

XVII. APPENDIX TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Appendix must include a complete Table of Contents, which includes the page number or attachment number, attachment title, and relevant selection criterion. A sample table of contents form is included below. Each attachment in the Appendix must be described in the narrative text of the relevant selection criterion, with a rationale for how its inclusion supports the narrative and the location of the attachment in the Appendix.

Page #	Attachment Title	Relevant Selection Criterion
3	I: Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council Members, 2013	A1(1)
4	II: Supporting Children with Disabilities and Their Families, An Interagency Agreement Among Early Care, Health and Education Programs and Agencies in Vermont	A1(C)
28	III: Memorandum of Understanding	A3(1)
48	IV: Letters of Stakeholder Support	A3(3)
142	V: Report to the Vermont Legislature - Implementation of Prekindergarten Education in Accordance with Vermont's Act 62	B
168	VI: STARS Standards	B
181	VII: STARS 2011 Brochure	B
183	VIII: STARS Place Mat	B
185	IX: Vermont Early Learning Standards: Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten (2003)	C1
225	X: Guiding Your Child's Early Learning: A Parent's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards (2006)	C1
249	XI: Home Visiting Regulations	C3
253	XII: Northern Lights Career Development Center: MATCH components Logic Model and Evaluation 2.0	D2

Page #	Attachment Title	Relevant Selection Criterion
257	XIII: Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals	D2
286	XIV: Evaluation of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System – Final Report	D2
367	XV: 2011 Vermont Early Childhood and Afterschool Professional Development Survey	D2
437	XVI: Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Child Professionals	D2
481	XVII: Early Childhood Career Ladder	D2
482	XVIII: Vermont Career Advising Guide for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals	D2
538	XIX: Ready Kindergartners Survey 2012-2013	E1
546	XX: Vermont's Statewide Report on Kindergarten Readiness 2012-2013	E1
552	XXI: Proposal to Henderson Foundation - Validating & Enhancing Vermont's Ready Kindergartners Survey (2013)	E1
557	XXII: "Discriminant Validity of a Community-Level Measure of Children's Readiness for School"(2003) – An Article Discussing the Results of a Validation Study of Vermont's Ready Kindergartners Survey	E1
568	XXIII: Draft 1 of the Vermont Early Learning Standards: Guiding the Learning and Development of Children from Infancy through Third Grade	E1
668	XXIV: The Key to Good Policy, Smart Decisions and Wise Investments: Vermont's Roadmap for an Early Childhood Data Reporting System	E2
690	XXV: Reference List	All sections

Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council Members, 2013		
Name	Title	Member Category
Armando Vilaseca	Secretary, Agency on Education	Co-Chair; Government
Tim Volk	Keliher, Samets, Volk	Co-Chair; At Large
Jeanice Garfield	Springfield School Board	At Large
Robin Stromgren	Bennington Regional Care Council	At Large
Jody Marquis	Creative Minds Children's Center	At Large
Lisa Ventriss	Vermont Business Roundtable	At Large
Melissa Riegel-Garrett	VAEYC	At Large
Mark Sustic	Vermont Community Pre-School Collaborative	At Large
Eddie Gale	AD Henderson Foundation	At Large
Mary Barrosse Schwartz	Vermont Business Roundtable	At Large
Betsy Rathbun-Gunn	United Counseling Services/Head Start	At Large
Cathryn Saint Marie	Early Childhood Home Provider	At Large
Mary Burns	Greater Burlington YMCA	At Large
Doug Racine	Secretary, Agency of Human Services	Government
Lawrence Miller	Agency of Commerce	Government
Harry Chen	Department of Health	Government
Bill Frank	State Representative	Government
Paul Dupre	Department of Mental Health	Government
Ben Allen	Department of Children and Families/Head Start	Government
David Yacovone	Department of Children and Families	Government
David Zuckerman	State Senator	Government
Kevin Mullin	State Senator	Government

Supporting Children with Disabilities and Their Families

*An Interagency
Agreement Among
Early Care, Health and
Education Programs and
Agencies in Vermont*

2010

CONTENTS

Statement of Purpose.....1

Introduction.....2

Principles.....3

Practices.....6

Glossary.....13

Signature Page..... Inside back cover

Distribution of this document has been made possible by
funding from the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration
Office.

<http://dcf.vermont.gov>

Copies available at:
Vermont Agency of Human Services
Head Start State Collaboration Office
103 South Main Street, 2 North
Waterbury, VT 05671-2901

Previously issued: 1987, 1994, 1999, 2005

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This document advances the goals of Building Bright Futures, Vermont's overall approach to supporting children prenatally through age six to assure that they are safe, healthy and successful. To that end, we will build and coordinate a system of quality supports for young children and their families. As a critical element of that system of support, this document serves as a guide and commitment to serving children with disabilities and their families.

The purpose of this agreement is to ensure coordination and collaboration among Vermont's early care, health and education programs. The Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office (VHSSCO) updates this agreement on behalf of the Head Start/Early Head Start programs to ensure their compliance with federal Head Start Performance Standards.

The endorsing parties agree to use the document to ensure that high-quality early care, health and education options are available for all eligible young children and their families.

This document is intended to be used as a guide for state-level coordination for developing regional and local agreements, and for strengthening relationships between agencies and programs involved with young children with disabilities and their families. The developers of the agreement have strived to use language that is clear and respectful, and that reflects the leadership role of parents of children with potential or established disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

The 2010 edition of *Supporting Children with Disabilities and Their Families* is the fourth update of a statewide interagency agreement for young children with disabilities in Vermont, and supersedes earlier versions. Previous versions of the agreement were initiated by the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office in response to federal Head Start requirements and a commitment from other state partners to ensure that services are offered to families in a coordinated, collaborative fashion in local communities based on a common set of guidelines.

This 2010 agreement reflects the changes and progress made in Vermont in the past five years to integrate early childhood health, mental health and early intervention services. This unique service delivery model is now called Children's Integrated Services (CIS). The CIS model is designed to improve child and family outcomes by providing client centric, holistic services, effective service coordination, flexible funding to address gaps in services, prevention, early intervention, health promotion and accountability.

In the previous agreement (2005), early childhood health was known as Healthy Babies, Kids and Families (HBKF), early childhood mental health was known as Children's UpStream Services (CUPS), and early intervention was known as the Family, Infant & Toddler Program (FITP). These three separate state programs have now been integrated into an overall approach to service delivery called Children's Integrated Services. The former program names are no longer used in this document. These services are referred to as Children's Integrated Services, and are part of a continuum of prevention, early intervention and treatment.

PRINCIPLES

We recognize that families with children with disabilities have routines, hopes, dreams, and needs—just as families with children without disabilities do. In fact, their routines, hopes, dreams and needs are more alike than they are different.

We agree to inform ourselves and to inform parents of their legal rights as we work together to coordinate and/or provide quality early care, health and education services. These rights are primarily based on the following list of principles.

These principles will guide the practice of all parties to the agreement. For example: when a program is planning a parent involvement component, it will:

- Ensure that the practices are centered on the family's interests and needs, that the system is accessible to all families,
- That resources are equitably distributed geographically, are inclusive of families with disabilities, and are sensitive and attentive to the culture of the family.

The rights of parents and their children will be protected as we work together to coordinate and/or provide quality early care, health and education services.

It is intended that these principles characterize the interactions of all parties to the agreement. They are fundamental in guiding our work on behalf of children and families and in recommending changes in practice and program design.

We believe:

Family-centered means that we view children in the context of the entire family, and we view the family as the center of services and supports. The best way to meet the needs of individual children is by addressing the needs of the family. The goal of agencies and service providers is to recognize and support each family's unique achievements and goals and those of their children. Family-centered services are both a goal and a process by which families are supported in being active partners in planning outcomes and necessary services that address each child's needs and overall family concerns.

Universally designed system means that all children and families have equitable access to and meaningful participation in services delivered in community-based settings.

Equitable means that quality services and resources designed for families with young children with disabilities are available regardless of where the family lives, their social or economic class, or their knowledge about how to access information.

Strengths-based means that we identify and work with the strengths and capabilities of families to help their child/ren. Supports and services are responsive to and build upon these strengths and competencies.

Inclusive means that young children learn best when placed in group settings with children their own age. Children benefit from learning and developing with other children who represent a wide range of abilities and backgrounds.

Culturally competent means that programs and staff are responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities and the child's cultural background as defined by his/her community, family history, and family structure.

Developmentally appropriate means that the learning which takes place for a child of one age or skill level is distinct from the learning that takes place for a child of another age or skill level.

Understandable/User-friendly means that the services, programs and resources must be easy to access for all families with young children, and that the information is understandable and presented in formats and in language that is understood by all.

Resource sharing means that the cost of resources and services provided to families with children with disabilities is a shared responsibility, and should not place an undue burden on communities and/or individual programs.

Outcome-based means we focus on the results or conditions of well-being for children, families and individuals. We measure our work and engage in continuous improvement. Services and activities focus on the results that families, in partnership with providers, hope to achieve.

Community-based means that services, programs and resources are based in the local communities where young children and their families live and/or spend a significant portion of each day.

Collaboration means that in order to be responsive to the wide range of needs and concerns of families with young children, we cannot work alone. What each of us contributes has an effect upon other services, programs and resources.

Confidentiality means that families control personal information and can restrict access to this information consistent with federal and state laws.

Comprehensive means that services are provided as part of a coordinated and integrated effort.

Continuity of care means that we recognize how important consistent caregivers are for optimal child development. National research confirms that closeness and consistency of relationships between children and their caregivers are critical factors in preparing children for school.

PRACTICES

The following practices are guided by the principles previously described. These practices are strategic methods and techniques used in supporting children with disabilities and their families. We agree to inform ourselves to understand each other's practices, and to use all our knowledge, research, evidence-based practice, experience and available technology. We share responsibility for improving our practices as we work together to coordinate and/or provide early care, health and education services in order to promote success.

Specific terminology and descriptions are consistent with, but are not legal interpretations of federal or state rules, regulations and laws.

Child Development

We agree to promote the overall development of young children with disabilities, not only in the area in which they have special need, but across all developmental domains, including motor, communication, social/emotional, cognitive, and adaptive, and across a variety of settings.

Parent Involvement

We recognize that parents and guardians have primary responsibility for their children and are their children's first and most important teachers and advocates. We will provide families with information, resources, training, and support to assist them in making informed decisions that meet their needs. We are committed to supporting the leadership roles of parents, guardians and primary caregivers.

Outreach

We will:

- Understand and share information about available services and resources.
- Inform families about early care, health and education services and resources in their communities.
- Promote public awareness of all community resources available to children and families.
- Ensure that families have access to information about health insurance including Medicaid and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT).

Outreach/Screening

We will:

- Establish and coordinate child-find activities for the identification of children who have disabilities or are at risk of disabilities.
- Plan and carry out shared developmental and health screenings in our communities and explore new opportunities for collaborative screenings. If screenings are conducted independently, results will be shared with other programs as needed with written parental consent.

Making Referrals

Any child who has or may have special health needs and/or delays in development should be referred to the Children's Integrated Services (CIS) intake team (prenatal to three) or to the Department of Education's Essential Early Education (3-5) program with parental consent. Additionally, referrals should be made to other Agency of Human Services resources that may be needed. (See CDD, DAIL, VDH in glossary.)

We will:

- Make referrals to needed or requested services with parental consent.
- Provide parents with information about the programs and services to which they are being referred.
- Accept self-referrals and referrals from providers with parental consent, understanding that a referral does not guarantee eligibility for a program.
- Notify the referral source about the status of referrals.

Initial Screening & Evaluation

Eligibility for services is determined for different programs in a variety of ways. One way to determine eligibility is through an initial screening and/or evaluation. We ensure that once a referral is received, procedures for initial screening and/or evaluation to determine eligibility are carried out based on the individual program's requirements.

For example:

- **Children's Integrated Services/Early Intervention (CIS/EI):** If an initial screening determines a need for an evaluation, CIS/EI will provide a multidisciplinary, all-domain assessment. This evaluation must be completed and eligibility determined within 45 calendar days of referral.
- **Essential Early Education (EEE):** An initial evaluation for EEE must be completed within 60 calendar days of parental consent for the evaluation. The decision to move forward with a comprehensive evaluation or begin with an initial screening prior to determining the need for a comprehensive evaluation rests with the Local Education Agency/school district.
- **Head Start:** For Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) enrolled children in need of evaluation, the first point of referral is either Children's Integrated Services or Essential Early Education. If a parent refuses referral to either CIS or EEE, Head Start will continue to work with the family to seek an evaluation by a qualified diagnostician.

Development and Implementation of Child and Family Plans

- We will ensure that plans are integrated to the degree possible. CIS and Head Start agree to integrate plans for shared children/families.
- We agree to recognize the primary role of parents/guardians in the development of plans related to the child and family's goals, and to provide support to maximize opportunities for family involvement in the process.
- With parent/guardian consent, Early Head Start and Head Start staff and other relevant representatives may participate in the development of the Head Start enrolled child's individualized plan. Service coordinators and/or case managers will invite program staff to team meetings, and will provide adequate notification of meeting date, time and location. Program staff will participate in the development of the plan either in person or through other means.
- We will ensure that there are mutually agreed upon times to share information, report progress and coordinate service delivery with parental consent. Every effort will be made to accommodate family schedules and to meet in homes or other natural settings comfortable for parents.
- Using a multidisciplinary assessment, observations and other relevant information, a child's CIS team, which includes the family and service providers, develops the One Plan. The plan builds on the strengths and resources of the family and includes health, mental health and well being, family support and specialized intervention services needed by the child and family.
- We will ensure that copies of the plan are provided to staff from collaborating agencies in a timely manner with written parental consent.
- We will implement services and supports in natural environments and/or inclusive settings in order to achieve outcomes of the plan.

- We agree to inform families that, for children with a CIS/Early Intervention plan, services are available year-round. EEE services are limited to the school year unless a child qualifies for extended-year services. (See Glossary)
- When a Head Start/Early Head Start enrolled child is not eligible for CIS early intervention or EEE, but is still in need of services, other providers may contribute to the development of a Head Start generated Individual Child Service Plan.

Transportation

If transportation is a service in a plan, it must be provided. Some transportation may be available through health insurance (e.g. Medicaid), public schools, public transportation system, etc.

Technical Assistance System/Consultation

We agree to support the development of a technical assistance and consultation system that builds the skills of families and practitioners, and includes people and resources representing various early care, health and education disciplines and expertise. This system will serve multiple purposes, including meeting the specific needs of individuals or programs; assuring public policies are implemented appropriately and effectively throughout the state; assisting in adopting or adapting specific innovations or practices; and providing information, training and resources on a topic or issue.

Consultation and technical assistance support skill building among caregivers that contributes to positive functioning in various child and family environments. It also improves the overall quality of programs and the program staff who are responsive to children's needs and support their healthy development.

Transition Planning

We recognize the importance of a carefully coordinated and timely transition for children and families moving from one placement to another. It is critical that families be fully involved in this process as well as staff from the current and next placement. Transition procedures vary from program to program depending on local policy and the individual needs of children and families.

We agree to share the responsibility for smoothly coordinated transition from one program to another, as required by law, for children and families by:

- Ensuring timely transition planning beginning at least 3-6 months prior to transition,
- Sharing information about individual program transition procedures with parents and collaborating staff,
- Sharing information about program options with parents, and
- Transferring records to the next placement with written parental consent.

Other recommended practices might include:

- Ensuring next placement orientation for families,
- Linking transitioning parents with parents who are familiar with the transition process,
- Offering opportunities for the child to experience and become comfortable with the next placement,
- Meeting staff of the next placement, and
- Meeting with parents and staff from all programs to address concerns and develop an effective transition plan.

Professional Development

We recognize the expertise of staff and parents of collaborating programs and agree to maximize these resources with reciprocal training and consultation. We seek and use information from the Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC), Vermont's early childhood professional development system, and the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) course calendar, career pathways, credentials and career advising to ensure professional development opportunities that are integrated and meaningful.

We will share responsibility for:

- Planning, funding and conducting joint in-service and ongoing professional development opportunities at the local, regional and state levels that enable staff to earn credentials and relevant certificates,
- Informing partner programs about upcoming in-service, training and staff development opportunities.
- Seeking and sharing opportunities to align professional development activities that enable staff to earn credentials (such as the early childhood and family mental health credential) and relevant level certificates.

Participation with regional Children's Integrated Services Teams and regional Building Bright Futures Councils

For the purposes of sharing information and collaborative planning and problem-solving, we will participate in the ongoing development and evaluation of the early care, health and education system. We will encourage the broader system to use the principles and practices described in this agreement.

Agreement Review

The Interagency Agreement Among Early Care, Health and Education Programs and Agencies in Vermont will be reviewed at least every three years and updated as needed. If it is not updated during that time frame, the current agreement will remain in effect.

GLOSSARY

Head Start and Early Head Start

Head Start is a comprehensive child and family development program available to income eligible families with preschool children age three to five. Early Head Start shares the Head Start mission, but serves pregnant women and families with children from birth to three years. Both Head Start and Early Head Start operate in accordance with national Head Start Performance Standards and the 2007 Head Start Act. Head Start services are available in all counties. Early Head Start services are available in Washington, Orange, Lamoille, Windham, Chittenden, Franklin/Grand Isle, Addison, Caledonia, Orleans and Essex counties. Families can receive Head Start services in their homes, in Head Start centers, in public schools, child care centers, community centers, and family child care homes, although not all service options are available in each county.

Head Start involves parents in all aspects of the program, from individualizing services for their children to program governance, and in planning how services such as education, training, health, nutrition, mental health, disabilities and social services will be implemented.

Head Start staff conduct health, nutrition, and developmental screenings for all enrolled children and refer children as needed to appropriate resources for evaluation and services. Head Start works in partnership with a wide variety of other early childhood programs such as human service agencies, child care programs and schools to meet the needs and goals of enrolled children and families.

For more information about Head Start and Early Head Start visit the Vermont Head Start Association website at <http://vermontheadstart.org>.

Vermont Department for Children and Families, Child Development Division (CDD)

The Child Development Division's goal is to increase accessibility to high-quality child care and child development services. Direct services for children and families include regulating early childhood and afterschool programs; early intervention services; information, resource and referral for families; parent education and family support services.

CDD provides technical assistance, professional development and mentoring opportunities to Vermont's early childhood and afterschool workforce. CDD is also involved in developing early childhood and afterschool systems in Vermont.

Information about the CDD and the Children's Integrated Services program is available at <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd>.

Children's Integrated Services (CIS)

CIS is Vermont's unique model for integrating early childhood health, mental health, early intervention services and specialized child care services for pregnant women and children from birth to age six. The model is designed to improve child and family outcomes by providing family-centered, holistic, prevention, early intervention, and health promotion services, effective service coordination, and flexible funding to address gaps in services.

Formerly known as Healthy Babies, Kids and Families (HBKF), nursing and family support activities are focused on prevention and early intervention and include health education and counseling, screening and assessment, referral, advocacy, risk reduction and case management. Services are available to pregnant and postpartum women, and infants and children from birth to age five who are eligible for Vermont's Dr. Dynasaur insurance.

Formerly known as Children's UpStream Services (CUPS), early childhood and family mental health promotes healthy social and emotional development for children up to six years old, their families, and child care programs. These services include information

and referral, direct services with children and families, parenting education, and training and consultation for early care, health and education providers.

Formerly known as the Family, Infant and Toddler Program (FITP), early intervention is a federally mandated (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)-Part C) system of individualized early intervention services for young children from birth to age three with, or at risk of, developmental delays.

CIS combines these three prevention, early intervention and treatment programs into one child development and family support services system. These services are available statewide through multi-disciplinary Children's Integrated Services Teams in each of the twelve Agency of Human Services regions. These teams provide a single point of access to a wide range of services that promote children's healthy development and assists families to promote their children's development. The menu of CIS services includes: Service Coordination, Health Education, Childbirth and Parenting Education, Specialized Therapies (e.g. speech, physical therapy, audiology, vision, nutrition), consultation to child care, medical evaluation, medical social work and family support.

These services result in positive outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women, children birth through age six, and their families.

Children's Integrated Services One Plan

Using a multidisciplinary assessment, observations and other relevant information, a child's CIS team, which includes the family and service providers, develops the One Plan. The plan builds on the strengths and resources of the family and includes health, mental health and well being, family support, specialized child care services and specialized intervention services needed by the child and family.

Vermont Department of Education

The Vermont Department of Education (DOE) is committed to helping students, educators, and public schools meet Vermont's high standards. DOE offers a wide variety of programs and services in support of Vermont's students, teachers, educators, administrators, families, and community members.

Information about DOE's programs and services is available at <http://education.vermont.gov>

Essential Early Education (EEE)

Essential Early Education (EEE) is Vermont's system of early childhood special education services for children three to six years old with disabilities.

EEE services must include early childhood specialized instruction and may include related services like speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy that are provided by local school districts to children aged three to five who have a developmental delay or a medical condition that may result in significant delays by the time the child enrolls in elementary school. Services are typically provided in preschool classrooms, community-based early childhood programs, children's homes and/or other settings depending on the unique needs of the child and their family.

A child may be determined eligible for EEE services in one of four ways. A child may:

1. have received special instruction, developmental therapy services, or speech services through their CIS early intervention program based on a CIS One Plan (See Children's Integrated Services One Plan above) at least 30 days prior to their third birthday;
2. have a medical condition which may result in significant delays as determined by a physician by the time of the child's sixth birthday and the child needs special education;

3. be determined to need special education based on an evaluation by an evaluation and planning team (EPT) finding that the child has a disability caused by a developmental delay;
4. meet eligibility criteria for children six through 21 years old, including determination of disability, adverse effect on educational performance and need for special education.

Individual Education Program (IEP)

An Individual Education Program (IEP) is a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by an IEP team which consists of public school representatives, parents or guardians, related service providers (e.g. therapists), and collaborative partners (e.g. Head Start). The IEP addresses specific educational goals and objectives that focus on the unique strengths and needs of the child.

Extended School Year (ESY)

Children aged three through 22 with an IEP may be eligible for services that extend beyond the typical school year (e.g. summer, weekends, holidays, etc.) The child's IEP team will consider and determine if ESY services are essential for the child to reach educational and/or developmental goals as stated in his/her Individual Education Program (IEP). Variables that should be considered in determining eligibility for extended school year services include evidence of regression during previous breaks in services, progress made during the school year on the current IEP, the child's degree of disability, breaks in programming that would prevent the child from attaining developmental milestones he/she would otherwise be expected to achieve, the correlation between the child's chronological age and rate of development, areas in the child's program that need consistent, ongoing attention, etc.

The EEE rules are further described in section 2361 of the "Vermont Department of Education Special Education Regulations and Other Pertinent Regulations," and can be found on the web at <http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/pdfdoc/board/rules/2360.pdf>

ADDITIONAL SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH OTHER AHS DEPARTMENTS

Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL)

Developmental Disability Services – Young children with developmental disabilities may be eligible for services through their local Developmental Disability agency. Services include care coordination, flexible family funding, crises supports and, for children with very significant medical or behavioral issues, comprehensive home and community-based support.

Children's Personal Care Services – Personal Care Services are available for Medicaid eligible children with disabilities who need assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and other basic activities of daily living.

The High Technology Home Care Program is an intensive home care program that coordinates treatments, medical supplies, and sophisticated medical equipment and provides skilled nursing care for medically involved children who are technology-dependent.

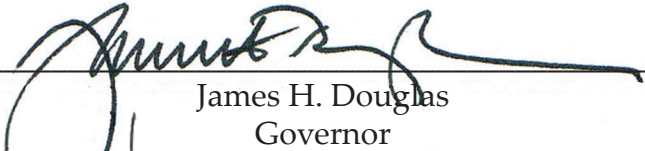
Vermont Department of Health - Children with Special Health Needs (VDH)


The Children with Special Health Needs Program at the Department of Health provides a large selection of services to children who have complex health conditions and to their families. By “children” we mean Vermont residents, birth to age 21. A child's eligibility for a specific program may depend upon a number of factors.

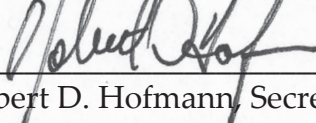
Rules, Regulations and Laws related to Young Children with Disabilities and/or Special Education

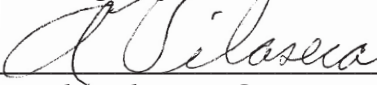
- The Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEIA) of 2004 (federal law and federal regulations)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices (2360)
- Act 117: An Act to Strengthen the Capacity of Vermont's Education System to Meet the Educational Needs of All Vermont Students
- Act 264: A law on behalf of children and adolescents who have a severe emotional disturbance and their families.
- 2007 Head Start Act
- 2007 Head Start Act: 45 CFR 1308 (preschool) and 45 CFR 1304.20(f)(2) (infants and toddlers)
- Act 62: a state law related to prekindergarten education, effective July 1, 2007, Act 62 codified existing practices used by some school districts to include three and four year olds in their average daily membership (ADM) in order to provide public funds to support prekindergarten education
- PreKindergarten Rules, effective July 1, 2008 as required by Act 62


*We, the undersigned, endorse the Interagency Agreement Among Early Care,
Health and Education Programs and Agencies in Vermont*

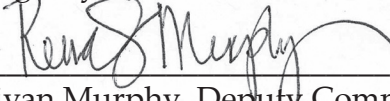

James H. Douglas
Governor



Louise Eldridge, Regional Program Manager
Office of Head Start

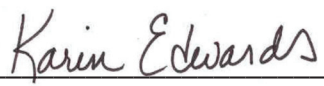

Robert D. Hofmann, Secretary
Vermont Agency of Human Services

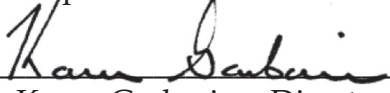

Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner
Vermont Department of Education


Stephen R. Dale, Commissioner
Department for Children and Families
Agency of Human Services


Reeva Sullivan Murphy, Deputy Commissioner
Child Development Division
Department for Children and Families


Paul Behrman, Chairperson
Vermont Head Start Association


Karin Edwards, Director
Integrated Support for Learning (Pre-K - Grade 8)
Department of Education


Karen Garbarino, Director
Children's Integrated Services, Child Development Division


K.C. Whiteley, Director
Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office

VERMONT EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE (VT ELC)

STATE PLAN MASTER AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

**VERMONT OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR (LEAD PROGRAM AGENCY) AND
VERMONT AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES (LEAD FISCAL AGENCY) AND
AND VERMONT AGENCY OF EDUCATION (PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY),
AND**

**VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITHIN THE
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES (PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY)
AND VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WITHIN THE AGENCY OF HUMAN
SERVICES (PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY),**

AND

THE BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES COUNCIL (PARTICIPATING AGENCY)

This Master Agreement is entered into by and between the Vermont Office of the Governor (“Lead Program Agency”), and the Vermont Agency of Human Services (“Lead Fiscal Agency”), and the Vermont Agency of Education (“Participating State Agency”), and the Vermont Department for Children and Families within the Agency of Human Services (“Participating State Agency”), and the Vermont Department of Health within the Agency of Human Services (“Participating State Agency”), and the Building Bright Futures Council (“Participating Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency hereby certifies and represents that they:

1) Each agree to be a Participating State Agency/Participating Agency and will implement those portions of the VT ELC State Plan within the Scope of Work assigned to them as indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

2) Agree to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the VT ELC State Plan and Exhibit I:

- (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards: (Vermont First Steps, Vermont Early Learning Standards, Common Core State Standards K12);

- (b) A set of statewide Program Standards for Early Learning and Development Programs (VT STARS Program Performance Standards and Qualified Prekindergarten Education Program as defined in Vermont State Board of Education, Rule 2600: Rules Governing Prekindergarten Education which incorporates VT STARS Program Performance Standards);
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (Vermont Step Ahead Recognition System (VT STARS)); and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials (Northern Lights Career Development Center Core Competency Documents and Vermont Northern Lights Career Ladder, and Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators: Licensing Rules and Endorsement Area: Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Educator)
- 3) Have all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this Master Agreement;
- 4) Are familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and are supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the VT ELC State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's/Participating Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan" "Participating Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency/Participating Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and

regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCIES/PARTICIPATING AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency/Participating Agency Scope of Work assigned to them as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the VT ELC State Plan;
- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's/Participating Agency's budget included in section XI - XIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency/Participating Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency in implementing their tasks and activities described in the VT ELC State Plan application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with, and support each Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency in carrying out the Scope of Work assigned to them, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for each Participating State Agency/Participating Agency during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's/Participating Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's/Participating Agency's Budget, as identified in section XI- XIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's/Participating Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency informed of the status of the VT ELC State Plan implementation and seek input from the Participating State Agency where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the VT ELC State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency necessary to implement the VT ELC State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and each Participating State Agency/Participating Agency will appoint a key contact person for the VT ELC State Plan.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and each Participating State Agency/Participating Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this Master Agreement, consistent with the VT ELC State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency/Participating Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency/Participating Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the VT ELC State Plan requires modifications that affect Participating State Agencies/Participating Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's/Participating Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF A PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S/PARTICIPATING AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that a Participating State Agency/Participating Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency/Participating Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

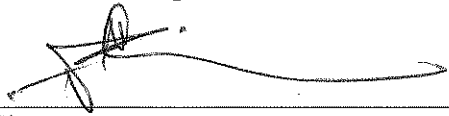
This Master Agreement may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Master Agreement shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

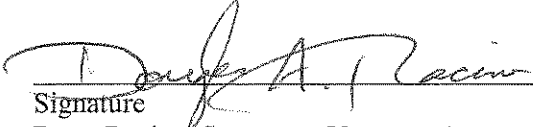
V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):



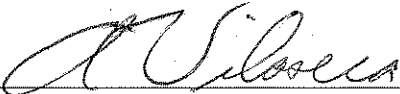
Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):



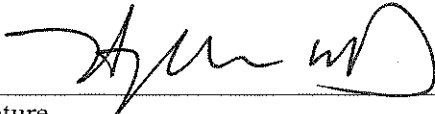
Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Education (Participating State Agency):



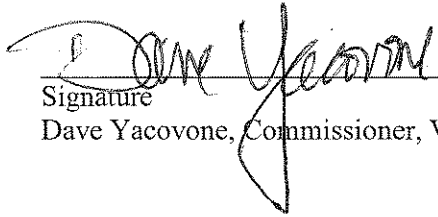
Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Armando Vilaseca, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Education

Authorized Representative of Vermont Department of Health (Participating State Agency):



Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Harry Chen, M.D., Commissioner, Vermont Department of Health

Authorized Representative of Vermont Department for Children and Families (Participating State Agency):



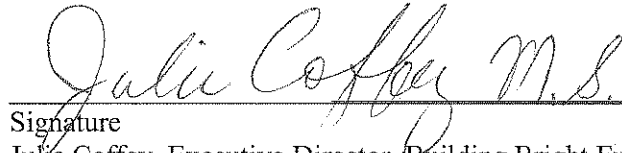
Signature

October 11, 2013

Date

Dave Yacovone, Commissioner, Vermont Department for Children and Families

Authorized Representative of Building Bright Futures Council (Participating State Agency):



Signature

October 11, 2013

Date


Julie Coffey, Executive Director, Building Bright Futures Council

EXHIBIT I – SCOPE OF WORK FOR LEAD AGENCY AND EACH PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY/PARTICIPATING AGENCY

The **Vermont Office of the Governor** hereby agrees to participate in the VT ELC State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
All Criterion	Designated Senior Staff	Provides oversight and advice for the VT RTTT ELC grant.
(A)(3)	Designated Senior Staff	Convenes and manages the VT RTTT ELC State Management Team.
(A)(3)	Designated Senior Staff	Along with VT RTTT ELC Management Team hires and supervises a VT RTTT ELC State Plan Manager. Manager serves as one of support staff of VT RTTT ELC Management Team.
(A)(3)	Designated Senior Staff	Hires and supervises administrative assistant for VT RTTT ELC State Plan Manager.
(A)(4)	Designated Senior Staff	Engages in discussion and planning by VT RTTT ELC Management Team, including the BBF Council to identify strategies and public and private funds to build on the achievements of the VT RTTT ELC State Plan.
(D)(2)	Designated Senior Staff	Leads formation of the Early Childhood Leadership Development Institute (ECLI) Work Group and assists in development of and successful launch of Early Childhood Leadership Development Institute.
(E)(2)	Designated Senior Staff	Establishes an Education Data Governance Council that includes Policy, Data and IT leadership from VT RTTT ELC participating state agencies and other relevant state agencies and partners.
(E)(2)	Governor Peter Shumlin	Appoints broad stakeholders to Education Data Governance Council.
(E)(2)	Designated Senior Staff	Hires consultant to manage Data Governance processes and procedures, facilitate meeting discussions, and handle the logistics for first two years of grant.

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):



Signature

October 11, 2013

Date

Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):


Signature

October 11, 2013

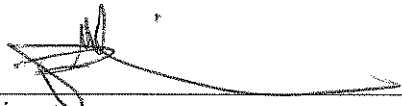
Date

Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

The **Vermont Agency of Human Services** hereby agrees to participate in the VT ELC State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

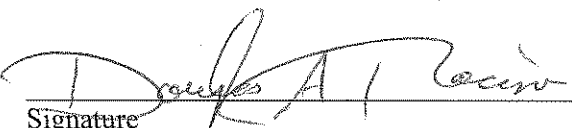
Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	Secretary of Human Services or designee	Hires VT RTTT ELC State Plan fiscal manager.
(A)(3)	Secretary of Human Services or designee	Provides oversight to the VT RTTT ELC State Plan fiscal management.
(A)(3)	Secretary of Human Services or designee	Coordinates closely with Governor's Office designated Senior Staff providing VT RTTT ELC grant program oversight.
(A)(3)	Designated Senior Staff	Active participation as member of the VT RTTT ELC State Management Team.
(A)(3)	Designated Senior Staff	Assures financial reporting for the VT RTTT ELC grant.

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):



Signature Date
Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):



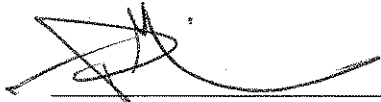
Signature Date
Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

The **Vermont Agency of Education** hereby agrees to participate in the VT ELC State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	Secretary of Education or designee	Secretary or designee participates regularly and actively on BBF Council (statewide) and encourage leaders in Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to participate on BBF Regional Councils.
(A)(3)	Designated senior staff	Participate regularly and actively as a member of the VTT RTT ELC State Management Team and recruits AOE content/program experts as participants in VT ELC activities as appropriate.
(A)(3)	Secretary of Education or designee	Hires and supervises a VT ELC Coordinator to assist with added volume of responsibilities under VT ELC Plan. Coordinator serves as one of support staff of VT RTTT ELC State Management Team.
(A)(4)	Designated senior staff	Engages in discussion and planning by VT RTTT ELC Management Team and the BBF Council to identify strategies and public or private funds to sustain the achievements of the VT ELC State Plan.
(B)(1)(2)(3) & (5)	Designated senior staff	Continues active participation on the VT STARS Oversight Committee.
(B)(3)	Designated senior staff	Lead the creation of a monitoring system for publicly funded preschool.
(B)(3)	Designated senior staff	Working with DCF, improve inter-rater reliability and create integrated monitoring and rating processes across child care licensing, VT STARS and publicly funded preschool.
(B)(5)	Designated senior staff	With DCF, initiate and monitor an evaluation of VT STARS.
(C)(1)	Designated senior staff	Leads review and completion of new VELs.
(C)(1)	Designated senior staff	Leads alignment of early learning guidelines across developmental age span from birth – grade 3.
(C)(1)	Designated senior staff	Updates and disseminates materials to inform families about early learning guidelines across all developmental ages (birth – grade 3) to engage families in supporting early learning and development.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff	Create the Comprehensive Early Childhood Assessment Work Group to develop a plan for a quality comprehensive system, with BBF, VDH and DCF.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff	Leads expansion of the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system throughout all types of early learning and development programs, including in infant and toddler

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		settings, for documenting children's development and informing practices.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff	Leads incorporation of CLASS as a commonly used assessment tool in early learning and development programs in Vermont and as part of the VT STARS array of assessment tools.
(C)(3)	CACFP staff	Participate in workgroup promoting good nutrition and food security for young children including the provision of healthy meals in early learning.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Convene statewide leadership and planning teams to promote comprehensive approach for professional development to support social and emotional well-being and promote Early Multi-tiered System of Supports.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Hire program manager to lead RTTT Early MTSS project.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff, RTTT Early MTSS Project Manager	Work with BBF Councils to adopt five key components of Early MTSS.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Provide oversight for RTTT Early MTSS project.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	With DCF, implement and evaluate MATCH program, including development of Results Based Accountability Model.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	Formally establish the Early Childhood Education Workgroup (ECHEW) with DCF.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	Lends expertise and participation to success of Leadership Development Institute.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	With DCF, participate in interagency work group to manage Early Childhood Workforce Survey.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	With DCF, implement licensed TEACH model in VT.
(E)(1)	Designated senior staff	Oversee strengthening and alignment of Ready Kindergartners Survey (RKS), including the convening of stakeholders.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Actively participate on the Early Childhood Data Governance Council convened by the Governor's Office.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Lead the drafting of an Early Childhood and K-12 SLDS Plan with DCF assistance.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Manage Early Childhood K-12 SLDS data linkages plan.
CPP4	Designated senior staff	Lead initiative, including hiring of contractor, to build a coordinated Birth through Grade 3 system including coordination of professional development pilot.
CPP5	Designated senior staff	Participate on the Promise Communities State Team to oversee menu of options development process and manage grant applications and give approvals.

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):



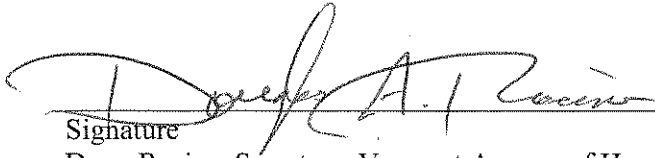
October 11, 2013

Signature

Date

Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):



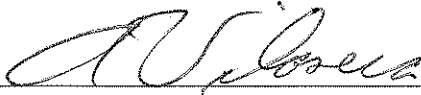
October 11, 2013

Signature

Date

Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Education (Participating State Agency):



October 11, 2013

Signature

Date

Armando Vilaseca, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Education

The **Vermont Department for Children and Families** hereby agrees to participate in the VT ELC State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

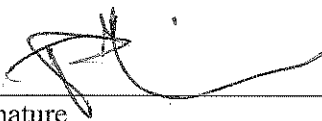
Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	Commissioner or designee and Head Start Collaboration Office Director	Participates regularly and actively on BBF State Advisory Council and encourages District Office staff and AHS Field Directors to participate actively on Regional Councils.
(A)(3)	Designated senior staff	Participates regularly and actively as a member of the VT RTTT ELC State Management Team and recruits DCF content/program experts as participants in VT ELC activities as appropriate.
(A)(3)	Deputy Commissioner of CDD	Hires and supervises VT ELC Contracts Manager to assist with added volume of grants, contract and payment activity that will accompany responsibilities for implementation of the proposed RTT-ELC plan.
(A)(4)	Designated senior staff	Engages in discussion and planning by VT RTTT ELC Management Team and the BBF Council to identify strategies and public or private funds to sustain the achievements of the VT RTTT ELC State Plan.
(B)(1) & (4)	Designated senior staff	Maintains VT STARS as the state TQRIS. Maintains commitment to high standards. Leads improvement of VT STARS reporting.
B(2)	Designated senior staff	Develops and implements a robust program of rewards and incentives to increase participation in VT STARS.
(B)(2)	Designated senior staff	Facilitate participation in VT STARS and support continuous program improvement and maintaining program quality through VT STARS participation.
(B)(3)	Designated senior staff	Leads strategies to increase frequency and quality of monitoring and rating ELDP participating in VT STARS and evaluate effectiveness to ensure continuous improvement.
(B)(3)	Designated senior staff	Working with AOE, improve inter-rater reliability and create integrated monitoring and rating processes across child care licensing, VT STARS and publicly funded preschool.
(B)(3)	Designated senior staff	Hires, trains, supervises and supports two VT STARS assessors to improve technical assistance capacity and strengthen monitoring of regulatory compliance in schools, centers and family child care homes.
(B)(4)	Designated senior staff	Develop and release competitive grant

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		opportunities to expand the Strengthening Families grants, provide supports, professional development opportunities and evaluation for grantees.
(B)(4)	Designated senior staff	Lead strategies to strengthen and improve Specialized Child Care Services (SCCS).
(B)(5)	Designated senior staff	With AOE, initiate and monitor an evaluation of VT STARS.
(C)(1)	Designated senior staff	Support AOE in the revision, finalization, dissemination and training of the new VELS.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff and HHSSCO	Actively participates in Comprehensive Assessments System group.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff	Assists AOE in expansion of the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system throughout all types of early learning and development programs, including in infant and toddler settings, for documenting children's development and informing practices.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff	Assists AOE in incorporation of CLASS as a commonly used assessment tool in early learning and development programs in Vermont and as part of the VT STARS array of assessment tools.
(C)(3)	Deputy Commissioner CDD	With VDH, hire a Home Visiting Coordinator: this position will manage oversight for implementation of evidence-based models and integration of all model locally through CIS.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	With VDH, oversee implementation of an aligned and integrated evidence-based statewide home visiting system.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Participates in activities to promote food security, good nutrition and physical activity through early learning and development programs in schools, centers and family child care homes well as through home visiting and other services.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Participate in statewide leadership and planning teams convened by AOE to promote comprehensive approach for professional development to support social and emotional well-being and promote Early Multi-tiered System of Supports.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff, VCCICC, CCRRs	With AOE, implement and evaluate MATCH program, including development of Results Based Accountability Model.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	Formally establish the Early Childhood Education Workgroup (ECHEW) with AOE.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	Implements expansion of the Vermont Early

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		Childhood Apprenticeship Program.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	With AOE, participate in interagency work group to manage Early Childhood Workforce Survey.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	With AOE, implement licensed TEACH model in VT.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	Lends expertise and participation to success of Leadership Development Institute.
(E)(1)	Designated senior staff	Participates in validation and strengthening of Vermont Ready Kindergarteners Survey.
(E)(2)	Commissioner or designee	Hires and supervises an AHS Information Technology (IT) Project Manager: this position will have in-agency oversight responsibility for the IT contract to build the CIS System. A FT Project Manager to manage the project will also be secured with contract funds.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Actively participate on the Early Childhood Data Governance Council convened by the Governor's Office.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Contributes relevant data to known/shared data on early learning and development.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Manage CIS Data System project, including appoint staff member as project manager and appointing a work group.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Participate with AOE on drafting of an Early Childhood and K-12 SLDS Plan.
CPP4	Designated senior staff	Support AOE's initiative, including hiring of contractor, to build a coordinated Birth through Grade 3 system including coordination of professional development pilot.
CPP5	Commissioner or designee	Hires and supervise a Promise Communities Project Manager: this position will be responsible for implementing Promise Communities Project, will supervise Coaches and work with PS State Team. This person will be point person on RTT-ELC for CDD and will sit on CDD Senior Management Team to ensure new and expanded activities are integrated with CDD usual business.
CPP5	Commissioner or designee	Hires and Supervises Promise Community Coaches: these three positions will be assigned to work from home offices in different regions of the state supporting communities in creating and implementing their Promise Community Plans. Each will work with 2 – 4 communities at a time.
CPP5	Designated senior staff	Convene and lead Promise Communities State Team to oversee menu of options development

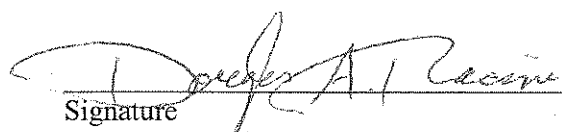
Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		process and manage grant applications and give approvals.

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):



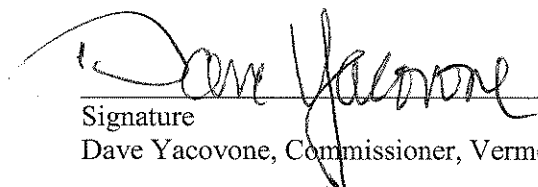
Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):



Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Authorized Representative of Vermont Department for Children and Families (Participating State Agency):



Signature Date
October 11, 2013
Dave Yacovone, Commissioner, Vermont Department for Children and Families

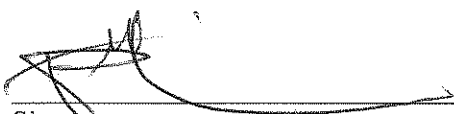
Vermont Early Learning Challenge Application for Initial Funding [CFDA 84.412A]
Proposal and State Plan

The **Vermont Department of Health** hereby agrees to participate in the VT ELC State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	Commissioner or designee	Participates regularly and actively on BBF State Advisory Council and encourages District Office staff and leadership of local community wellness initiatives to participate actively on Regional Councils.
(A)(3)	Designated senior staff	Participates regularly and actively as a member of the VT RTTT ELC State Management Team and recruits VDH content/program experts as participants in VT ELC activities as appropriate.
(A)(4)	Designated senior staff	Engages in discussion and planning by VT RTTT ELC State Management Team and the BBF Council to identify strategies and public or private funds to sustain the achievements of the VT ELC State Plan.
(C)(2)	Designated senior staff	Actively participates in Comprehensive Assessments System group.
(C)(3)	Commissioner or designee	With DCF, hire a Home Visiting Coordinator: this position will manage oversight for implementation of evidence-based models and integration of all model locally through CIS.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Oversee implementation of an aligned and integrated evidence-based statewide home visiting system.
(C)(3)	Maternal Child Health, Healthy Child Care Vermont (HCCVT)	Lead the enhancement and expansion of Child Care Health Consultation services.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff, HCCVT Coordinator, Nutrition and Physical Activity Cmte	Participates actively in activities to promote food security, good nutrition and physical activity through early learning and development programs in schools, centers and family child care homes well as through home visiting and other services.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff, VT Help Me Grow Management Cmte	Lead the population-level, cross-sector collaboration to promote healthy development of Vermont children through use of the Help Me Grow framework.
(C)(3)	Designated senior staff	Participate in statewide leadership and planning teams convened by AOE to promote comprehensive approach for professional development to support social and emotional well-being and promote Early Multi-tiered System of Supports.
(D)(2)	Designated senior staff	Lends expertise and participation to success of

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		Leadership Development Institute.
(E)(1)	Designated senior staff	Participates in validation and strengthening of Vermont Ready Kindergarteners Survey.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Actively participates on the Early Childhood Data Governance Council convened by the Governor's Office.
(E)(2)	Designated senior staff	Contributes relevant health data to known/shared data on early learning and development.
CPP5	Designated senior staff	Participate on the Promise Communities State Team to oversee menu of options development process and manage grant applications and give approvals.

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):




October 11, 2013

Signature

Date

Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):



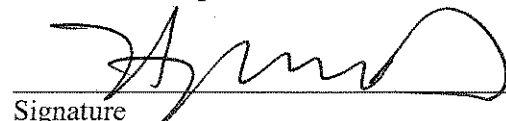
October 11, 2013

Signature

Date

Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Authorized Representative of Vermont Department of Health (Participating State Agency):



October 11, 2013

Signature

Date

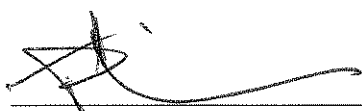
Harry Chen, M.D., Commissioner, Vermont Department of Health

The Building Bright Futures Council of Vermont hereby agrees to participate in the VT ELC State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director	Convenes, manages, and supports Building Bright Futures Council (statewide).
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director, BBF State Advisory Council, BBF Regional Manager, 12 BBF Regional Council Coordinators	Actively recruits and engages critical partners at state and local levels, clearly articulates relationships and responsibilities among partners and overlapping systems of care, and promotes strategic planning and action at state and local levels.
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director	BBF Council Executive Director participates regularly and actively as a member of the VT RTT - ELC State Management Team and recruits BBF Council content/program experts as participants in VT RTTT ELC activities as appropriate.
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director	Hires and supervises a BBF Regional Councils Manager.
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director, Leadership at 12 BBF Regional Councils	Hires, trains, supervises and supports 11 FTEs as Regional Council Coordinators to enhance the capacity of BBF Regional Councils.
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director, BBF State Advisory Council, BBF Regional Manager, 12 BBF Regional Council Coordinators	Participates in the development and implementation of ELC Partnerships. Supports Regional BBF Councils in providing inclusive, collaborative local governance structure for ELC Partnerships.
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director, 12 BBF Regional Council Coordinators, BBF State Advisory Council	Produces timely and useful reports on the status of measurable outcomes related to children's early learning and development at both statewide and regional levels to inform improved practice, effective investments and sound policy decisions.
(A)(4)	BBF Executive Director and BBF hired consultants	Engages in discussion and planning by VT RTTT ELC State Management Team and the BBF Council to identify strategies and public or private funds to sustain the achievements of the VT ELC State Plan.
(B)(1)(2)(3) & (5)	BBF State Council Directors, BBF Regional Council Members	Designated BBF Council members continue active participation on the VT STARS Oversight Committee.
(C)(3)	BBF State Director and BBF Regional Council	Work with AOE to adopt five key components of Early MTSS.
(D)(2)	BBF SAC Cmte on Professional Preparedness and Development	BBF Council members participate in Early Childhood Higher Education Work Group convened by AOE.
(A)(3)	BBF Executive Director	Assists development and implementation of Early Childhood Leadership Development Institute.
(E)(2)	BBF Executive Director or designee	Designated staff actively participates on the Early Childhood Data Governance Council convened by the Governor's Office.
(E)(2)	BBF Executive Director	Hires, supervises and supports data and planning personnel to create and support the unified early childhood data reporting infrastructure that tracks results and provides consistent reporting of VT's early

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		learning and development outcomes and policy questions.
(E)(2)	BBF Executive Director, Hired Project Manager	Fully implements all activities in the plan to enhance Vermont's early childhood data system so that it is a unified system used by all to improve practices and inform policies that support children's health, development and learning and is aligned and interoperable with Vermont's Statewide Longitudinal Data System.

Authorized Representative of Vermont Office of the Governor (Lead Program Agency):



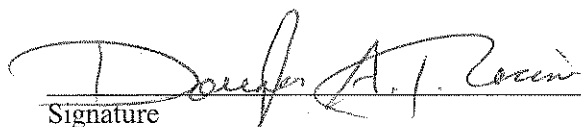
Signature

Governor Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont

October 11, 2013

Date

Authorized Representative of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Lead Fiscal Agency):



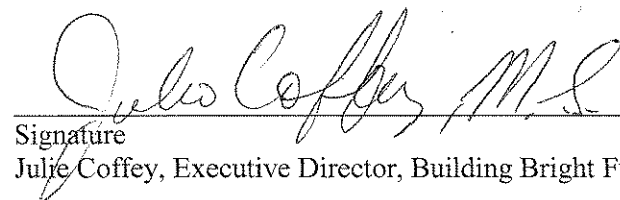
Signature

Doug Racine, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

October 11, 2013

Date

Authorized Representative of Building Bright Futures Council (Participating Agency):



Signature

Julie Coffey, Executive Director, Building Bright Futures Council

October 11, 2013

Date

Letters of Stakeholder Support

Advocacy Groups

Prevent Child Abuse VT
VT Early Childhood Alliance

Higher Education Institutions

Northern Lights Career Center
University of Vermont
Vermont State Colleges

Schools, Unions, Superintendents

PreK-16 Council
St. Johnsbury School District
VT State Board of Education
VT Principals Association
VT National Education Association
VT Council for Special Educators
VT School Boards Association
VT Superintendents Association
VT Afterschool, Inc.

Political Leaders

U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy
U.S. Senator Bernard Sanders
U.S. Representative Peter Welch
Burlington City Mayor Miro Weinberger
State Senator John Campbell
Vermont House Speaker Shap Smith
Vermont Representative Sarah Buxton

Philanthropy

A.D. Henderson Foundation
The Permanent Fund
The Turrell Fund
VT Children's Trust

Early Learning Intermediary Organizations

Building Bright Futures Regional Councils (12)
Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council
Vermont Association for the Education of
Young Children
Vermont Head Start Association
Parent Child Center Network
VT Association for the Education of Young
Children

Local Nonprofits and Community Leaders

VT Association of Child Care Resource and
Referral Agencies
The Snelling Center for Government
Stern Center
VT Center for the Book
VT Early Childhood Division
VT Community Foundation
VT Community Loan Fund

Members of the Business Community

VT Business for Social Responsibility
VT Business Roundtable

Health/Nutrition

Hunger Free VT
VT Child Health Improvement Program
VT Academy of Pediatrics

Groups Outside of ELIO's

First Schools
VT Head Start State Collaboration Office
Results Based Accountability
VT Commission on Women

Building Bright Futures- Bennington's Early Childhood Council

October 9, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

The Bennington Early Childhood Council is pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

As a Council, we are part of the local infrastructure that supports Vermont's strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. This system ensures that locally, we are using state benchmarks and data to identify areas of concern and to monitor progress. Using the framework of our Regional Plan, we can update and refine activities that will have a greater impact for our children and their families by combining our resources and expertise.

The Bennington Region has made a strong commitment to professional development. It is system wide and builds on previous professional development. Not only does it give us additional skills, but it gives this region common language and expectations. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future." A professional staff is an investment that we can make to ensure positive outcome for our children.

Along with Vermont's Governor, the Bennington Region believe that for a children to arrive at school ready to succeed in school and in life they must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

The Bennington Region is excited about the prospects of increasing the capacity of the early childhood systems work both locally and at the state level. We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, the Bennington Council strongly urges you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Robin Stromgren". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robin Stromgren
Regional Coordinator



Julianne Nickerson, MSW
 Building Bright Futures Chittenden County
 1110 Prim Rd.
 Colchester, VT 05446

Oct. 14 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Building Bright Futures of Chittenden County is consists of a regional council that works closely with all the regional partners to fulfill our regional goals of :

- Children live in safe and supported families and communities
- Children are socially, emotionally, and physically (dental, nutrition, prenatal) healthy
- Children are ready for and succeed in school. (Schools are ready for children)

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

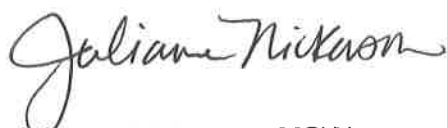
Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge funding will enrich the Building Bright Futures of Chittenden county by supporting the infrastructure needed in the community. Our council representation includes those who serve children prenatally to through grade 3. Our goals, listed above, are supported in the work that is included in the Race to The Top - Early Learning Challenge grant. The goals are big and presently we take small steps to turn the data curve to make a change for children and families, our goal is to have the funding to make big changes and see all children thrive. All of the various partners who work with children in the early care education settings, health care , home-visiting programs as well as parents are partners in our council. Chittenden County has a unique population of needs with a large influx of new Americans and refugees. Any support to our state and regions will in effect help with the needs of this particular population as well as all families and children.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julianne Nickerson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Julianne Nickerson, MSW
Building Bright Futures
Chittenden County
Regional Council coordinator

October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

On behalf of the Caledonia/ Southern Essex Building Bright Futures (BBF) regional council, we are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Building Bright Futures Council of Caledonia/ Southern Essex seeks to assure that children birth to age six are healthy and successful by improving the quality, affordability and accessibility of early childhood services in the areas of early care, health and education. There is currently a part-time (10 hours weekly) regional coordinator who acts as staff to the council to carry out the work of the regional and state councils. Our region's fundamental governance is guided by the BBF Regional Infrastructure adopted by the State Council on November 30, 2007.

Our region completed a five-year strategic plan in 2008-09 to address early childhood issues specific to Caledonia and Southern Essex Counties. The four indicators chosen to focus on in the regional plan were:

- Percentage of women smoking during pregnancy
- Percentage of children ready for school in all five domains of the kindergarten questionnaire
- Percent of regulated early childhood programs that are nationally accredited or have 4/5 STARS
- Rate of substantiated victims of child abuse and neglect (<6 years)

Pending the approval of our application, we would increase our regional coordination capacity to a full-time position and be able to implement a renewed community assessment with a focus on current identified needs. It will permit the BBF Coordinator to fully implement our regional plan and outlined strategies resulting in positive outcomes for children and families regionally and state-wide.

As we know, the early years are critical to a child's development. Therefore, in order to assist each child to reach his or her full potential, we need to collectively ensure children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. With the reinvigoration of the BBF Regional Coordination, these objectives would more efficiently and successfully be achieved.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application has critical elements that builds on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early-learning,

developmental programs while addressing areas that need improvement. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Dawn M. Powers
BBF Regional Coordinator
Caledonia/ Southern Essex
Email: bbfcoordinator@yahoo.com
Phone: (802) 673-6478

October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

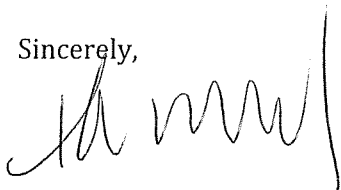
Central Vermont Building Bright Futures council seeks to assure that all children in central Vermont are healthy and successful by improving the quality, affordability and accessibility of services for families with children under the age of six in the areas of health, early care and education. Our council consists of a diverse and multidisciplinary team dedicated to improving the lives of young children and their families. Council members represent many constituencies and include representatives from the local parent child center, early childhood and family mental health, maternal child health, Head Start, for profit and not-for-profit child care centers, Children's Integrated Services, the Agency of Human Services and many more. This cross-section of dedicated experts in early childhood are the people doing the work in our communities and intend to be active participants in the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge work in Vermont.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

We greatly appreciate the Shumlin Administration's emphasis on the importance of early childhood and we appreciate the support and dedication the administration has shown to improving the amazing work happening throughout Vermont.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Becky Raymond', with a stylized, flowing script.

Becky Raymond, Regional Director
On behalf of the Central Vermont Building Bright Futures Council



October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius:

The Franklin-Grand Isle Building Bright Futures PTA (501c3) is pleased to support the State of Vermont in its application for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge initial funding.

We are a volunteer organization that represents early care, health, education, and community members and has been in existence since March 1992. We are part of a state-wide network that is committed to high quality early education which has been shown to produce large gains for children in academic learning and socialization. Many studies show educational benefits of quality early education for children at third grade and beyond. And, the evidence indicates that more intensive, higher quality early education has larger lasting benefits and provides the most help for those at highest risk.

The Vermont Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge application provides an opportunity for our families and children to receive the support they need in their community. The plan outlined in this application allows us to strength our systems that interact with and influence each other to either decrease or increase risk factors or protective factors that affect a range of health, education, and social outcomes.

Our Council and community are committed to the continued development in the service of our children and look forward to a positive response. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Judy A. Ashley

Judy A. Ashley, Chair
Franklin-Grand Isle Building Bright Futures PTA



36 South Main Street, PO Box 208
St. Albans, VT 05478
802-370-0458

319 US Route 5 South
 Norwich, Vermont 05055
 T 802 649 3268 F 802 649 3270



www.FamilyPlaceVT.org
 @FamilyPlaceVT on Twitter
 Facebook.com/FamilyPlaceVT

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

The Family Place, as the regional coordinator of our Building Bright Futures (BBF) Council of the Hartford region, is pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for funding for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Family Place is the Parent Child Center for the Upper Valley of Vermont, serving as the lead community agency around parent support, child abuse prevention, and early childhood services. We believe that all young children deserve a healthy, nurturing start in life and the chance to achieve their full potential. To ensure the well being of our youngest citizens, our programs, including BBF, collaborate with community partners to ensure that all parents develop the skills and resources to overcome whatever challenges they face including poverty, developmental delays, and child maltreatment.

Each year, our staff of 37 professionals serves over 1400 families from 32 Upper Valley towns. 65% of those served are low-income families. 58% have children under three. Our prevention and direct service programs in addition to BBF include:

- Families Learning Together: intensive education and support (including high school completion program and worksites for job skill development) for young parents living in poverty with infants and toddlers, along with licensed childcare for their children
- Children's Integrated Services: home visiting and counseling, therapy, child development and parenting guidance for families in need of support
- Child Find: Conducting individual developmental assessments for young children identified by school districts as needing assessment for special educational services
- Child Advocacy Center: multi-disciplinary response for child victims of sexual abuse and their non-offending parents
- Parenting classes, playgroups, and a resource library for any family with a preschooler

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elizabeth L. Adams · Bill Boyle, M.D. · Mary Brown · Elizabeth Chabot, Secretary
 Helen Damon-Moore · Janine Williamson Kanzler · Nina McCampbell · Leslie Potter · Arline S. Rotman
 John Ruth, Treasurer · Kathleen O. Snyder, Vice Chair · Posie Taylor, Chair · Charles Wheelan · Jack Wilson

- Child Care Financial Assistance Program, Reach Up, and Welcome Baby programs offer concrete supports to parents

In my professional experience working in New England and the Midwest, Vermont and the BBF council in the Hartford has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs.

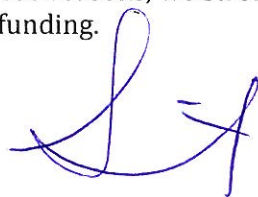
Along with Vermont's Governor, we at The Family Place believe that for a child to arrive at school ready to succeed in school and in life, s/he must possess vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

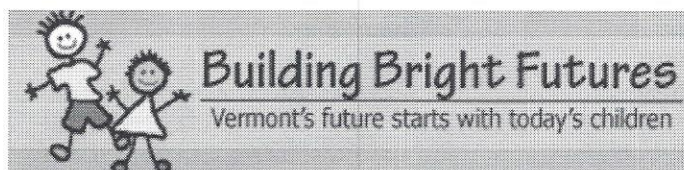
We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

As a community partner with the state and a private agency that works directly on the frontline with some of our most under-served populations, it is critical to our ongoing work with distressed and disadvantaged families that Race To The Top be awarded to the State of Vermont. Our rural state, while widely known and respected for collaborative, innovative practices, is increasingly disadvantaged due to our small size when competing with larger states for private foundation dollars. Yet our state and community partners continue to hold the highest of standards relative to quality services and improving early childhood outcomes. This grant would provide a foundation of support on which development of best practices would continue. For all of these reasons, we strongly support this application and respectfully request consideration for funding.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Smit, MSW, LICSW
Executive Director





October 12, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Middlebury Regional Early Childhood Council has been in existence for years and is the forum where local public and private partners can see their work, outlining the efforts in a regional strategic plan. Our council endeavors to translate the abstract language of "comprehensive systems building" into specific strategies for action and concrete outcomes.

We work alongside the state early childhood council- a Governor-appointed Early Childhood State Advisory Council for Vermont; established in 2010 by Vermont Statute, ACT 104. Like us, the state council is comprised of both private and public sector leadership: State and Local Government, state legislators, early care, health, and education representatives of various stakeholder groups.

Though our council has been in existence for over two decades, much of the work has been done on a volunteer basis or, at best, through piecemeal funding to maintain part-time Council coordination and small direct-service grants to early childhood service providers. In addition, our council has lacked access to valid, reliable data to base their understanding of the community needs, thus allow informed solutions. The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant would enable both huge regional council capacity growth and expansion to the early childhood data reporting system as the data resource needed by all regional councils.

Pairing Vermont's inaugural Early Childhood (EC) Framework, to be unveiled October 29, 2013 by Governor Shumlin *WITH* the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant could catapult Vermont's system of early care, health, and education toward impactful improvements in Quality, Access, and Equity of services for young children, especially those with high needs. Simply put, we need this.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that build on Vermont's existing strengths in

delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Saunders".

Barbara Saunders

Co-Chair

Building Bright Futures Regional Early Childhood Advisory Council

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Lamoille Valley Building Bright Futures Council seeks to assure that all children in our region are healthy and successful. Our volunteer council, with a part time coordinator, works to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of services for families in the areas of early care, health and education. We are a diverse group with representatives including parents, early education, health, Head Start, child care programs, and non-profit organizations. We are committed to improving outcomes for young children and their families.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. We believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Becky Gonyea", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Becky Gonyea
Building Bright Futures, Steering Committee



October 14, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Newport Regional Early Childhood Council has been in existence for many years and is the forum where local public and private partners can see their work, outlining the efforts in a regional strategic plan. Our council endeavors to translate the abstract language of "comprehensive systems building" into specific strategies for action and concrete outcomes.

We work alongside the state early childhood council- a Governor-appointed Early Childhood State Advisory Council for Vermont; established in 2010 by Vermont Statute, ACT 104. Like us, the state council is comprised of both private and public sector leadership: State and Local Government, state legislators, early care, health, and education representatives of various stakeholder groups.

The Newport region has many longtime early childhood champions but has lacked the resources to meet the needs of our communities we serve. One of the things we have lacked is in valid, reliable data to base our understanding of the community needs, thus allow informed solutions. The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant would enable both regional council capacity growth and expansion to the early childhood data reporting system as the data resource needed by us and the other regional councils.

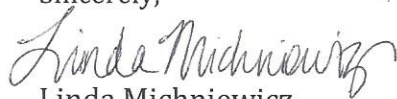
Pairing Vermont's inaugural Early Childhood (EC) Framework, to be unveiled October 29, 2013 by Governor Shumlin *WITH* the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant could catapult Vermont's system of early care, health, and education toward impactful improvements in Quality, Access, and Equity of services for young children, especially those with high needs. Simply put, we need this.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is

critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Linda Michniewicz". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Linda Michniewicz

Co-Chair

Chittenden Regional Building Bright Futures Regional Early Childhood Advisory Council



October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Building Bright Futures, established in 2009 by Vermont Statute ACT 104, is comprised of an Early Childhood State Advisory Council and 12 regional early childhood councils. Members of both the state and regional councils represent public and private sectors in the areas of early care, health, and education. It is an intentional alliance on all levels, tasked with ensuring that all Vermont's children are: well cared for, healthy, able to thrive, and arrive at school ready to learn.

This is a pivotal time in Vermont. Diligent hard work has gone into refining and shoring up the systems of support for young children and families in Vermont over the last two decades. Vermont is a responsive state, which has an inherent strength and ability to bring diverse groups of people together to solve problems and meet challenges. Calling on these traits, private businesses, government officials, legislators, agency representatives, child care providers, parents and community leaders have come together in communities around the state to show their support for early care and education. Vermonters are ready and willing to take the needed steps to ensure that our children are truly successful. With the unveiling of the Early Childhood Framework, at the Governor's Early Childhood Summit on October 29th, a common vision will be presented to guide the creation of a state wide action plan.

An integral part of the action planning will be the Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council and the 12 regional councils. Regional early childhood councils have existed for many years, but attendance has ebbed and flowed. It takes a dedicated, committed coordinator to keep it alive in each region. The Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, if awarded, would allow for greater funding for coordinators, and ensure consistency across all regions. Funding is

inconsistent across regions. By placing the emphasis on the leadership piece, it would strengthen each region and provide more consistent delivery of important services. The coordinator is the catalyst needed to regularly bring community partners together to evaluate and determine areas of need in services. Local strategic plans are created and implemented by working closely together. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jan Krantz".

Jan Krantz

BBF Regional Council of Rutland Coordinator

Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Page 67

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge. As one of the 12 early childhood councils in Vermont, we have worked for years to look at the needs of young children and their families, determine what gaps in services exist and find ways to improve access to services. It's been a struggle in these years of poor economy and budget cutting.

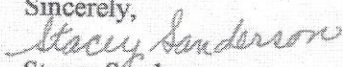
Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous and we appreciate the input we've been able to give to the planners. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

If funded we see a huge opportunity for our council, and others, to be able to move forward on the planning efforts we've made and be able to be able to impact services in a positive way for the first time in a long time. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Stacey Sanderson

for the BBF Council of the Springfield Area

Council members represent Springfield Schools, Twin River Valley Supervisory Union, Spfld. Area Parent Child Center, Windsor County Head Start, Resource & Referral agency, Vt. Birth to Three Initiative, Children's Integrated Services, Agency of Human Services Field Services, Vt. Dept. of Health, and the Northern Lights Career Development Center



October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

As Governor Peter J. Shumlin pointed out in his inaugural address on January 10, 2013, Vermont has a proud tradition of leading the nation. From abolishing slavery, to mandating public funding for universal education, to making civil unions possible, and to passing marriage equality without a court mandate, Vermont's pioneering spirit has led the way to transform many of our country's social policies. Building Bright Futures of Southeastern Vermont (BBF SEVT) is pleased to be a part of this honored custom by supporting the State's Race To The Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTTT-ELC) application, which will implement Vermont's **first state-wide integrated Early Childhood Framework and Action Plan**.

Located in rural Windham County, BBF SEVT has seen first-hand how quality early childhood programs make a difference in the lives of all children, but especially for those who are economically disadvantaged or have special needs. The expansion of state-wide early childhood services, supported by a state-wide integrated infrastructure, will make it more feasible for the home and center-based providers in our region to provide high quality education and care services. This is especially important since nearly half of children in Windham County are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and nearly 400 children; ages 0-6 live below the poverty line.

Vermont's RTTT-ELC grant, through targeted strategic investments, will help our region improve and expand our range of early care and education services by:

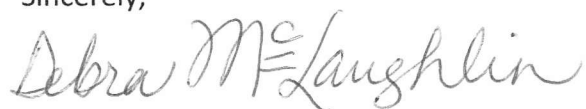
- ☐ **Focusing on the whole child**
- ☐ **Promoting equity and access**
- ☐ **Creating a holistic and integrated system**
- ☐ **Embracing an educational continuum**
- ☐ **Working with public and private partners**

Vermont's consistent and long-term work in early education and care has always been groundbreaking. As the state that ranks second in the nation for child well-being, Vermont's commitment to putting the child at the center of its systemic efforts to address their developmental needs has inspired many breakthroughs in data collection, quality, and professional development, among others. Vermont's vision to create a high quality system of care realizes the full potential of every child and also aligns with the President's Early Childhood Initiative.

This is an extraordinary time in the field of early education and care. Through research, evidence-based strategies, and tactical investments, our nation's youngest children have access to unprecedented services that will help them realize their full potential. Making it possible for our youngest citizens to succeed in school and in life is truly a hallmark of a civil society.

Please help us expand our critical work to ensure that every young child in Vermont has access to the quality early childhood services that they deserve by funding this grant application.

Sincerely,



Debra McLaughlin, Coordinator, Building Bright Futures of Southeastern Vermont (BBF SEVT)
on behalf of the following members of the BBF SEVT Advisory Board

Sadie Fischesser, Field Director, Bennington/Brattleboro Districts, VT Agency of Human Services

Debra Gass, Executive Director, Early Education Services

Sue Graff, Director of Community Investments, United Way of Windham County

Gretchen Horton, Executive Director, Brattleboro Childcare Centre

Chloe Learey, Executive Director, Winston-Prouty Center for Children

Elizabeth Raposa, Executive Director, Windham Child Care Association

Sandy Stark, Welcome Baby Coordinator, Early Education Services

Janice Stockman, Early Childhood Coordinator, Windham Southeast Supervisory Union

Nancy Witherill, Resource Development Specialist, Windham Child Care Association



October 12, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge. (Please also see our MOU which details our participation in the State Plan).

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is the Governor-appointed Early Childhood State Advisory Council for Vermont and was established in 2010 by Vermont Statute, ACT 104. The Council is comprised of both private and public sector leadership: State and Local Government, state legislators, early care, health, and education representatives of various stakeholder groups.

BBF has both a statewide council and 12 regional early childhood councils throughout Vermont. The regional councils endeavor to improve their local systems of service delivery, acting in effect as microcosms of the state entity. Each regional council provides a forum within which local public and private partners can see their work, outlining the efforts in a regional strategic plan. Each regional council translates the abstract language of "comprehensive systems building" into specific strategies for action and concrete outcomes.

Though regional councils have been in existence for over two decades, much of the work has been done on a volunteer basis or, at best, through piecemeal funding to maintain part-time Council coordination and small direct-service grants to early childhood service providers. In addition, councils have lacked access to valid, reliable data to base their understanding of the community needs, thus allow informed solutions. The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant would enable both huge regional council capacity growth and expansion to the early childhood data reporting system as the data resource needed by regional councils.

These systemic improvements are critical to Vermont.

Pairing Vermont's inaugural Early Childhood (EC) Framework, to be unveiled October 29, 2013 by Governor Shumlin with the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant could catapult Vermont's system of early care, health, and education toward impactful

improvements in Quality, Access, and Equity of services for young children, especially those with high needs. Simply put, we need this.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Coffey, M.S.".

Julie E. Coffey, M.S.

Executive Director

Building Bright Futures Early Childhood Advisory Council



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

FPG CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
SHERYL-MAR NORTH
CAMPUS BOX 8040
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-8040
www.firstschool.us

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

FirstSchool, an 8 year Kellogg funded initiative at FPG Child Development Institute at UNC-CH is pleased to submit this letter of support and commitment to Vermont's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application. FirstSchool's goal is to help schools close the achievement and opportunity gap by strengthening and enriching the learning, development, and early school experiences of PreK-3rd grade children. FirstSchool is grounded in work with schools and districts where leadership and staff work hard to make sustainable changes in their professional culture, relationships with families and children, instructional practices, and curricular choices. We are committed to developing knowledge, understanding and application of effective PreK-3rd grade policy and practice, with an emphasis on instruction and engagement in learning that is aligned with Common Core State Standards and Early Learning Standards. A Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant will enable us, and all of the partners in Vermont's early childhood community, to achieve significant advances on behalf of this critical population.

Through Vermont's application, the partnership with FirstSchool will assist in focusing on aligning teaching practices with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and State Early Learning and K-3 Standards in PreK – 3rd grade classrooms by developing a cadre of PreK-3rd experts in the state by facilitating state and district leaders through state institutes and cross-state collaborations to develop nuanced understandings of how data, knowledge and support from the Snapshot Professional Learning System (Snapshot) may be used to provide teachers with feedback on their pedagogy, gain insights into how CCSS and ELS play out in daily classroom practice, and how to use the Snapshot to drive continuous improvement efforts in schools, particularly those who are struggling to meet the needs of specialized populations.

The Early Learning Challenge is essential to Vermont's ability to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of efforts to improve education, health, and economic outcomes throughout the state. The Shumlin Administration's leadership and dedication to Vermont's families is evident throughout the plan, and we would be proud to be part of it. We look forward to informing and supporting the growth of a well-coordinated comprehensive system of early childhood services available to all children across the state.

Sincerely
Sharon Ritchie Ed.D
Senior Scientist
FPG Child Development Institute-UNC-CH



Vermont Head Start Association



September 30, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius:

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge. As you know, Head Start and Early Head Start are federally-funded, national child and family development programs which provide comprehensive services for low-income participants – primarily pregnant women, children from birth to age five, and their families. Services for children promote school readiness, and include early education, health, nutrition, mental health, and services for children with special needs. Services for parents promote family engagement, and include parent leadership and social service supports. Vermont's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application aligns well with Head Start's commitment to high quality systems to support services to children and families.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future." Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Paul Behrman,
 Chair, Vermont Head Start Association

Champlain Valley Head Start
 431 Pine Street
 Burlington, VT 05401

CVCAC Head Start
 195 US Route 302 – Berlin
 Barre, VT 05641

**NEKCA / Child & Family
 Development Program**
 191 High Street
 Barton, VT 05822

**Early Education Services /
 Windham County**
 130 Birge Street
 Brattleboro, VT 05301

Bennington County Head Start
 P.O. Box 588
 Bennington, VT 05201

Rutland County Head Start
 Box 222
 Rutland, VT 05701

**SEVCA / Windsor County
 Head Start**
 15 Pine Street
 Springfield, VT 05156

**State Head Start
 Collaboration Office**
 103 South Main Street
 Waterbury, VT 05671



38 Eastwood Drive, Suite 100
South Burlington, VT 05403

P: (802) 865-0255
F: (802) 865-0266
HungerFreeVT.org

October 8 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Hunger Free Vermont is an education and advocacy organization with the mission to end the injustice of hunger and malnutrition for all Vermonters. Incorporated in 1993, we are a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to providing nutrition education and expanding access to nutrition programs that nourish Vermont's children, families, and communities. Our Early Childhood Nutrition Outreach program helps child care centers provide healthful meals through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). We collaborate with child care providers, advocates, and state agencies to offer technical assistance and to ensure that healthy meals and snacks are considered an integral part of quality child care in Vermont.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children; however, there is work to be done to ensure that our youngest and most vulnerable population has access to quality, nutritious meals where they learn and play. Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. Creating a secure food environment in child care helps children develop healthy eating patterns during critical early years, preventing obesity, poor academic achievement, and developmental delays, and increased aggressive or hyperactive behavior.

Hunger Free Vermont strives to increase access to healthy meals for young children, and to offer providers the support and training they need to serve nutritious meals. Our aim is to bring about sustainable and permanent change in Vermont's early childhood education system by making access to nutritious food and nutrition education part of every young child's learning, and to address some of the barriers to CACFP participation that Vermont faces as a small rural state. This grant would help us accomplish our goals by offering financial support through the STARS quality rating system for providers serving meals, and would increase access to technical assistance and training opportunities. Working with the Child Care Health Consultants funded through this grant, and connecting more closely with STARS and the Vermont child care community will allow Hunger Free Vermont to expand our work and our reach to ensure that all young children in Vermont have access to regular nutritious meals and a healthy child care environment.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenna Whitson", is written over a horizontal line.

Jenna Whitson
Child Nutrition Advocate, Hunger Free Vermont

Main Office
P.O. Box 489 | CCV | Montpelier, VT 05601
Phone: (802) 828-2876 Fax: (802) 828-2805

CCV - 307 South Street Springfield, VT 05156
Phone: (802) 885-8374 Fax: (802) 885-8454

Oct. 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center is pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Northern Lights serves as Vermont's hub for professional development for early childhood and afterschool professionals. We work with the Child Development Division, Agency of Education and hundreds of other partners to provide clear information and resources about professional development and career pathways; to enhance and align the components of a user-friendly, high quality professional development system; and to increase opportunities for quality, accessible professional development opportunities that are meaningful and lead to career advancement. We do this because we know the quality of the relationships that professionals have with each of the young children in our state, has a significant impact on that child's development.

Vermont has a long history demonstrating its strong commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. Since Northern Lights began, in 2005, this commitment towards enhancement, alignment and integration of services has grown stronger. The current Governor Shumlin, has focused his attention on recognizing the importance of the early years, and moved to create a statewide action plan to address gaps and spread successes.

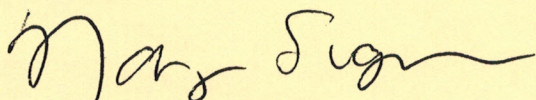
Northern Lights knows from the scientific evidence, data over time and experience, that all children need optimal health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability in order to succeed and thrive in life and in school. We recognize the role of professional development of the workforce in supporting families, service providers and programs, and informing communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers so that we work collaboratively toward the same goal: assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

Northern Lights is committed to facilitating the implementation of an enhanced and coordinated system of mentors and coaches (called MATCH) for this workforce; increasing access to professional development opportunities particularly in higher education through TEACH and other venues that align with early childhood Level certificates and credentials; and providing the specific training needed to prepare and support the workforce to effectively meet the needs of children and families with higher needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Sugarman", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Nancy Sugarman, Director
Northern Lights Career Development Center

Vermont Parent Child Center Network
130 Fisher Pond Road
Saint Albans, VT 05478

October 3, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Parent Child Center Network (VPCCN) would like to convey and assure our support for state of Vermont regarding the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant application. The VPCCN is a coalition of 15 legislatively designated centers that provide children, youth and families with strengths-based, holistic and collaborative services across Vermont with a focus on early childhood education and prevention services. The VPCCN provides leadership, support and advocacy on behalf of its membership and in collaboration with key partners in order to achieve the best outcomes for families. The PCCN has vested partnerships that include the Department of Education, The Child Development Division, and Department of Health. These partnerships are of great value and will continue to be prioritized as Vermont's Early Childhood system looks to forge a head and improve our current system of care. The PCCN has many core components that align with the priorities and indicators of change addressed in the Race to the Top application. It is the belief of the Network that in order to be effective in supporting our families and implementing systematic change, local and state collaboration is essential. The PCCN has been and will continue to be a supporter and key partner in the early childhood system of care.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

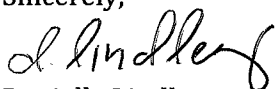
Vermont Parent Child Center Network
130 Fisher Pond Road
Saint Albans, VT 05478

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

Upon receiving funding from the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, this will allow for further support in the work of the VPCCN. Currently, the Parent Child Centers are legislatively designated to provide crucial services for Vermont families with a focus on eight core components, one of them being Home visiting. PCC's were embedded into local communities to serve as "hubs" for early childhood services and resources. The VPCCN's current home visiting program definition and standards align with Vermont's Proposed Early Childhood Framework which explains home visiting as a primary service delivery strategy in which services are offered on a voluntary basis to pregnant women, expectant fathers and parent and caregivers of children birth to kindergarten entry. Targeted participant outcomes include improved maternal and child health, prevention of child injuries, child and abuse or maltreatment, enhancement in school readiness and achievement; improvements in economic self sufficiency, increased knowledge of child development and coordination and referrals to community resources and supports. Funding would allow the VPCCN to collaboratively work with state and local partners to ensure that Vermont's children are being granted the opportunity for a healthy start, that families are the guiding force behind our work, and that all families are afforded quality services. Through these efforts, Vermont will be thoughtfully investing in the future of all Vermonters and gathering quality data and outcomes that quantify and illustrate the difference that our work is making to ensure effectiveness within the families and communities we serve.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application. If you have any further questions, please contact me at 802-393-6586 or danielle.lindley@ncssinc.org.

Sincerely,



Danielle Lindley

Chair of the Vermont Parent Child Center Network

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont (PCAV) is the Vermont Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and the National Circle of Parents. PCAV's mission is to promote and support healthy relationships between children and the people who care for them in order to eliminate child abuse and neglect. PCAV has been serving youth and families for 36 years by carrying out innovative, proven effective prevention programs that include: parenting education and support, shaken baby syndrome prevention, technology safety training, and child sexual abuse prevention.

PCAV is currently engaged in a project that mentors early care and education providers to implement an early sexuality and abuse prevention curriculum, Care for Kids, with children ages 3-8. The program is health-based, includes a strong adult education and skills component, and focuses on the social and emotional development of children. Communication, empathy, healthy boundaries, and healthy relationship skills are all addressed through fun and developmentally-appropriate activities. More funding is required to meet the on-going demand for such concentrated mentoring that increases early care and education providers' comfort with the sensitive topic of sexual abuse prevention. The Race to the Top application outlines the larger commitment needed to sustain broad, research-based early learning programs, which PCAV conducts and seeks to expand.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Dave Hakens

Vice President
Judy Reed

Treasurer
Wendy Love

Secretary
Michael Dorr, MS

BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS
Walter Bruska

BOARD MEMBERS
Brian Blais
Margaret Herrington, LCMHC
Sandy Kilburn
Bill Miller
Dave Mount
Stan Piotrowski
Kathi Smith

ADVISORY BOARD
OF DIRECTORS
Ian Anderson
Ted Castle
Karen Danaher, CPA
Julie Frame, Esq.
Sandy Gartner
Hon. Judge Ernest W. Gibson III
Jerry Greenfield
Erik Hameline
Joan Hoff
Sara Larkin
Normand Lussier
Christina McCaffrey, RN
Lois H. McClure
Terri O'Shea
Karyn Patno, M.D.
Nancy Russell
Ann Schmidt
Beth Yandow

Immediate Past President
Dr. William Cunningham, PhD


only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

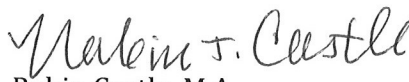
We recognize the need for consistent and accessible early learning throughout Vermont in part, because children with special needs may experience higher rates of abuse or neglect. Abuse may cause both short- and long-term impacts that are completely preventable. The Race to the Top support would increase PCAV's ability to offer continuing child abuse and neglect prevention programming through enhanced local networking opportunities and strengthened collaborative activities. When early learning is a mobilizing priority in Vermont communities, children and families will thrive.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Linda E. Johnson
Executive Director
Prevent Child Abuse Vermont



Robin Castle, M.A.
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Manager



October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

VACCRRRA is pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

VACCRRRA, the Vermont Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, is a statewide network of the 12 child care resource and referral agencies across Vermont. VACCRRRA's mission is to "enhance the capacity of member agencies to build a diverse, high quality early childhood care and education system accessible to all Vermont families." We manage eligibility determination for families into the Child Care Financial Assistance Program, provide a wide array of professional development opportunities to licensed and registered child care providers, assist providers in preparing for and achieving STARS status, and provide consumer education to parents seeking child care.

Working directly in local communities throughout the state, VACCRRRA agencies bring the voices of parents and child care providers to state level work and policy conversations. Vermont has a long and proud commitment to providing a broad array of child development and family support services along a continuum ranging from prevention initiatives like playgroups and community parent education to intervention services for high needs children. VACCRRRA members' special role is to link parents seeking child care and other developmental services to those resources in each community and to support child care providers as they strive to provide the highest quality program to children in their care.

We look forward to continuing and deepening our partnership with the state of Vermont should we receive this Race to the Top grant. We know that the resources provided through the grant will enhance and strengthen the systems work described herein. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and we urge you to fund this application.

Cordially,

Danielle Lindley and Jeff Robbins
VACCRRRA Co-Chairs



P.O. Box 464
Waterbury, VT 05676

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

VAEYC is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the nation's largest membership organization of early childhood professionals. Our Vermont membership numbers over 520, and includes anyone who cares about the education and well-being of young children.

VAEYC's mission is to improve the education and care of young children in VT. VAEYC uses a three level approach in working to achieve our mission: supports to early childhood programs, supports to early childhood professionals and systems improvement work. VT's Race to the Top –Early Learning Challenge proposal incorporates systemic strategies that will leverage efforts by my organization and others in VT.

VAEYC believes the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

VAEYC members and the professionals who engage in our programs and services will positively benefit if the VT Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge proposal is funded. Early childhood program quality will improve as VT's QRIS (STARS) is strengthened and providers are supported in their engagement. Early childhood professionals will move up VT's professional development levels as they are better prepared and trained through initiatives like T.E.A.C.H. System improvement will happen as we are able to make data-driven decisions based on our VT data systems that will be further linked and populated. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Melissa Riegel-Garrett
Executive Director, VAEYC

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are very pleased to express our strong support for the State of Vermont's application for initial funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Program.

The State of Vermont has long recognized the vital importance of improving and expanding high quality early learning opportunities, and has made substantial investments in increasing access to and improving outcomes for children throughout the state. However, as a small and predominately rural state, Vermont has particular capacity challenges addressing the early learning needs of disadvantaged children and children with disabilities, especially in the most rural areas of our state.

Governor Shumlin, the Secretary of Human Services and the Secretary of Education have put together an innovative Early Learning Challenge application that would not only significantly improve opportunities for children with the highest needs, but would also yield lasting benefits for all children that would continue long past the four-year funding period. The effort involves an integrative and collaborative approach among state, regional and local education, health, and human services agencies that would transform the existing patchwork of disconnected initiatives into a coordinated effort to prepare Vermont's young people for success in school and in life.


Vermont's Early Learning Challenge initiative will create fully aligned statewide early learning standards, coordinate professional development among providers, and implement comprehensive assessment systems for early learning programs and instruction. The effort will create appropriate governance, transparency and accountability measures. Importantly, it will expand access to critical health services through enhanced coordination between healthcare and early-learning providers, with a focus on the highest need populations.


If funded, this Early Learning Challenge proposal will help ensure that all Vermont children have access to high quality early education. It will yield vast improvements in the state's early education infrastructure in the near term, and myriad benefits to future generations of Vermonters.

We strongly support this effort. If we can be of assistance, or provide further evidence of our support, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

Sincerely,


PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator


BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator


PETER WELCH
United States Representative

Vermont House of Representatives
115 State Street
Drawer 33
Montpelier, VT 05633-5201
tel: (802) 828-2228
fax: (802) 828-2424
ppeltz@leg.state.vt.us



Peter Peltz
State Representative
Woodbury-Worcester-Elmore
Morristown

Page 84
PO Box 41
Woodbury, VT 05681
tel: (802) 472-6524
peter@peterpeltz.com

October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education

Application: Control Center

Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)

LBJ Basement Level 1

400 Maryland Avenue, SW.

Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The PreK-16 Council and the House Education Committee know the evidence is incontrovertible that early education is essential for the development and education of all children. We have advanced policy and programs for pre-kindergarteners and will continue to do so.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

It is critically important that resources at the federal and state levels be applied for early learners. The PreK-16 Council and the House Education will channel these resources for best results. We are well on our way but need more to help those who are particularly in need.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

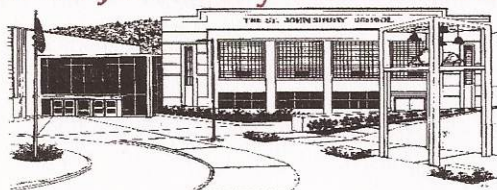
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Peltz', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Rep. Peter Peltz

Chair of the PreK-16 Council
Vice-Chair of the Vermont House Education Committee

The St. Johnsbury School District



257 Western Avenue
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

Margaret Ranny Bledsoe, Ph.D., Superintendent/School Improvement Director

Deb Sanders-Dame, Ed.D., Director of Student Support Services

Kathryn Ducharme, Business Manager

October 10, 2013

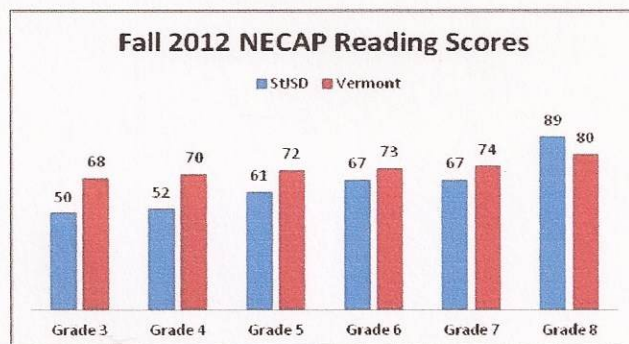
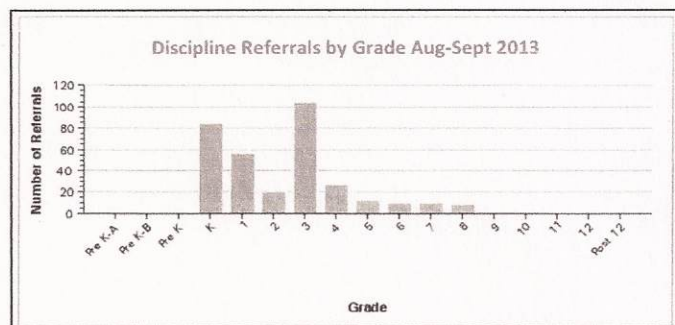
Secretaries Arne Duncan and Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I write to strongly support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge. Because of my first-hand experience as Superintendent on one of Vermont's high poverty districts, I can attest to the urgent need in our low-income, rural communities for the kind of support this grant would convey to the children of Vermont.

St. Johnsbury School is a K-8 school of over 650 students located in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. We are a low performing school (ranked at 114 out of 131 schools based on the 2012 NECAP scores), and many of our families live in poverty; in 2012-2013, 67% of our children were eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch, as compared to 49% for our county (Caledonia) and 39% for the state as a whole.

I am in my second year as Superintendent of our District, having come to the state from a position of school leadership in Boston. I have been heartened to see how much structure and support there is in the state to provide children with a world-class education, and have also become increasingly concerned about the effects of rural poverty on our youngest students. It is clear to me that the key to school improvement in our District is a strategic, scaffolded approach to early education that includes the approaches proposed in Vermont's grant application. In order to illustrate our need, I am going to include two graphs representing data from the St. Johnsbury School. The first is a list of our discipline referrals by grade level for this school year, and the second is our NECAP Language Arts scores by grade level compared with state scores.



"...supporting respectful, caring, lifelong learners..."

Phone: 802-748-1711

Fax: 802-748-2512

YATYATAT etid ony

Letter to U.S. D.O.E.

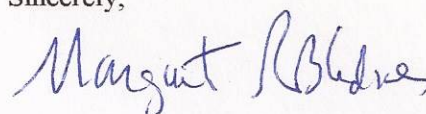
Page two

This data demonstrates that our school is making a difference in the lives of our students. Over the years, our children show improvement in behavior and in their academic outcomes. But these improvements are happening too slowly for all of them reach and exceed state averages by Grade 8, and leave our school with the skills they need to be successful in secondary school, college, and careers. It is not sufficient to have students developing the socio-emotional and academic skills they need in middle school – we need to show success in our work with children much earlier. What is required is more intensive work in early grades to provide the socio-emotional support that students need as well as the academic support to address skill deficits early. But we cannot do this work without help.

What is exciting about the State of Vermont, and about the St. Johnsbury community in particular, is that we are poised to make progress. As educational and governmental leaders, you know that genuine improvement can only be accomplished when there are strong leaders and committed professionals with the vision and energy to develop and implement solutions. I believe that Vermont has the blend of need, vision and skill to address the challenges that we have and that this grant will make a significant difference in the lives of the children of our state.

I consulted with our District staff working in early education before writing this letter, and also express their support for the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application. We believe that the range of policy initiatives and practical actions it describes will build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, and that it will allow communities like ours to concretely address the challenges we face in providing adequate service to the children of our state, particularly those with high needs. We express our commitment to use the support we would receive to work together to provide the students we serve with the best education possible, one that will prepare them for the challenges and possibilities of the world they will inhabit. We strongly urge you to fund the State of Vermont's application.

Sincerely,



Dr. Margaret R. Bledsoe
Superintendent, St. Johnsbury School District

"...supporting respectful, caring, lifelong learners..."



State of Vermont
 120 State Street
 Montpelier, VT 05620-2501
www.education.vermont.gov

[phone] 802-828-5101
 [fax] 802-828-3140

State Board of Education

October 3, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius:

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont State Board of Education is responsible for the establishment, evaluation and advancement of education policy for the State of Vermont. Its vision is to assure that every learner completes his/her education with the knowledge and skills necessary for future success. Goal Four of its Strategic Plan states: *PK -16 education partnerships facilitate improved student success, by strengthening kindergarten readiness, increasing student engagement and relevance in PK-12 education, and improving postsecondary aspiration, continuation and completion rates for all learners.* For 2013-14, a primary focus of the Board is elimination of the achievement gap through work with the legislature and appropriate organizations to provide access to universal early education by 2016. Through a unanimous motion at its September 17, 2013 meeting, the Vermont State Board of Education committed its support to the pursuit of the State's application for initial funding under the Race to the Top –Early Learning Challenge.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively



U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
October 3, 2013
Page 2

commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

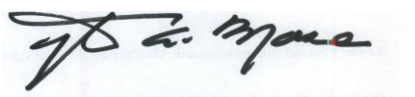
We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

The application proposes a number of strategies that build on and expand current priorities of the State Board of Education, including:

- Revision of and related dissemination and training for the Vermont Early Learning;
- Expansion of current efforts to create a comprehensive early learning assessment system that includes screening, formative assessment, assessment of adult-child interaction and assessment of program quality;
- Strengthening of the current kindergarten readiness assessment and retraining the field in the use of the new tool, as well as support for the work of a cross agency, cross sector group for the purpose of creating a document describing the assessment system, the various purposes and tools and how the information will be used;
- Scaling up and creating sustainable structures for tiered systems of supports for children from birth through grade three; and
- Strategies for incorporation of pre-K data into the State Longitudinal Data System being developed and creation of an interface between AOE and AHS data systems.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Stephan A. Morse
Chair, State Board of Education





Vermont Principals' Association

Two Prospect Street, Suite 3 Montpelier, VT 05602

Phone: 802 229-0547 Fax: 802 229-4801

<http://www.vpaonline.org>

Kenneth Page
Executive Director

Bob Johnson
Associate Executive Director

Dave Cobb
Development Director

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write in support of the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The members of the Vermont Principals' Association are committed to supporting improvements in our approach to early learning. As practitioners, we strongly believe in universal access to quality early education programs for all children in Vermont. Experience tells us that a strong start for every child is essential. This will be achieved only if the education system, the early childhood system, and the broader system of human services have a well-integrated, comprehensive approach to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application will be essential in helping us move forward toward that vision. It is thoughtful and rigorous and contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development of the services system for young children, particularly those with high needs.

The Vermont Principals' Association represents nearly 500 school administrators throughout Vermont. These professionals are Vermont's first line of educational leaders. Our members are invested in engaging every child and every family at the earliest opportunity possible in order to ensure a quality educational experience for all. Principals understand the long-term success of our students, their families, and our communities will depend on our success in the early childhood arena. We strongly urge you to fund this application.

For the Association,

Kenneth J. Page

Dean Stearns President – River Bend Technical Center
Patrick Burke, President-Elect – South Burlington High School
Supporting Learners and Leaders

Kenneth J. Page
Executive Director

dc



2 Prospect Street, Suite 5
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators (VCSEA) exists to build influence in education policy focused on instruction to improve outcomes for all students and, in particular, students with disabilities. Additionally, VCSEA also places a primary focus on public policy regarding special education finance, again with the goal of improving outcomes for students with disabilities. And finally the organization supports and offers professional development for its members and others in the educational community serving students with disabilities of all ages. We place a high priority on building the opportunities for young children to receive intensive and consistent services both to serve children in a timely and appropriate manner and to prevent the need for more intensive services when early intervention is absent or inadequate

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to

developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

VCSEA has advocated for high quality, intensive and consistent services for all students who are at risk for learning challenges and who have disabilities for over 30 years. VCSEA members are particularly attentive to the needs of young children. Early intervention is the most powerful prevention strategy we can use in decreasing the numbers of children who will be identified as having a disability later in their school experience. Additionally, we believe a strong community network of supports, including education, for young children is a powerful tool in mitigating the effects of economic disadvantage. Bringing strengthened interagency cooperation and collaboration to the services system for young children maximizes the wise use of available resources.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Jo-Anne Unruh

Jo-Anne Unruh, Ph.D., Executive Director

VERMONT

SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

.....

Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities

October 10, 2013

Officers

Ken Fredette
President
Wallingford

John Fike
1st Vice President
Reading

Emily Long
2nd Vice President
Leland & Gray UHS

Kalee Roberts
Past President
Hyde Park

Ken Swierad
Treasurer
Bennington

Clarence Haynes
Member-at-Large
Middletown Springs

Kim Gleason
Member-at-Large
Essex

Staff

Stephen Dale
Executive Director
sdale@vtvsba.org

Nicole Mace
Associate Director
Legal Services
nmace@vtvsba.org

Harry Frank
Associate Director
Board Development
hfrank@vtvsba.org

Kerri Lamb
Operations Manager
klamb@vtvsba.org

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write this letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

We at the Vermont School Boards Association are strongly committed to supporting improvements in our approach to early learning. Back in January, 2013, the VSBA, together with the Vermont Superintendents Association, issued an **Agenda for A World-Class Education** which outlined a blueprint for engaging every child and their family in accessing a great education. First and foremost, the **Agenda** calls for universal access to quality pre-K for all children in Vermont. We understand that a strong start for every child is essential, and will be achieved only if the education system, the early childhood system, and the broader system of human services have a well-integrated, comprehensive approach to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application will be essential in helping us move forward toward that vision. It is thoughtful and rigorous and contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development of the services system for young children, particularly those with high needs.

The Vermont School Boards Association represents nearly 300 local school boards in Vermont. These are the citizen boards which oversee our public school system. They are very concerned that we all be invested in engaging every child and every family before our children ever start kindergarten. The long-term success of our students, their families, and our communities will depend on our success in the early childhood arena. We strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely yours,



Stephen R. Dale, Executive Director

October 13, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Vermont-NEA represents 12,000 professionals dedicated to our public schools and most importantly, the students within the schools. We represent both teachers and support personnel in most every community in the state. Vermont-NEA believes that Vermont's public schools are our most important resource. We advocate for our public schools and the professionals who work there. Our focus is to ensure good working conditions which in turn will ensure good learning conditions for our students. We provide assistance to schools in many professional areas, work with teachers new to the profession, help to improve working conditions, and work in the legislature to assist our legislators as they move public education forward. Vermont-NEA's members care deeply for Vermont's children and will welcome support for our youngest Vermonters in preparation for their public school experience.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

We support our members as they work to provide their students with the best environment for learning by ensuring that their schools offer every opportunity for student growth. However, even the best school system is faced with serious challenges if our youngest students enter school under nourished and unprepared. Our members know what children need to learn to their best ability, and with appropriate care in the early years, these children thrive. The Early Learning Challenge funding will move all of Vermont toward identifying and meeting the needs of our youngest Vermonters, even in our most rural areas. We are encouraged by the possibilities this grant offers and look forward to working with the Governor's office to assist from the perspective of the professional educators in our public schools.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Martha Allen, President
Vermont-NEA



Vermont Superintendents Association

2 Prospect Street, Suite 2
E-mail: jfrancis@vtvsa.org

Montpelier, VT 05602

(802) 229-5834
(802) 229-4739 FAX

Jeffrey D. Francis, Executive Director

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

On behalf of the Vermont Superintendents Association, I am writing to express support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Superintendents Association has a record of long-standing support for improving approaches to early care and education. This support has been reflected in actions as leaders of Vermont's public education systems and through advocacy for improving the public policy network associated with the system of early care and education.

This year, the Vermont Superintendents Association joined the Vermont School Boards Association in developing and promoting our joint *Agenda for a World-Class Education in Vermont*. This agenda prioritizes early childhood education through a call for universal access to pre-k education and reflects the research and experience of educators and the recognition that the foundations created through effective care and education contribute to success of a child through her lifetime.

The Vermont Superintendents Association believes that Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. The application contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

The Vermont Superintendents Association is the professional association of Vermont's superintendents and assistant superintendents. Our commitment to educational opportunity, high levels of achievement and efficiency and cost-effectiveness provides the underpinnings of our enthusiastic support for Vermont's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application. It is in that spirit that we urge you to fund the Vermont application.

Thank you very much for your consideration of the Vermont application.

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey Francis, Executive Director
Vermont Superintendents Association



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

As the Mayor of the largest City in the State of Vermont, I see both the incredible resources Vermonters have committed to our youngest residents and the great challenges that we face in trying to meet a growing constellation of needs. For a small, relatively prosperous and livable City, Burlington has substantial poverty challenges; 25% of our citizens live below the poverty line, and many have done so for generations. 51% of our families with school-age children qualify for free or reduced-price meals, compared to 40% around the State. Over the last decades, Burlington and our neighboring City Winooski have become the new home to a growing number of refugees from around the world, many from central and eastern Africa, Bhutan and Nepal, the Middle East, Bosnia and Vietnam. While situated in the whitest State in the union, approximately 30% of children enrolled in our schools are students of color (compared to 8% Statewide) and at least 56 languages are spoken on our campuses (14% of our students receive English Language Learning services compared to 2% across the State).*

Growth of our child population in Burlington creates both incredible opportunity and unique needs in our community. The Superintendent of Burlington Schools recently shared with me that since school began on August 28th, 70 new students have moved into our district. 20 of them are enrolled in pre-K classrooms (3-5 years old). We anticipate the number of children ages 0-3 to be rising at a similar rate.

I believe the City of Burlington, in concert with the State of Vermont and in partnership with the private sector, must step forward to meet these unique needs. We can do better for our children. My Administration is committed to developing a comprehensive system of support for all of Burlington's children, coordinating existing services and filling needs

that are going unmet. The best place to start is with our youngest citizens, which is why I am actively pursuing an initiative that will ensure universal access to high quality early education for every child in the City. The moral imperative is there, the interest and energy exist in our City and State, and the economic return on investment is a compelling mandate to focus our energies and resources. As Governor Peter Shumlin said in his Second Inaugural Address, "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

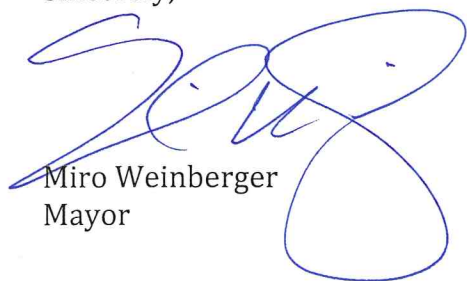
I applaud Governor Shumlin's enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly our children with high needs who often face a range of obstacles to success. Like the Governor, I believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life, she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services.

I believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which we can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

Burlington is a City with a long history of forward-thinking initiatives in a State that has a deep commitment to supporting its citizens. With local, State and federal leaders in alignment on the importance of supporting early learning opportunities, we will be in an excellent position to leverage private funds and put tax dollars to work to make good on our promises to each child in Vermont.

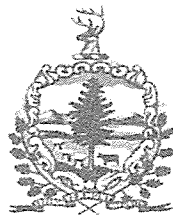
For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Miro Weinberger
Mayor

*Data from 12/1/11; source is Burlington School District Annual Report, 2011-12



**STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Sebelius and Duncan,

I am pleased to write this letter of support for Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.

As Pro Tem of the Vermont Senate and a member of the Senate for the past twelve years, I know first-hand the importance of an independent, equal, and flexible educational system. To that end, Vermont has been a leader in education reform, including the passage of our education fair funding bill, Act 60, many years ago. With that innovative law, we created the most fair funding mechanism for paying for education in the country while ensuring our children have one of the best public educations in the nation.

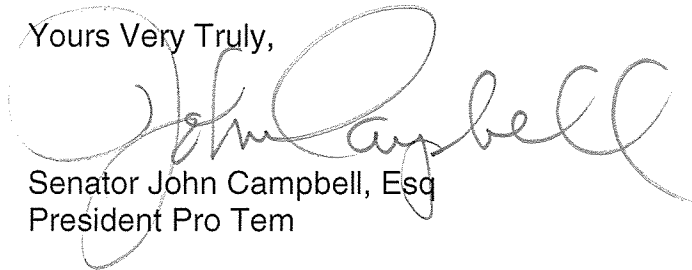
We are also committed to early learning. Research shows that early learning, particularly for children with high needs, is the place where the magic happens – not just for academic achievement but also in cost savings. It is a win-win for everyone. We grow a more confident, well-adjusted, and productive citizenry while saving tax-payer dollars in the long term.

In the Vermont Senate, we have learned over the past ten years from advocates, citizens, our state education agency, school boards, parents, and teachers that education is a whole-state investment – this includes families, schools, communities, business, nonprofits, and the children themselves. We need our kids to show up ready to excel and we need the whole community's support in ensuring that our children are healthy, safe, at optimal development and have access to developmentally beneficial early learning programs and services.

After a review of the grant, I am delighted with the thoughtfulness and rigor of Vermont's application. It contains a range of initiatives and actions that will build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering highly-effective early learning and development programs while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can improve. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs. With award of this grant, we will be able to take Vermont's early learning commitment to the next level. We urge you to fund this application.

Thank you for the opportunity to share in your grant process. Vermont is an innovative and inventive state and if awarded this grant, we will exceed your expectations at every measure.

Yours Very Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Campbell" clearly legible. It is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Senator John Campbell, Esq
President Pro Tem



**STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
115 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05633-5201

Date: October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont House and its Education Committee are dedicated to addressing the educational needs of young Vermonters, and we believe that a vibrant and robust early childhood education is essential to the academic success of the state's children. However, many potential improvements could be made with greater investment and more flexibility. Thus, we believe Initial Funding under the Race to the Top program would vastly improve Vermont's early childhood learning infrastructure.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

If awarded funding, the Vermont House and its Education Committee would work to provide early childhood learning programs to the more impoverished areas of the state, as these are the places where early learning is most lacking. Emphasis will be placed on family and local community involvement in the development of these programs, though adherence to a common standard will be stressed, in order to help ensure that a child's early education is not dependent on where they live.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shap Smith', with a stylized, cursive script.

Representative Shap Smith
Speaker of the House of Representatives

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to support the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge. As a member of Vermont's House Education Committee, I've worked extensively on the issues this grant aims to support. I applaud the federal government's emphasis on promoting greater access to affordable early learning opportunities, data driven decision-making, and an integrated, cross-system approach to specialized services.

Vermont's small size allows us to be nimble in the way we collaborate and administer services. To our credit, policymakers and stakeholders are accustomed to approaching challenges with open minds, broad perspectives, and deference to expert practitioners. This permits us to make informed adaptations to our policies, helping us meet our goals faster more successfully. We can be—and often are—the "laboratory" for new approaches to early childhood care and education, helping to meet the needs of children and families more effectively and providing useful data and assessments that other states may consider.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent second inaugural address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

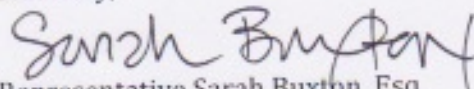
Along with our Governor, I believe that for a child to arrive at school able to succeed in education and in life, he or she must be healthy, emotional secure, socially competent, and able to foster strong curiosity and driving persistence. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

I believe that Vermont's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

As the lead sponsor H.270, a bill to provide universal access to publicly funded prekindergarten education for all three and four year-olds, I am particularly driven to ensure that children from rural areas, low family incomes, or less affluent communities are provided with equal access to early, high-quality experiences and the opportunity to succeed as their more privileged peers.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sarah Buxton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Buxton".

Representative Sarah Buxton, Esq.
Windsor-Orange 1
House Education Committee, Clerk

Fostering responsible and ethical civic leadership, encouraging public service by private citizens, and promoting informed citizen participation in shaping public policy in Vermont.



October 12, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Snelling Center for Government is a non-profit, non-partisan corporation established in 1992.

The mission of the Snelling Center is to foster responsible and ethical civic leadership, encourage public service by private citizens, and promote informed citizen participation in shaping public policy in Vermont.

We work to fulfill our mission by:

- Offering the premier leadership development programs in Vermont.
- Engaging the public in issues of strategic importance to Vermont.
- Consulting on projects to make government and government programs more effective.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing.

We believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PETER MALLARY, CHAIR

JOHN W. EVERITT

BOB MASON

MEG H. O'DONNELL

HAL COLSTON

LAINE DUNHAM

JUNE HESTON

NED KIRSCH

BILL SAYRE

DIANE B. SNELLING

LUKE B. SNELLING

MARK H. SNELLING

KATHY SOULIA

DIRECTORS EMERITUS

STEPHAN A. MORSE

THE HON. THOMAS P. SALMON

STEPHEN C. TERRY

MARK H. SNELLING
PRESIDENT

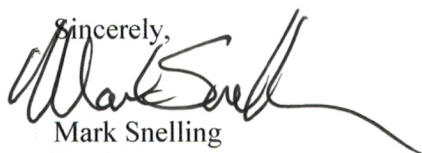
We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous.

We believe it is important to build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children.

We are hopeful, that should this application be funded, The Snelling Center for Government will be a part of bringing together stakeholders from all across Vermont to exchange ideas and work to develop the most comprehensive and effective early childhood programs in America.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Mark Snelling
President



Stern Center

for Language and Learning

President

Blanche Podhajski, Ph.D.

Board of Directors

Eve Pratt Hoar, Chair
Jennifer Cabill Bean
Will Billings
Leslie Watson Botjer
Christopher R. Gannon
Ruthann Hackett
Katie D. Halsey
Cynthia K. Hoehl, D.H.L.
Elaine Ittleman
Ellie Kenworthy, M.Ed.
G.Reid Lyon, Ph.D.
Justin Molson
Blanche Podhajski, Ph.D.
Maureen Post
Stephen Richards
Deborah S. Schapiro
Judith Shaw, R.N., M.P.H., Ed.D.
Carol Stone

Honorary Board of Directors

Bernice Stern, Chair
Eugene Cenci
Governor Howard Dean, M.D.
Governor James H. Douglas
Lewis R. First, M.D.
Sarah Gray Gund
John M. Hoehl
Senator James Jeffords
Arthur Kreizel
Governor Madeleine Kunin
Senator Patrick Leahy
Joan Martin
Eugene E. Richards III
Governor Peter Shumlin
Ann L. Smallwood
Senator Barbara Snelling
Peter Stern, M.D.
David Stifler, M.D.
Barry Stone
Elizabeth Wallman

October 9, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius:

On behalf of the Stern Center's Board, staff, and most of all, our students, we are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Stern Center for Language and Learning is a 30 year old nonprofit organization dedicated to helping all kinds of learners reach their full potential. Our three fold mission of direct services, professional learning and research complements educational programs offered in Vermont's public schools. The Stern Center staff sees over 800 children and provides professional learning to over one thousand educators yearly. Sixty per cent of these youngsters are experiencing learning disabilities and many of the teachers/providers are underprepared to meet the needs of these complex learners.

We are fortunate to have a Governor, Peter Shumlin, who has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. He not only talks the talk, he walks the walk. Governor Shumlin freely shares his early challenges as a child with dyslexia, inspiring hundreds of young Vermonters who have similar struggles learning to read. He is also passionate about the importance of beginning education early. He was among the first to confirm the importance of the Vermont Blueprint to Close the Achievement Gap and we are making steady strides for our youngest learners. He has advised Vermonters that investments in early childhood education are wise and economically sound.

Since 1995, the Stern Center has received over two million dollars in private foundation grants which we have given back to public schools and childcare centers to advance knowledge about research based best practices. BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY®, our professional learning program to help prepare all children to enter Kindergarten ready to read, has research evidence to show that not only do children do better when their providers take BUILDING BLOCKS, but those in the lowest 20th percentile, our vulnerable youngsters including children of poverty, increase their abilities from below to above an at risk level. The science of early education, to which we are proud to have contributed, is overwhelming and must be translated to practice.

Despite this powerful research explosion of the past several decades which explicates what is possible for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's

BECAUSE ALL GREAT MINDS DON'T THINK ALIKE

183 Talcott Road, Suite 101, Williston, VT 05495-9209 | Phone 802-878-2332, 800-544-4863 | Fax 802-878-0230
1 Oak Ridge, Building 1, Suite 3, West Lebanon, NH 03874 | Fax 603-653-5606

learning@sterncenter.org | www.sterncenter.org





Stern Center

for Language and Learning

safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success. We have the leadership and talent in Vermont to apply science through developmental best practices and professional learning. In addition, the teamwork among state agencies is strong so that children's health, education, social competence and emotional well-being can be addressed collaboratively.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is a rigorous presentation of rural opportunity. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's unique strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do even better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

I strongly encourage you to support this application and help Vermont become a model for excellence in early learning for all children. Please feel free to contact me if I can provide further information or answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Blanche Podhajski, Ph.D.
President and Founder
Clinical Associate Professor of Neurological Sciences
University of Vermont College of Medicine



The University of Vermont

October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

We have reviewed Vermont's application and agree that the strategies they have identified are the cornerstones of an effective and comprehensive reform agenda aimed at improving Early Childhood Education in Vermont. The reform areas where we see our expertise being most useful to this initiative are *Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children*, *Supporting a Great Early Childhood Education Workforce*, and *Measuring Outcomes and Progress*. We have faculty expertise that can help with creating assessments to address behavioral health needs and inform families. We can also support professional development and mentoring to teachers in the field through our existing high quality programs in early childhood and early childhood special education. Because our faculty has significant expertise in high quality interdisciplinary research, we can also collaborate in the development of research designed to measure integrated outcomes and progress. We are eager to lend our expertise and experience to help implement the state plan.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at school ready to succeed in school and in life she requires emotional health and well-being, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that this potential for all children is only realized when families,

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Office of the Dean, 309 Waterman Building, 85 South Prospect Street, Burlington, VT 05405-0160

(802) 656-3424 • fax: (802) 656-0855

<http://www.uvm.edu/~cess/>

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is especially true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives, practical actions, and solutions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can significantly improve. The successful funding of this application is vital to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

Under the leadership of Governor Shumlin, Vermont is well positioned politically, structurally, and culturally to effectively leverage and utilize the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant to significantly improve Early Childhood education in Vermont. The Governor, State Legislature, the VT Agency for Education, Early Childhood leaders and educators in Vermont, and the voting public have shown a strong commitment to early childhood education. The strong alignment of these constituents means that the potential for reform in Vermont is great. For us personally, this grant will be beneficial to our faculty and students as it will allow them to be involved in a substantive state-wide reform initiative designed to impact the lives of children and families in Vermont. The benefits of this work for us will extend far beyond the boundaries of the University of Vermont since the improvement of Early Childhood education has far-reaching benefits to the economy, educational system, and the lives of families and communities in Vermont.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fayneese Miller".

Fayneese Miller, PhD
Dean

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

575 STONE CUTTERS WAY

PO Box 7

MONTPELIER VT 05601

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT

JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE

LYNDON STATE COLLEGE

VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

October 4, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont State College system is composed of five unique institutions, Castleton, Lyndon, the Community College of Vermont, Vermont Technical College and Johnson State College. Collectively, those colleges educate more than sixty-percent of the Vermont students who continue on to college. Vermont students make up eighty-four percent of our enrollment, and 55% are first generation students. Given that student profile, we are keenly conscious of the value of early learning and the stage it sets for a successful future. We wholeheartedly support this application and effort.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early

learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant will have significant impacts on the Vermont State College system and each colleges' ability to support the educational workforce. Implementation of TEACH, as proposed in the grant application, would provide significant funding for increased access to higher education coursework for early educators. The ability to pursue college coursework and earn degrees while working in the field will strengthen the early education workforce by increasing the accessibility of advanced degree programs. The grant will also enable Vermont to clearly identify gaps in educational pathways for early education teachers, particularly from AA to BA and how the VSC system can help address them. Finally, and perhaps most importantly in the age of data driven policy, RTT funding would create a more thorough data system enabling the colleges to access information concerning the early childhood workforce, their completed education, employment and professional development activities and analyze needs, plan responses, implement changes, and monitor the results over time.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

On behalf of the presidents of the five state colleges, I strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Donovan', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Tim Donovan
Chancellor
Vermont State Colleges



October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius:

We are pleased to offer our strong support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Vermont Center for the Book shares Governor Shumlin's commitment to the importance of early education and our mission complements and supports the goals of this application. Since 1989 VCB has worked closely with the Vermont Agency of Human Services and the Vermont Agency of Education and their efforts to coordinate early education in communities around the state and to promote school readiness. Specifically, VCB has worked to improve the professional development of the child-care workforce, to extend learning into the home, to support literacy and language development in the early grades, and to promote cooperative relationships among the many agencies and programs providing services to children and families. This has been accomplished through our standards-based *Mother Goose Cares* courses for early educators and our *Mother Goose Programs* for families.

Vermont's ongoing commitment to ensuring that all children arrive at school healthy and able to learn and achieve success is commendable. We know that according to research, a myriad of factors contribute to school success and we know that families and communities are integral to the process. We have carefully reviewed this application and we believe it is thorough and achievable, containing a variety of policy measures and realistic strategies that not only build on existing successful frameworks but frankly address areas for improvement. The funding of this application is critical to Vermont children, especially children with high needs.



Funding will also reinforce the goal of VCB's programs addressing early childhood education from birth to Kindergarten, which is: to improve the quality of early education in Vermont by increasing the competence of early childhood educators, by expanding their ability to intentionally incorporate the language, concepts and skills of literacy, science, math and social studies into their daily interactions with children and by fostering communication between and among early educators and the families with whom they work.

We are pleased to be a part of Vermont's long-standing commitment to state and local partnerships, ensuring that policy and practice is informed and guided by what is happening in local Vermont communities. VCB is an enthusiastic partner whose interests and investments in early learning and development complement and support the goals of this application.

We strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sally Anderson", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Sally Anderson
Executive Director



VERMONT DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

October 9, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Division of Early Childhood (VTDEC) is a subdivision of the International Division of Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Our membership includes early educators and advocates who promote policies and practices to support the development of young children with disabilities and special needs. This funding will support greater evidenced based inclusion practices to allow optimal development of all Vermont children. We believe that every Vermont child within our diverse economic areas deserves the same opportunity for success.

Vermont has consistently demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing as we embrace the Common Core State Standards and promote programs to enhance all children's development. Our taxpayers support their local school boards who try to be efficient in providing quality education for all. However, school budget increases are prevalent; often a result of the spiraling cost of special education services. An increasing number of children are requiring services due to social, emotional, and cognitive developmental delays that we know can be prevented with an investment in early childhood education. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have."

Along with Vermont's Governor, VTDEC believes that for a child to arrive at the schoolhouse door ready to succeed in school and in life he/she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, schools, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and

services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

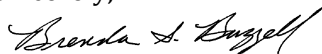
We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

This funding will allow for professional development that supports early care and education providers, early educators, communities and families to understand and learn strategies to help all children become successful through appropriate scaffolded interventions and inclusion practices. This grant will help our children with high needs receive well coordinated early intervention that will allow them to enter kindergarten ready to learn and as research demonstrates, allow special education recommendations to decrease.

Vermont has selected a common early assessment program, Teaching Strategies Gold (TS GOLD), which uses formative assessment to observe children's learning and recognize areas that need targeted intervention. Training more early care and education providers and educators though grade three in deeper knowledge of TS Gold will allow for a common language among all adults to recognize necessary intervention for children with high needs who struggle to develop skills. Our state's implementation of Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) will assist early care and education providers and teachers to deliver explicit instruction to build these foundational skills. Vermont has developed early learning standards aligned with both the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Common Core State Standards and through legislative action is striving towards universal Pre-K. Achieving validity and reliability in our kindergarten readiness survey will allow all children to achieve optimal development in their early learning opportunities. Funding will support all of these efforts, while advancing the workforce to help children with high needs receive early intervention and inclusion to support their development. Research has demonstrated that gaps can be closed and evidenced -based inclusion practices do support all children to reach their optimal development.

For all of these reasons, the members of VTDEC strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Brenda Buzzell, M.Ed.

President, Vermont Subdivision of Early Childhood (VTDEC)
of the International Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children



St. Joseph's 7, UHC Campus, 1 South Prospect Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401
802 656 8210 TEL 802 656 8368 FAX

www.vchip.org

October 10, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) of the University of Vermont is a research and quality improvement program whose mission is to optimize the health of Vermont children and families by initiating and supporting measurement-based efforts to enhance public and private child health practice. Since its inception in 1999, VCHIP has focused on improving the health of Vermont's children and families by conducting research and evaluation studies and quality improvement projects on a variety of topics (e.g. developmental and autism screening, preventive health services, prenatal care, asthma, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, immunizations, adolescent substance abuse). VCHIP works in partnership with Vermont's Agency of Human Services to improve service delivery so that systems are in place to ensure children are healthy and ready to learn and that children and families can thrive in their communities. With this intimate knowledge of Vermont's current systems and drive towards improvement, particularly in the area of early care and education, Vermont is perfectly poised to make tremendous strides forward to strengthen early learning systems with support from the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly Medicaid-eligible children and others with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success. Simply stated, we believe that kindergarten readiness is a health outcome.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which

Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs. Page 119

Further, the Race to the Top grant will enhance VCHIP's ongoing work to promote early identification of developmental concerns and linkages to appropriate health, education, and family-support services. VCHIP, in partnership with the Vermont Department of Health, Building Bright Futures, and community partners is currently working to define a universal system for early developmental screening across service providers (i.e. health, early care and education, and referral partners). This has been a core concept imbedded in Vermont's use of our Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding. This goal is also reflected in our work funded through SAMHSA's Project LAUNCH, with a specific focus on developing the system within Chittenden County, Vermont's most populous and diverse county, with the intent of this multidisciplinary workgroup to ensure the system is replicable in all areas of the state. Once finalized, VCHIP will provide training, technical assistance, and quality improvement coaching to support implementation of the system for universal developmental screening in primary care and early care and education settings over the next four years. The policies and programs identified through Race to the Top could ensure broad and deep dissemination of these systems changes and help ensure all children have the brightest future possible.

We are excited about the prospect of strengthening Vermont's systems to support early care and education through Race to the Top in order to promote early child wellness and learning and help build protective factors for all families but especially those families facing significant risk factors. Together we share a vision for the improved wellness of our young children and their families. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Shaw". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith Shaw, EdD, MPH, RN, FAAP
Executive Director



Vermont Chapter

Vermont Chapter

PO Box 1457
Montpelier, VT 05601
Phone: 802-223-7898
Fax: 802-223-1201
Web: www.aapvt.org

Chapter President

Barbara Frankowski, MD, FAAP
University Pediatrics
1 South Prospect Street
Burlington, VT 05401
802-847-4696
barbara.frankowski@vtmednet.org

Chapter Vice President

Jill Rinehart, MD, FAAP
Hagan & Rinehart Pediatrics
410 Shelburne Road
So. Burlington, VT 05403
802-860-1928
Jill Rinehart
doctorjillrinehart@comcast.net

Chapter Secretary-Treasurer

Michael Kilcullen, MD, FAAP
32 Pleasant Street
Woodstock, VT 05091
802-457-5001
Michael.Kilcullen@mahhc.org

Chapter Executive Board

Kim Aakre, MD, FAAP
Kristen Connolly, MD
Stephen Contompasis, MD, FAAP
Wendy S. Davis, MD, FAAP
Monica Fiorenza, MD, FAAP
Mark Harris, MD, FAAP
Breena Holmes, MD, FAAP
Beth Jillson, MD, FAAP
Michael Kilcullen, MD, FAAP
Jerry Larabee, M.D., FAAP
Laura Murphy, MD, FAAP
Joseph Nasca, MD, FAAP
Karyn Patno, MD, FAAP
Valerie Rooney, MD, FAAP

Immediate Past President

Louis A. DiNicola, MD, FAAP
Gifford Medical Center
44 South Main Street
PO Box 2000
Randolph, VT 05060
802-728-2423
LdiNicola@giffordmed.org

Executive Director

Stephanie Winters
134 Main Street
PO Box 1457
Montpelier, VT 05601
802-223-7898
swinters@vtmd.org

October 9, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius:

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

As the President of the Vermont Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I can speak for our members, the majority of the pediatricians of Vermont. We are dedicated to do the best we can to keep our state's youngest and most vulnerable safe and healthy so they are ready to thrive in a learning environment. We can keep these children safe from infections with immunizations, we can counsel parents about good nutrition and physical activity for their children, how to keep them safe from environmental hazards, and give them advice on parenting and discipline. We know parents love their children and want to do their best, but too often poverty, trauma, and lack of parental experience interfere with the physical and mental health of their children, and limit their ability to learn.

With this grant, we hope to see opportunities for better physical and emotional health, and increased opportunities for early learning for our young patients that the pediatricians of the Vermont Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics care so much about. We especially see this as an essential benefit for our neediest children: those increasing numbers born to mothers who struggle with substance abuse, depression, and trauma, as well as children born into our New American families, who struggle with poverty and language barriers. Don't all these children deserve an equal chance to start Kindergarten happy, healthy, and ready to learn? This can lead not only to success in school, but success in life.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Barbara L. Frankowski, MD, MPH, FAAP
President



**VERMONT
BUSINESSES
FOR SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY**

**RESEARCH &
EDUCATION FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

JEFFREY HOLLENDER
JEFFREY HOLLENDER PARTNERS

ALLISON HOOPER
VERMONT BUTTER & CHEESE

DON MAYER
SMALL DOG ELECTRONICS

MATHEW RUBIN
VERMONT INDEPENDENT POWER
PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

**VBSR
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

LAWRENCE K. BARBER
MERRILL LYNCH GLOBAL WEALTH
MANAGEMENT

RUSS BENNETT
NORTHLAND DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION, INC.

DAVID BLITTERSDORF
ALLEARTH RENEWABLES

GEOFF BROWN
THE VERMONT COUNTRY STORE

YOLA CARLOUGH
B LAB

MARK CURRAN
BLACK RIVER PRODUCE

BRIAN DUNKIEL
DUNKIEL SAUNDERS ELLIOTT RAUBVOGEL &
HAND

DAVID EPSTEIN
TRUEXCULLINS ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

PAT HEFFERNAN
MARKETING PARTNERS, INC.

JULIE LINEBERGER
LINE SYNC ARCHITECTURE

DON MAYER
SMALL DOG ELECTRONICS

CHRIS MILLER
BEN & JERRY'S

STEPHEN MORRIS
GREEN LIVING JOURNAL

SARA NEWMARK
NEW CHAPTER

JOHN NORTON
NRG SYSTEMS, INC.

LESLIE NULTY
FOCAL POINT ADVISORY SERVICES

JACOB PARK
GREEN MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

AVRAM PATT
WASHINGTON ELECTRIC COOP

MARKEY READ
CAREER NETWORKS

BETH SACHS
VERMONT ENERGY INVESTMENT CORP.

October 9, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) is a statewide business association with 1,200 members representing a diversity of business types and business sizes in every region of the state. For over 20 years VBSR has been working hard to ensure we are creating healthy and vibrant communities and people and have recently identified quality early childhood education as one of our top policy priorities. VBSR is a willing and active partner towards achieving this goal.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Andrea Cohen, Executive Director
Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

255 SOUTH CHAMPLAIN ST, SUITE 11, BURLINGTON, VT 05401 **PHONE:** (802) 862-8347

E-MAIL: INFO@VBSR.ORG **WEB:** WWW.VBSR.ORG

Printed on chlorine-free paper made from 100% post-consumer fibers.

October 7, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Business Roundtable has been engaged in promoting early childhood investments in high quality programs for nearly a decade. We have supported access and funding for evidence-based home visiting and pre-k through advocacy and policy development.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

Our work with convening the Vermont Home Visiting Alliance will be greatly advanced if the grant is successful, with the funding for implementation of a data system to track the funding, process and outcomes. We applaud the state's vision in building in support for accountability into this grant application.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa".

Lisa Ventriss, President
Vermont Business Roundtable

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Barrosse Schwartz".

Mary Barrosse Schwartz, Executive Director
VBR Research and Education Foundation
(And coordinator for the Vermont Home Visiting Alliance)

The A.D. Henderson Foundation, Inc.

September 27, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

The A.D. Henderson Foundation is pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

In the summer of 2012, the A.D. Henderson Foundation Board of Directors underwent an intentional process to determine how it could make the greatest impact with its grantmaking dollars. The Board of Directors decided it wanted to focus on our youngest children and to increase the proportion of its grant making in Vermont because Vermont is a place where you can have an impact and get things done.

In the A.D. Henderson Foundation's first year since resetting priorities, the Foundation made just shy of \$1 million in grants for early care and education in Vermont. Major initiatives include the Vermont Birth To Three Project, to support home based childcare providers to be a resource for young children and their families; the Vermont Community Preschool Collaborative to create high quality public/private preschool partnerships on the way to universal access to preschool; Start with the Arts to train home based childcare providers on art and literacy activities, a grant to the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VAEYC) to mentor center based programs to improve their quality, and a grant to Building Bright Futures and the Vermont Agency of Education to validate and improve the Kindergarten Readiness Survey.

Why does the Foundation do this? We're fairly certain there isn't a parent in the State of Vermont that doesn't want their child ready to learn when they enter Kindergarten. The brain research that tell us the earliest years are most important for brain development. We estimate over 70% of the children in Vermont are in the care of someone other than their parents because their parents are working. The experience those children have in that childcare setting is vitally important to their success.

When Governor Shumlin came into office, his administration came to us and our philanthropic partners on the preschool project and essentially asked us "how can we get this done?" We already have strong collaborative partnerships among the philanthropic sector, and it was a welcome breath of fresh air to have the Governor's administration join in our efforts. We are excited about the potential for the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge grant. I have watched scores of my colleagues diligently working on the RTTT proposal and am continually impressed by the cohesion of Vermont's early childhood lead organizations in our efforts to build strong families, high quality childcare, community based responses, and accountable systems as we make sure the promise of every Vermont child is fulfilled.

Sincerely,



Eddie Gale

Program Director



U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., LBJ Basement Level 1
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

October 9, 2013

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Permanent Fund for Vermont's Children has a mission "to promote healthy happy children and families in Vermont through the support of community based prevention strategies". We work closely with the State of Vermont and this grant would greatly enhance our work.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

This grant would help Vermont develop sustainable systems within the early childhood sector from which we could support best practices. Just one example is Vermont's STARS quality rating system. A strengthened STARS would play an important role in our goal to transform the child care system where affordable, high quality care that supports both the parents and the child becomes the norm.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,


 Derrick Davis, President

The Permanent Fund for Vermont's Children

3 Court Street • PO Box 30 • Middlebury, Vermont 05753 • 802-498-5157 • Fax: 802-388-3398
info@permanentfund.org • www.permanentfund.org

TURRELL FUND*A Foundation Serving Children*

21 Van Vleck Street
 Montclair, NJ 07042-2358

www.turrellfund.org
 turrell@turrellfund.org
 Voice: 973-783-9358
 Fax: 973-783-9283

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

September 28, 2013

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased and honored to have been asked to write a letter in support of the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Turrell Fund is a Family Foundation that was established in 1935 to support organizations which directly provide for or foster the creation and delivery of quality developmental and educational services to at risk children, especially the youngest, and their families. Our funding is targeted to Vermont and designated areas of New Jersey. In addition to funding direct services, we also support well structured advocacy, policy and systems change initiatives. This includes organizations for which advocacy is a component of their work and agencies for which it is the primary mission. The Turrell Fund has a keen interest in the success of Vermont's RTTT-Early Learning Challenge application as its focus and approach for assuring the overall well being and academic success of Vermont's youngest and most at risk children is aligned perfectly with our mission. If funded, it would significantly increase the collective impact we can together have on the long term well being of Vermont's most vulnerable young children and their families.

Vermont is known for its demonstrated strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing as the educational, social and economic benefits are well documented. As Governor Peter Shumlin stated in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming; the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We find the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application to be thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that

we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

The Turrell Fund is currently funding a range of direct services and system development efforts in Vermont to assure access to services for all young children and their families, including the most at risk, and to address the ongoing sustainability of a high quality early childhood system for the State. These efforts include funding to enhance the quality of infant/toddler care; to expand access to universal preschool services; to address early literacy through our Libraries as Centers of Excellence project being carried out in conjunction with the State Department of Libraries and the Vermont Center for the Book; to improve the quality of early childhood services through ongoing professional development opportunities; and to increase public support for investments in early childhood services by our support for the Vermont Early Childhood Alliance and our involvement in a collaborative public engagement campaign. All of these efforts complement and support the outcomes and goals outlined as priority areas in Vermont's RTTT-ELC application. Turrell's overall funding capability in Vermont is limited. In order to maximize the impact and benefit of the services and projects we support, we work collaboratively with other private funders and our State partners. Funding of this application will exponentially increase our ability to support our youngest and most at risk children and their families and to have the ongoing capacity to collect the necessary data to document child and system progress to know we are making a difference.

For these reasons, we strongly support Vermont's application and urge you to fund it.

Sincerely,



Curtland Fields
President/CEO
Turrell Fund



Kimberly Keiser
Vermont Project Director
Turrell Fund

— VERMONT —
CHILDREN'S
TRUST
— FOUNDATION —

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

October 4, 2013

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

The Vermont Children's Trust Foundation (VCTF) is pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

VCTF is a foundation that raises private money to augment public funding in the State's Trust Fund for children's prevention programming. Each year, we fund on average over 85 programs that give Vermont children opportunities that lead to success in school and in life. Programs like mentoring initiatives, preschools, after school programs, teen centers, substance abuse prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, literacy and parenting education. Every year, we have to say no to qualified programs because there are insufficient funds in the Trust. We believe the Vermont Race to the Top funds will help raise all boats.

One of VCTF's measured outcomes for grantees is that children are ready for and succeed in school. Like our Governor, we know from experience and from scientific evidence the only way to ensure a positive outcome is to have all constituents -- families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers -- working in concert to assure children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. We know every child has potential, yet not every one is presented the opportunity to maximize that potential.

Money from RTT – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Linda Allen & Fagan Hart
Co-executive Directors

Our mission is to
promote the well-being
of children and
families in Vermont
by raising funds
for community-based
prevention programs.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Amanda Ahmadi, Esq.
William Allen
Michele Asch
Tony Blake
Rhonda Forcier
Carol Huntington
Timothy Ross
John Scheer, CPA
Matthew Walker
Jennifer Whalen

EMERITUS BOARD MEMBERS

Brenda Bean
Sandy First
Mary Jane Gentry
Lynne von Trapp

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS

Governor Howard Dean
Governor James H. Douglas
Governor Peter Shumlin
Lewis First, MD
Joan Hoff
Senator James Jeffords
Senator Patrick Leahy
Senator Bernard Sanders
Representative Peter Welch
Jerold Lucey, MD
Katharine Montstream
Barbara Snelling

FOUNDING BENEFACTORS

Faith Bieler
James & Pamela Chiasson
Stokes & Mary Jane Gentry
Jack Lancaster
Elizabeth Steele
Turtle Fur Co.
Johannes & Lynne von Trapp
Joe & Marcia Welch
Gertrude J. Winde Memorial
Brenda Ross Winter

95 St. Paul Street, Suite 330
Burlington, VT 05401
ph: 802.951.8604
fx: 802.951.8605
888.475.KIDS
www.vtchildrenstrust.org



U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

September 30, 2013

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to write this letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Community Foundation is a statewide grantmaking organization that provides over \$12 million in grants annually across a breadth of issues. We offer individuals, businesses, and organizations the opportunity to open charitable funds with us and we invest and manage those funds for them. We also provide advice on how to have the most impact with their grantmaking.

For 27 years we have made significant contributions towards early childhood and ensuring that every Vermont child has the opportunity to thrive. For more than a decade, one of our component funds, the Permanent Fund for Vermont's Children has played a significant role in increasing access to quality preschool programs for Vermont's children and more recently has led the charge to increase quality care for children aged birth to three.

The Permanent Fund, in conjunction with other philanthropic partners has forged strong partnerships with the state, including Governor Shumlin, around this shared commitment for Vermont's youngest, particularly children with high needs. Together, they have made significant progress in increasing opportunities for strong early development and have brought Vermont to the tipping point in building an early care system that truly reaches and serves all children and provides them with every opportunity to succeed. When I'm asked by our fundholders who want to really have impact and move the needle on an issue what they should give to, I point to this work.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

From the vantage point of a philanthropic entity there are two unique opportunities here. First, funding this application is an opportunity to truly create a sustainable system across an entire state population. I imagine it's not often that this grant amount could make a

difference with that depth across one whole state. Secondly, never before in my work in the foundation world have I seen such an effective model of philanthropy that is actually making this kind of difference. One big reason for that is the collective impact model that has been used from the beginning bringing all stakeholders, public and private, to the table and identifying the solutions together and with the input and guidance of those on the ground doing the work. Everyone is vested in this solution. It has more chance of succeeding than anything I've seen before and we have begun to model some of our other philanthropic initiatives after this work.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jen Peterson", with a stylized, flowing script.

Jen Peterson
Vice President for Program and Grants
Vermont Community Foundation

October 7, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Community Loan Fund creates opportunities that lead to healthy communities and financial stability for all Vermonters. We provide loans, grants and supporting services for child care providers and community organizations. The Vermont Community Loan Fund believes that early education provides an essential foundation for our children's growth and development. We also understand that a parent's ability to find quality care is an essential piece of their ability to find and hold onto the job that supports their growing family.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

The successful funding of this application will lead to healthy communities and a more stable financial picture for Vermont's youngest population. The funding will be an asset to parents, providers and communities resulting in an assurance of quality, sustainable care and education for the children of Vermont.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Hope L. Campbell
Director, Child Care Programs
Vermont Community Loan Fund

V E R M O N T

EARLY CHILDHOOD ALLIANCE

Tuesday October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We are pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Early Childhood Alliance is a statewide advocacy coalition comprised of individuals, organizations, associations, networks, businesses and agencies from the private and public sectors dedicated to improving the early childhood experience in the areas of learning, safety, health, and food and economic security. Our supporters consist of providers working directly with children and families as well as systems thinkers, working to improve and build on the successes we have experienced in Vermont.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. This commitment is ongoing. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Vermont's Governor, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We would like to underscore that the Alliance partnered with the Administration to mount a robust statewide community engagement effort so that our supporters would have the opportunity to make a meaningful contribute to the development of the Race to the Top application as well as the Vermont Early Childhood Framework. In partnership, we created an accessible process that included community sessions throughout the state, utilizing our state-of-the-art interactive television system, and holding conference calls. These were all well attended events, with diverse participants. Additionally, we provided consultation on the Administration's one-on-one outreach to key stakeholders and the use of online capabilities for engagement.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

Robyn Freedner-Maguire
Director



**Department for Children and Families
Child Development Division**

103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05671-5500

[phone] 802-241-3110
[toll free] 800-649-2642

Agency of Human Services

<http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd>

Head Start-State Collaboration Office

October 6, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

On behalf of the Vermont Head Start –State Collaboration Office (VHSSCO), I strongly support the State of Vermont’s application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant opportunity. The VHSSCO provides a structure and process to facilitate collaboration among Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) programs and State and local entities that perform activities designed to benefit young children from birth to school entry and their low-income families. Through this collaboration, the VHSSCO works together with HS and EHS programs, State agencies, and local organizations to formulate, implement, and improve state and local policies and practices. This RTT-ELC grant application provides the VHSSCO with an excellent collaborative opportunity to improve systems, policies, and practices within Vermont.

The State of Vermont’s RTT-ELC grant application is thoughtful and rigorous. The application contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that build on Vermont’s existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont’s continued development of systems to improve the services to its children, particularly those with high needs.

My involvement as one of the RTT-ELC grant application drafting team members has ensured that the application in two notable ways addresses high-needs young children and their families served by HS and EHS programs. First, the application includes funding to link and integrate HS and EHS child outcomes data with the Vermont Agency of Education’s Kindergarten through Grade 12 State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) and to transfer the integrated SLDS-HS and EHS data to the Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council, Inc.’s Early Childhood Data Reporting System. This will enhance and integrate Vermont’s data systems and will increase the access of HS and EHS



practitioners, parents, administrators and elementary school teachers and principals to reports about the academic progress of high needs children after they graduate from HS.

Second, the evidence-based EHS home visiting program is named in the application as one of the five home visiting models to be included in the State of Vermont's new home visiting system which will be coordinated through the State's Children's Integrated Services. The inclusion of the EHS home visiting program in this State-based home visiting system will foster the integration and coordination of home visiting services to high needs children and their families within Vermont, and it presents the future possibility that additional high needs young children and their families will have access to evidence-based EHS services and programming.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to fund this application. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at (802) 585-5777.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin L. Allen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Benjamin" being more prominent and the last name "Allen" following in a similar style.

Benjamin L. Allen, Ph.D.
Vermont Head Start Collaboration Director



FISCAL POLICY STUDIES INSTITUTE

October 11, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to write a letter of support for the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding Under Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Fiscal Policy Studies Institute was established in 1996 to help communities, cities, counties, states and nations working to measurably improve the well-being of their citizens. Since then FPSI has worked with state and local partners, from the public and private sectors, in over 40 states and countries around the world. I have worked with Vermont over the past two decades and know of their deep commitment to early growth and development and achieving good outcomes for children.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. They believe strongly that for a child to arrive at school ready to succeed in school and in life she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

I believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that I believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

- 2 -

Page 2

Vermont, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

Vermont has been a leader in the country across a number of important outcomes for children, as measured by several indicators of their success including: health insurance, child abuse and teenage pregnancy to name a few. I am confident that Vermont will demonstrate and continue on a path of good results as they implement the various components in their Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,



Mark Friedman, Director
Fiscal Policy Studies Institute



123 Ethan Allen Avenue
Dupont Hall, Suite 308-309
Colchester, VT 05446
(802) 448-3464

October 8, 2013

U.S. Department of Education
Application: Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter on behalf of Vermont Afterschool, Inc. in support of the **State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.**

Vermont Afterschool, Inc. is a statewide nonprofit that supports organizations in providing quality afterschool, summer, and expanded learning experiences so that Vermont's children and youth have the opportunities, skills, and resources they need to become healthy, productive members of society. Our organization provides professional development and training, technical assistance and mentoring, research, evaluation supports, and other resources to Vermont programs working with children and youth, PreK through high school. Through our work we collaborate closely with the Vermont Agency of Education and the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families, Child Development Division, as well as a broad range of other statewide partners.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. At Vermont Afterschool, we believe that for a child to arrive at the school house door ready to succeed, he or she must enter that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity, and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's health and safety, optimal development, and access to quality early learning programs. We also know that the best outcomes for children are when the supports and intentional focus on early learning do not stop at the school house door but continue through the primary grades, supporting the child up through at least age eight. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

The initiatives and strategies outlined in Vermont's application provide essential supports to afterschool and summer learning programs working with young children, PreK through Grade 3. As a key provider of professional development opportunities for professionals working in afterschool and summer learning programs, Vermont Afterschool participates fully in Vermont's Statewide Professional Development System. As outlined in the grant application, these strategies support quality at both the program level—through the use of nationally recognized quality assessment tools like the School Age Program Assessment Tool (SAPQA)—as well as for the individual—through initiatives such as the Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate and the Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential. In addition, afterschool and summer learning



123 Ethan Allen Avenue
Dupont Hall, Suite 308-309
Colchester, VT 05446
(802) 448-3464

programs are fully integrated in Vermont's Tiered Quality Rating Information System (TQRIS) and will benefit from efforts to expand participation and support progress upward to higher levels of quality. We are particularly interested in the strategies outlined in the application that would sustain program effects into Early Elementary Grades through technical assistance and training.

Finally, one cannot talk about student success without mentioning strategies that address summer learning loss. Vermont Afterschool supports summer learning programs throughout the state, and we know that these programs play an important role in leveling the playing field and giving children, regardless of geographic location and/or family income, the opportunity to be engaged, active, and learning during those vital summer months. We also know that both summer and afterschool programs provide critical support to working families so that parents know that their children are well cared for and actively engaged in positive development and learning activities while children are out of school in the afternoons or over the summer. Vermont's application outlines important efforts to support increased public investments in higher payment rates and increased benefits in the Child Care Federal Assistance Program (CCFAP) for eligible families accessing afterschool and/or summer learning programs.

The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant will allow Vermont to further strengthen and develop the solid foundation that we have to support programs across the entire early learning and development continuum. Thank you for your consideration of this letter of support. For all the reasons mentioned above, I strongly urge you to fund Vermont's application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly Morehouse".

Holly Morehouse
Executive Director



State of Vermont
Vermont Commission on Women
 126 State Street
 Montpelier, Vermont 05633-6801
www.women.state.vt.us

[phone] 802-828-2851
 [fax] 802-828-2930
 [toll free] 800-881-1561

U.S. Department of Education
 Application: Control Center
 Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412A)
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

October 10, 2013

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

I am pleased to write a letter on behalf of The Vermont Commission on Women in support of the State of Vermont's application for Initial Funding under the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.

The Vermont Commission on Women (VCW) is an independent state agency committed to advancing rights and opportunities for women in Vermont. In our work we:

- act as an advisor, planner, and information source for the legislative and executive branches on issues affecting women
- provide information and referrals to the general public
- function as an educational resource by conducting research, producing publications, and coordinating conferences and workshops
- work in coalition with other organizations to exchange information and take action for Vermont's women

VCW's priority areas of concern include economic equity and security for Vermont women and families, and ensuring access to life-long educational and human development opportunities. We know that a comprehensive, strongly resourced network of services in support of the earliest learning, care, and development of Vermont's children helps strengthen Vermont women's and families' health, education, and long-term economic stability.

Vermont has demonstrated a strong and enduring commitment to the early learning and development of young children, particularly children with high needs. In the words of Governor Peter Shumlin in his recent Second Inaugural Address: "The evidence is overwhelming: the earlier we invest in our children, the healthier, more productive lives they will have. Taxpayers win too, since every dollar we invest in early childhood education saves seven dollars in the future."

Along with Governor Shumlin, we believe that for a child to enter the school house door ready to



succeed in school and in life, she must arrive at that door with vibrant health, emotional security, social competence, curiosity, and capability. We know from experience and from growing scientific evidence that while this is the potential for all children, it is only realized when families, communities, public and private investors, and state policymakers collectively commit to assuring children's safety, health, optimal development, and access to developmentally beneficial early learning and development programs and services. This is particularly true for children with high needs, who often face a range of obstacles to success.

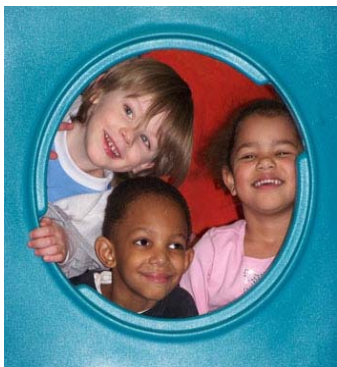
We believe the Vermont Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application is thoughtful and rigorous. It contains a range of policy initiatives and practical actions that we believe build on Vermont's existing strengths in delivering early learning and development programs, while concretely addressing some of the areas in which Vermont can do better. The successful funding of this application is critical to Vermont's continued development in the service of its children, particularly those with high needs.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to fund this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cary Brown', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Cary Brown
Executive Director



Report to the Vermont Legislature



Implementation of Prekindergarten Education in Accordance with Vermont's Act 62



January 2010

**Report to
The Vermont Legislature**

**One Time Report
Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Education**

**In Accordance with H. 534
Act 62. Sec.10 (2007)**

Submitted to: Senate Education
House Education

Submitted by: Stephen R. Dale
Commissioner
Department for Children and Families

Armando Vilaseca
Commissioner
Department of Education

Prepared by: Manuela Fonseca
Early Childhood Coordinator
Department of Education

Reeva Murphy
Deputy Commissioner
Child Development Division

Report Date: January 2010

State of Vermont
Vermont Department of Education
120 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2500

State of Vermont
Vermont Department for Children & Families
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05671

January 31, 2010

This report on the implementation of prekindergarten education in accordance with Vermont's Act 62 of 2007 is respectfully submitted as per the provisions of the act.

The full impacts of Act 62 are still unfolding. Responses to the required elements of the report are not as complete due to the relatively short time between adoption of the Prekindergarten Rules (July 2008) and the due date of this report. Act 132, an amendment to Act 62, imposed delays in the implementation of the child progress reporting. Since programs are just beginning to collect these data, they will only be available in December 2010.

At the conclusion of this report, we present our joint recommendations for enhancing prekindergarten education, and we look forward to the opportunity to discuss these further.

We recognize that early learning experiences leave lasting impressions in terms of children's intellectual and social-emotional development, and that it is in our state's best interest to ensure that these first impressions are positive. Toward this end, we believe that Act 62 is working to improve the quality of these early experiences.

Sincerely,



Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner
Vermont Department of Education



Stephen R. Dale, Commissioner
Vermont Department for Children and Families

Executive Summary

Vermont schools have operated voluntary early education programs, primarily to at risk children, since the 1980s. Prior to the 2007 enactment of Act 62 which codified this long-standing practice, approximately 150 town school districts offered some form of publicly funded prekindergarten education.

The purpose of Act 62 is to ensure access to quality prekindergarten (pre-K) education programs, promote partnerships between school districts and qualified private programs, require community input prior to establishing or expanding programs, and offer children and their families greater access to early learning experiences.

Act 62 also required a written report from the Department of Education (DOE) and Department for Children and Families commissioners to the House and Senate Committees on Education in January 2010 that included information on:

- Enrollment and costs,
- How districts were managing the “cap” on enrollment,
- A description of programs’ ability to meet the quality standards, and
- Impacts on children’s development.

Act 132, a technical corrections bill passed in 2008, amended the implementation dates of some requirements. Because of this accommodation, this document cannot report on child outcomes because the annual child development assessments are only beginning to be used for children enrolled this school year.

The number of children enrolled in publically funded pre-K programs was increasing prior to Act 62 and continued after its enactment. However, there has not been an increase in the number of town school districts counting pre-K children in their school census used to calculate Average Daily Membership (ADM) since Act 62 took effect. While a few new school districts began counting pre-K children, a few stopped doing so, citing budget constraints. Nevertheless, the number of children enrolled in pre-K programs has increased.

Prekindergarten education looks differently across Vermont. There exist various types of programs using different curricula and different philosophical approaches. In some cases, there are partnerships with Head Start programs in which a school-funded Essential Early Education (EEE) teacher and a Head Start-funded teacher work side by side. In others, children attend a home-based family child care program or a center-based child care program. And in other cases, children attend a prekindergarten program in the elementary school that is operated by the school district. Despite the different “looks” of prekindergarten education, all qualified programs must meet basically the same program and staff qualifications, and ensure that their programs align with Vermont’s Early Learning Standards (VELS). Act 62 allows for continuing this local determination of which model(s) work best for local children and families, and providers.

Partnerships are a key product of Act 62’s intent. Of the 53 supervisory unions offering pre-K education, more than half (33) contract with private providers, and 22 collaborate with Head Start. The vast majority of these partnerships existed before Act 62. Thirty of the districts that partner with private providers also offer a school-operated program. Of the total of 80 partners collaborating with school districts, 84 percent are center-based child care centers or preschools;

16 percent are home-based family providers. All pre-K programs, regardless of type of program, must meet the same program quality standards.

There is a great deal of variation in the terms of school-provider, and school-Head Start agreements and contracts. School districts negotiate contracts with their partners based on available resources. Most negotiate a per-child amount as compensation; however, the range of per-child payments providers receive for providing pre-K is enormous. Some school districts that provide the required licensed early childhood teacher also pay a per-child amount, others pay a lump sum, and some do not provide monetary compensation.

Act 62 requires all programs to gather information on children's developmental progress using one of two approved assessment tools; the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum (CCDC) or the Work Sampling System (WSS). Since Act 132 delayed the requirement for reporting on children's progress by a year, pre-K programs are just now in their first year of collecting data. A report on these data will not be available until the fall.

It is clear that Education Fund expenditures supporting publicly funded prekindergarten education have risen over the past few years. The magnitude of that increase is difficult to specify since reporting requirements have changed during that period. It is certain that a number of other funding sources contribute to the overall costs of providing a quality pre-K program, including federal Head Start funds, Child Care Financial Assistance, the Early Education Initiative (EEI), and private and foundation funds.

The limit or "cap" on enrollment does not appear to be a significant limitation at this time. Available data indicate that the vast majority of school districts (191) counting Pre-K children did not exceed their "cap."

Recommendations from the Commissioners include:

- "Stay the course" on implementation.
- Use adjustments in rules and regulations to address any early concerns.
- Allow school districts, community partners, agencies more time to become established, report accurate data and fully assess how well the intent of Act 62 as enacted and amended has been met.
- Gather information from families about their experiences with publicly funded pre-K programs.
- DCF and DOE should continue to collaboratively administer publicly funded Pre-K implementation, committing lead staff from both departments to guide and support emerging programs and partnerships.
- Continue the Pre-K ADM caps until there is more evidence that the caps are adversely affecting children, families, providers and town school districts.
- Strengthen the requirement for a Community Needs Assessment required in Act 62 when school districts seek to establish or expand publicly funded prekindergarten education. We suggest amending the prekindergarten rules to meet this objective.

- Provide the Legislature with a report of the effects of publicly funded prekindergarten education on children's developmental progress in January 2011.
- Continue to explore how different funding streams can be utilized more effectively to support Pre-K partnerships and services. Provide the Legislature with an update on the cost of prekindergarten education to the Education Fund, Pre-K enrollments and funding in January 2011.
- Provide the Legislature with an update on the cost of prekindergarten education to the Education Fund, and Pre-K enrollments in January 2011.
- Establish a strong public-private partnership to provide targeted technical assistance to districts and community partners working on implementation in communities.

Report to the Vermont Legislature: Implementation of Prekindergarten Education - Act 62

PART I – Act 62 and Related Policies

Early Policies Supporting Prekindergarten Education

Prior to the enactment of Act 62 in 2007 which established publicly funded prekindergarten education for children ages 3 to 5, the Legislature had passed various laws that supported early education. In Act 68 of 1987, it authorized school districts to provide early education on a voluntary basis, and established a grant program to support early education programs run by school districts, public agencies, or privately run businesses. Act 68 also mandated that starting in 1991, all children ages 3 through 5 with disabilities were entitled to receive Essential Early Education (EEE) services. Concomitantly, the State Board of Education adopted rules enabling school districts to include young children receiving early education in the weighted pupil count under the foundation formula, the school funding method at that time. The public funding provided opportunities for districts to establish inclusive classes for young children receiving EEE services, and for districts to develop collaborative programs with Head Start and private providers. When Act 60 became law in 1997, it continued the policy of allowing school districts to include prekindergarten children in the school census and “average daily membership” on a prorated basis. By 2006, children from approximately 150 towns had access to some form of publicly funded prekindergarten education.

Prekindergarten Education Study Committee and H.534

In 2006 the General Assembly created the Prekindergarten Education Study Committee in Act 186. The committee was charged to gather information regarding the current implementation of prekindergarten education throughout the state, research the impact of early education and recommend whether prekindergarten education should be publicly funded and if so, how. This bipartisan committee was chaired by Rep. Kilmartin and included representatives from both chambers. The committee met six times during the summer and fall of 2006. Members heard hours of public testimony, reviewed the research literature as well as survey data and case studies of prekindergarten programs in Vermont, and held a public hearing on Vermont Interactive Television.

The committee’s findings and recommendations were summarized in the committee’s February 2007 report entitled, *Early Childhood Nurture and Development in Enriched Education Settings*. The committee concluded that public funding should continue to support prekindergarten education, and that the preferred delivery model for prekindergarten education is one in which schools partner with qualified private providers. Most of the committee’s recommendations were included in H.534, a bill on prekindergarten education, which passed both chambers of the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Douglas in June 2007. H.534 became Act 62.

Act 62, A Law Related to Prekindergarten Education

Act 62 codified what had been a long-standing practice some school districts used of including 3- and 4-year-olds in their average daily membership (ADM) in order to provide publicly funded prekindergarten education. However, its provisions sought to ensure that *quality* prekindergarten education was implemented in a more consistent and equitable manner across the state. It

authorized the commissioner of the Department of Education (DOE) and the commissioner of the Department for Children and Families (DCF) to jointly implement Act 62.

The key provisions of Act 62 are:

- (1) a reaffirmation that prekindergarten education remains *voluntary*. School districts are *not required* to provide prekindergarten education, and children are *not* required to attend.
- (2) the establishment of a cap for the number of children a school district can count (section 6),
- (3) the promotion of partnerships between school districts and qualified private programs (section 1),
- (4) the requirement of a community discussion and needs assessment prior to a district establishing prekindergarten education or expanding current prekindergarten programs (section 3),
- (5) flexibility for families to request enrolling their children in qualified prekindergarten programs inside and outside of the school district in which they live (section 3), and
- (6) the requirement that the commissioner of Education and the commissioner for Children and Families jointly develop rules to govern prekindergarten education.

Act 62 also stipulated that the commissioners submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education in January 2010. The information required included: (1) enrollments and costs of prekindergarten education, (2) breakdown of which methods school districts were using to adhere to the limitations on enrollment (i.e., the cap), (3) description of prekindergarten programs' ability to meet the quality standards pertaining to program quality and educator licensure, and (4) impacts of prekindergarten education on children's development. Additionally, it requested the commissioners to recommend any changes to the cap and provide an analysis of the effect of prekindergarten education on the child care subsidy program.

Prekindergarten Rules

During the summer and fall of 2007, the commissioners of DOE and DCF and their staff worked together to develop rules to regulate the implementation of prekindergarten education in Vermont. The development of these rules began with a meeting of representatives from both agencies and a large group of stakeholders in the fall of 2007. These stakeholders represented child care centers, school districts and supervisory unions, advocates and state associations. This group was instrumental in providing input throughout the writing of the prekindergarten rules.

A draft of the prekindergarten rules was presented to the State Board of Education in November of 2007 and the Interagency Committee for Administrative Rules the following month. The public was invited to comment on the draft rules from January 21 through February 29, 2008. The final version of the rules was adopted by the State Board of Education on May 20, 2008. The Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR) approved the rules in June of 2008. The prekindergarten education rules went into effect on July 1, 2008, as required by Act 62.

Act 132, An Amendment to Act 62

In the spring of 2008, the Legislature passed H.884, a technical corrections bill that amended Act 62 in the area of program quality standards, the effective dates of some requirements, and the

options districts have for determining their cap. H.884 is now known as Act 132. These changes are as follows:

▪ ***Program Quality Standards***

Act 62 requires prekindergarten programs to demonstrate that they meet quality standards either by being accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), or by having at least 3 STARS in Vermont's Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS). This requirement was to take effect on July 1, 2008. Act 132 gave school districts and private early care and education providers which offered prekindergarten education on or prior to October 1, 2008, a "presumptive 3 STARS" rating until July 1, 2009. In essence, it gave established programs an additional year to complete the STARS application process and meet the required standard, or to obtain NAEYC accreditation.

In addition, DCF and DOE were charged with jointly developing regulations for STARS. The STARS rules were developed and adopted during this past fall. They went into effect on January 4, 2010.

▪ ***Effective Dates***

Act 132 delayed by one year the effective dates of two provisions in Act 62: (1) the requirement for annual child development assessments to measure progress, and (2) the terms of contract payments. These two provisions came into effect on July 1, 2009. All other Act 62 provisions came into effect on July 1, 2008 as originally stipulated. As a consequence of Act 132, child progress information will not be available in this report since programs only began implementing child development assessments this fall.

▪ ***Options for Limits on Prekindergarten ADM (Cap)***

Although there are no limits on the number of children a school district may enroll in a Pre-K program, Act 62 places limits on the number of prekindergarten children a district may report in its annual school census and include in its ADM. Act 62 provided several options districts could choose from as their caps; Act 132 clarified some of these options. The resulting options which are currently in effect are as follows:

1. ten children;
2. one plus the average annual increase or decrease in the district's first-grade ADM as counted over the last five years times the most recent first-grade ADM;
3. the total number of children who are enrolled in prekindergarten and who are eligible to enter kindergarten in the following academic year;
4. one-fifth of the total number of children in grades one-five who were included in last year's ADM; or
5. the highest number of prekindergarten children a school district counted in 2004-2005, 2005-2006, or in 2006-2007.

It should be noted that children receiving EEE services are *in addition to* the number of children allowed in the district's prekindergarten ADM cap. The cap only pertains to children who are 3 to 5 years of age and who are *not* receiving special education services.

Technical Assistance Provided to the Public on Act 62

There has been and continues to be a need for providing clear information to the various constituencies affected by Act 62: families with young children, school district representatives,

private early childhood care and education providers, Head Start directors, school board members and the general public. To fully understand Vermont's approach to providing prekindergarten education, it is necessary to understand Act 62, Act 132, the prekindergarten rules, and Acts 60 and 68 that guide the state's system of education spending and taxation.

This situation was further complicated because several towns had been providing prekindergarten education prior to Act 62 and had practices in place which conflicted with Act 62. While most people want to comply with Act 62, changing practices that are no longer allowed (e.g., private providers using district's payments without any restrictions rather than applying the funds to families' tuition payments, school districts arbitrarily taking a 30 percent cut for administrative costs from payments to private providers) has been challenging for many.

Staff from the DOE and DCF have sought to provide the technical assistance needed through various venues. After enactment of Act 62 and during the prekindergarten rulemaking process, Fact Sheets written for the three main audiences (i.e., families, private early care and education providers, and school districts) were disseminated. The *Guide to Implementing Prekindergarten Education in Accordance with Act 62* was published in February 2009 (an earlier, less complete version was published in June 2008). Staff have made numerous presentations to various audiences in order to clarify issues and answer questions. These groups include the Building Bright Futures (BBF) regional directors and councils, Head Start directors, special education directors, EEE and Early Education Initiative (EEI) coordinators, child care associations members, school administrators and school board members. Staff also respond individually to queries from providers, school personnel and families through email, face-to-face meetings and telephone.

The DOE funded training-of-trainers sessions on the required prekindergarten assessment tools, Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum (CCDC) and the Work Sampling System (WSS). DOE staff conducted numerous CCDC and WSS trainings around the state during 2009 in order to ensure teachers in all types of programs had the knowledge and skills to use the assessment tool they choose accurately.

The capacity at the DOE and DCF for providing technical assistance, especially to act proactively and provide adequate oversight, was decreased with the elimination of an early education staff position at the DOE and turnover at DCF. Enlisting the support of advocates, BBF directors, and/or school personnel to assist in providing technical assistance is one strategy; however, it would be important to ensure that information is accurate and consistent; otherwise their assistance could confound rather than elucidate.

PART II – A Snapshot of Prekindergarten Education in Vermont

Participation in Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Education

■ *Pre-K & EEE Enrollment 2003-2010*

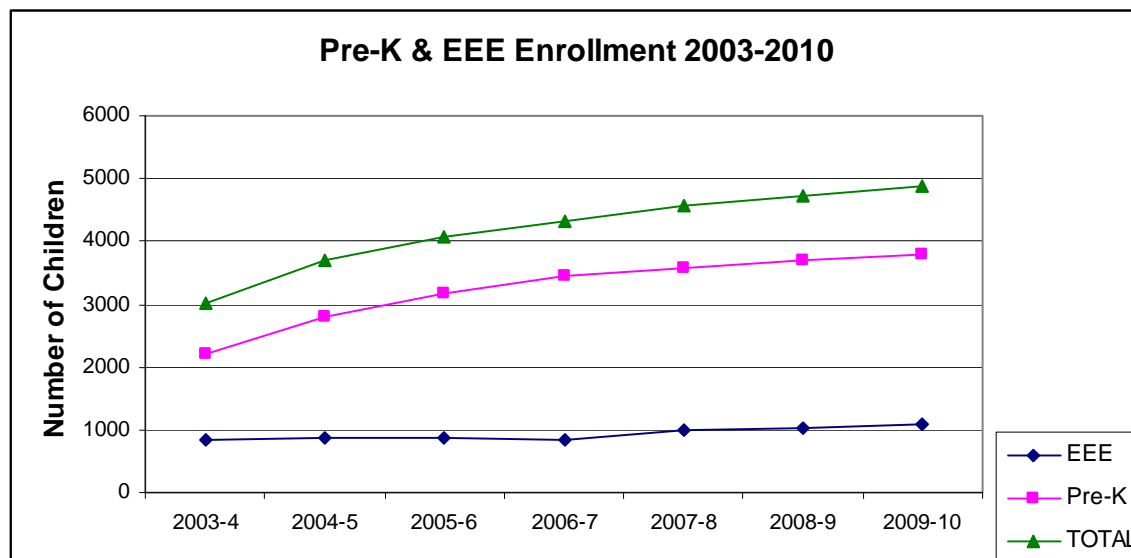
The number of children participating in publicly funded prekindergarten education has increased 50.44 percent during the past seven years (2003-2010). While enrollment in EEE also increased during this time period, the EEE increase was about half of the increase in prekindergarten enrollment (i.e., 25.50 percent). Table 1 details the enrollment numbers for both pre-K and EEE. These numbers come from the annual October school census reports;¹ they are a “head count” and do not provide information on the length of the pre-K program.

Table 1. Pre-K and EEE Enrollment 2003-2010

Year	Prekindergarten		EEE		Total	
	Number	% increase from pervious year	Number	% increase from pervious year	Number	% increase from pervious year
2003-4	2,198		829		3,027	
2004-5	2,812	21.83	886	6.43	3,698	18.14
2005-6	3,178	11.52	881	-0.57	4,059	8.89
2006-7	3,465	8.28	845	-4.26	4,310	5.82
2007-8	3,560	2.67	996	15.16	4,556	5.40
2008-9	3,690	3.52	1041	4.32	4,731	3.70
2009-10	3,789	2.61	1089	4.41	4,878	3.01
2003-10	50.44% increase		25.50% increase		44.97% increase	

Figure 1 on the following page illustrates the growth in enrollment over the past seven years. Surprisingly, the largest increase in pre-K enrollment in any single year (i.e., 621 children, an increase of nearly 22 percent) occurred from 2003-4 to 2004-5, well before Act 62 came into effect in July 2007. Since then, the increase in prekindergarten enrollment has been modest; there was a 2.7 percent increase in 2007-2008, 3.5 percent in 2008-2009, and 2.6 percent in 2009-2010. These data suggest that the enactment of Act 62 has not significantly promoted the growth of prekindergarten education, nor has Act 62 inhibited growth.

¹ It should be noted that the school census are self-reported data; as with all such data, it is reasonable to assume that there is a margin of error. As discussed in Part III of this report, a review of the ADM reports show that a few school districts have reported their school census erroneously.

Figure 1. Prekindergarten and EEE Enrollments 2003-2010

▪ ***Access to Prekindergarten Education: Towns' Participation***

Act 62 unequivocally asserted that prekindergarten education is *voluntary*; towns decide whether to offer prekindergarten education and families decide whether or not to have their children participate. These two parts of the issue – availability of publicly funded prekindergarten and children's enrollment – need to be considered. As discussed above, the enrollment numbers for prekindergarten education indicate that more families are choosing to have their children participate, whether in a private child care or preschool program, in a school-operated program, or in a Head Start/School collaborative program. The calculations of ADM for FY08 through FY10 confirm this increase.

Based on data collected in the 2008 – 2010 annual school census reports and which were used to calculate ADM, the enactment of Act 62 does not appear to have significantly affected the total number of towns that have opted to count prekindergarten children in their school census. ADM data are reported by "town school district"² and "city school district". In Vermont, there are a total of 260 town and city school districts. Table 2 on the following page summarizes what these data indicate.

The picture these data present belies the transitions made during FY08 and FY10. Most of the 204 school districts that counted pre-K children in FY10 have consistently done so throughout this time period; these include the cities and towns of Burlington, South Burlington, Brattleboro, St. Johnsbury, Waterbury and Winooski.

² T. 16 §11. (10) "School district" means town school districts, union school districts, interstate school districts, city school districts, unified union districts, and incorporated school districts.

In T.16§ 421. Town School Districts

(a) A town shall constitute a school district, except that when a town contains an incorporated school district, the town school district shall consist of that part of the town not embraced within the incorporated school district.

Table 2. Number of Town School Districts Reporting Pre-K Enrollments FY08-FY10

	FY08		FY09		FY10	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<i>Reported Pre-K</i>	202	77.69	207	79.62	204	78.46
<i>Did not report Pre-K</i>	58	22.31	53	20.38	56	21.54
<i>Total</i>	260	100	260	100	260	100

Eight school districts started counting pre-K children in 2008-2009; Essex Town was the largest of these. In 2009-2010, an additional five towns began counting pre-K in their school census; Springfield was the largest of these school districts. While 13 new school districts began including pre-K children in their census in FY08 through FY10, 11 school districts that previously counted pre-K children decided to stop doing so. Of these school districts, the largest is Colchester. Although an early supporter of publicly funded prekindergarten education, the Colchester school board decided to no longer provide publicly funded prekindergarten education primarily because of budget constraints.

The ADM data for FY08-FY10 indicate that 34 school districts did not count pre-K children in any of these fiscal years. While many of these town school districts have very small populations (e.g., Maidenstone, Buel's Gore), larger communities such as Milton, Randolph and Rutland City are in this group as well. (Note: There is probably some measure of error in school census reports since these rely on accurate and complete reporting at the local level.)

The Face of Prekindergarten Education in Vermont

Prekindergarten education in Vermont looks differently across the state. In contrast to some states that establish a uniform delivery model and/or standard curriculum for prekindergarten, in Vermont there exist various types of programs using different curriculum models and different philosophical approaches. In some cases, there are partnerships with Head Start programs in which a school-funded EEE teacher and a Head Start-funded teacher work side by side. In others, children attend a home-based family child care program or a center-based child care program. And in other cases, children attend a prekindergarten program in the elementary school that is operated by the school district. Despite the different “looks” of Pre-K education, all qualified programs must meet basically the same program and staff qualifications, and ensure that their programs align with Vermont’s Early Learning Standards (VELS). Act 62 allows for continuing this local determination of which model(s) work best for local children and families, and providers. The following provides a brief description of the current status of prekindergarten education in Vermont.

▪ Overview of Partnerships and Collaborations

Act 62 promotes the strategy of school districts establishing partnerships with existing and qualified early care and education programs in order to provide prekindergarten education. There have been some new partnerships since the enactment of Act 62 (e.g., Springfield School District, Rutland Central Supervisory Union) and new partners have been added to existing collaborations (e.g., Heartworks now partners with Burlington School District); however, many school district or supervisory union partnerships with Head Start, center-based childcare centers and preschools, and home-based family child care programs, existed prior to 2007 (e.g.,

Burlington School District, Franklin Central Supervisory Union, Washington West Supervisory Union).

According to a survey recently conducted by the DOE, a total of 53 (or 88 percent) of all supervisory unions (SU) and city school districts³ (SD) offer publicly funded Pre-K education. Of these, 33 (62.4 percent) SUs and districts contract with private providers and/or Head Start to offer Pre-K education. Thirty of these SUs and school districts also operate their own school-based programs (n = 30 or 90%). Three school districts (i.e., Montpelier, South Burlington SD, and Springfield SD) only offer pre-K education through contracts with partners; they do not operate any of their own pre-K programs. Fewer than half (20 or 37.7 percent) of the 53 SUs and school districts that offer pre-K do not have any partnerships; they only offer pre-K through school-based or school-operated programs. Table 3 presents these data.

Table 3 Number of SUs & SDs Offering PreK through Partnerships

	N	%
Have partnerships & offer own pre-K program	30	56.6
Have partnerships & do not operate own pre-K program	3	5.7
Only offer own pre-K program; do not have partnerships	20	37.7
TOTAL number of SUs or SDs offering preK	53	

In many cases, SUs and school districts have multiple partnerships, and several private programs partnered with more than one district. The SUs or SDs that had the highest number of partnerships are clustered in the Chittenden area where the populations of children and private providers are large. Burlington SD had partnerships with 20 different programs, Chittenden South SU partnered with 16 private programs, and South Burlington SD partnered with 13 programs. Table 4 below presents the number and percentage of private early care and education providers that partner with one or more SU or SD.

Partnerships and collaborations between school districts or supervisory unions and existing community early care and education programs for providing publicly funded prekindergarten education can be grouped into two major categories: (1) contracts with private early care and education providers, and (2) collaborations with Head Start. Each of these is discussed below.

Table 4 Number & Percentage of Private Providers by Number of SU or SD Partnerships

<i>SD/SU Partners</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Examples</i>
1 only	45	56.25	Saxton's River Montessori, Winooski Family Center
2	20	25.00	Stepping Stones, Ellen's Sunshine Home, Y's Time
3	11	13.75	Burlington Children's Space, Heartworks
4	4	5.00	Trinity Children's Center, YMCA in Burlington
Total	80	100	

³ In this instance, "school district" is used to refer to the city school districts that have a superintendent and are not part of a supervisory union, such as Burlington SD, South Burlington SD, Milton SD.

Partners: Private Early Care and Education Providers

Supervisory unions and school districts contracted with a total of 80 private early care and education programs during the 2009-2010 academic year. Of these 80 partners, 67 (83.75 percent) were center-based programs and 13 (16.25 percent) were home-based family providers. Partners included both non-profit and for-profit organizations, although most of the center-based programs were non-profit. In terms of schedules, 56 (83.58 percent) of the center-based programs operate full-day, full-year programs while the remaining 11 (16.42 percent) are part-day programs that only operate during the academic year. In the case of home-based family child care programs, 9 (69.23 percent) operate on a full-time basis, and 4 (30.77 percent) only operate on a part-time basis.

Act 62 stipulates that all prekindergarten education programs must meet program quality standards. The standards are: (1) accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), or (2) four or more STARS with two points in each arena in Vermont's Step Ahead Recognition System. Programs that have at least three STARS may submit a three-year plan for meeting the standard to the DOE and DCF commissioners; if approved, they can continue to offer prekindergarten education during that three-year period. Table 5 details how these 80 partner programs have met this standard.

Table 5 Partner Pre-K Programs Meeting Program Quality Requirements

	N	%	NOTES
NAEYC	31	38.75	All but 3 of these accredited programs also hold 4 or 5 STARS
5 STARS	29	36.25	Some of these programs also have NAEYC accreditation
4 STARS	29	36.25	Some of these programs also have NAEYC accreditation
3 STARS	15	18.75	11 of these have an approved plan for obtaining standard in 3 years
Pending	1	1.25	1 program has submitted an application for STARS and it's pending
0 STARS	3	3.75	2 programs don't have NAEYC or STARS; 1 has Waldorf accreditation

Act 62 also requires that all programs providing publicly funded Pre-K education must meet specific staff qualifications. In the case of non-school operated early care and education programs, the requirements are: (1) center-based programs must have at least one licensed early childhood educator (ECE) or early childhood special educator (ECSE) on the premises during the 6-10 hours of the week that are considered the prekindergarten program, and (2) home-based family providers must either hold an ECE or ECSE license, or receive a minimum of three hours of supervision from a mentor licensed in ECE or ECSE.

A recent DOE survey found that 59 partners or 73.75 percent of all private early care and education partners employ at least one educator endorsed in ECE or ECSE. The remaining 21 partners meet this requirement in one of the following ways: (1) co-teaching with a licensed ECE or ECSE funded by the SU or SD, (2) having at least one teacher working under a provisional ECE or ECSE license, or (3) receiving three or more hours of mentoring from a licensed ECE or ECSE that is provided by the school district or by some other entity (e.g., Child Care Resource in Williston), or is arranged by the provider.

▪ ***Private Early Care & Education Partnership Contracts and Compensation***

The vast majority of partnership contracts signed by a SU or SD and an early care and education program define compensation as a per-child amount for every child included in the school census. Of the 80 partner programs, 68 (85 percent) receive a per-child amount as compensation; however, there continues to exist great variation in this per-child rate across the state. Although most of the per-child rates school districts pay to private providers fall between \$2,000 and \$3,000 per child annually, the range of payments is from \$939 to \$5,132 for the same 10 hours of prekindergarten education.

Eleven or 13.75 percent of partnership contracts stipulate that the SU or SD will provide the partner program with a teacher licensed in ECE or ECSE for 10 hours per week in order for the program to meet the staff qualifications standard. One SD and one SU provide the partner with a licensed teacher and also pay a per-child rate of \$700 or \$2,000, respectively on an annual basis. In one instance, a partner program receives a licensed teacher for 10 hours per week plus a lump payment of \$2,000. Four of these 11 contracts just provide the ECE or ECSE licensed teacher, and three contracts include professional development as well as the teacher's time. One contract with a home-based family provider stipulates that the district will provide an ECE mentor, but no financial compensation.

One contract between an SU and a private program provides a lump sum of \$8,000 and professional development for the program's staff. Ten children from that program were included in the school census. Since the amount allotted for professional development was not available, it is not possible to determine an accurate per-child rate of compensation to this particular program.

Partners: Head Start Programs

Head Start is a federally funded program designed to support the development and well-being of children living in poverty. Head Start has been providing comprehensive early education and related services (e.g., nutrition, health, dental health, family support) to young children and their families for more than 40 years. Head Start began as a part-time preschool program to serve 4-year-olds and help bolster their health and social competence. Now, all Head Start programs serve 3- and 4-year-olds, most offer a full-time, year-round program, and four serve infants, toddlers and their families through Early Head Start.

Vermont has seven regional Head Start programs across the state. Three Head Start programs cover several counties; for example Champlain Valley Head Start (CVOEO) is responsible for Franklin, Grand Isle, Chittenden and Addison counties. All of Vermont's seven Head Start programs have partnerships with at least one school district for the purpose of providing prekindergarten education. Twenty-two different supervisory unions or school districts partner with Head Start to offer 35 collaborative programs across the state.

These Head Start/school collaborative programs uniformly demonstrate a high level of program quality. Many of these 35 programs hold NAEYC accreditation and/or 4 or 5 STARS; no collaborative program has fewer than 4 STARS.

There is less consistency across the state's Head Start/school collaborative programs in terms of the ECE- or ECSE-licensed teacher requirement. Based on a recent survey DOE conducted with Head Start staff and school district staff, roughly half of the collaborative programs have an

ECE- or ECSE-licensed Head Start teacher. When this is not the case, the school district provides the licensed teacher and Head Start may provide an assistant teacher, an Early Childhood Advocate, and/or a Family Services Worker.

▪ ***Head Start Partnership Contracts and Compensation***

Whereas private early care and education programs rely on parent tuition fees, Head Start programs are federally funded. Head Start services are provided free of charge to eligible families⁴; in some cases, part-time programs may charge families for optional extended hours. Hence, the funding that Head Start partners receive is not used to offset tuition fees; rather, it is most often used to expand services from part- to full-day, enhance staff salaries, support professional development, and/or enhance program delivery.

The agreements between Head Start programs and school districts vary greatly across the state and even within the same Head Start region. A few agreements stipulate a per-child rate the school district pays for each Head Start child it counts (i.e., Burlington SD, and Windham Northwest SU); the rates range from \$2,600 to \$3,120. A few more districts agree to provide a lump sum of \$4,000 to \$10,000 rather than per-child payments, and also provide the classroom space or possibly pay for an assistant. In these cases, the licensed teacher is employed by Head Start.

Most contracts involve services rather than financial compensation. For example, the school district may provide the licensed teacher and possibly the classroom space and/or an assistant teacher, while Head Start provides a family services worker who will work with all of the children, including non-Head Start children. In one contract, the children attending Head Start go to the elementary school for art and gym classes the school district provides free of charge.

School-Operated Prekindergarten Programs

Historically, many supervisory unions and school districts began offering prekindergarten education in order to create an inclusive classroom for children from the ages of 3 to 5 with disabilities. This was a part-time classroom with low enrollment and staffed with an early childhood special educator, para-educators, and perhaps a speech and language pathologist (SLP), and/or visiting occupational or physical therapists. In order to have “typically developing peers” in these Essential Early Education (EEE) classrooms, children without disabilities from the surrounding community were invited to join the class. In these early EEE classrooms, there were often more children with disabilities than there were typically developing peers. In recent years, in order to meet the goal of ensuring children with disabilities are in truly inclusive settings, the number of typically developing children in EEE classrooms was increased, and these classrooms evolved to become pre-K programs. Although this description of the origins of school-operated prekindergarten as evolving from EEE classes does apply to all school-operated prekindergarten programs, it does apply to many school-operated programs.

School-operated prekindergarten programs are sometimes coordinated and supervised at the SU level (e.g., North Country SU, Bennington-Rutland SU) and in other cases at the school building level (e.g., Cambridge Elementary School, Dover Elementary School). There are a total of 103 school-operated prekindergarten programs. The vast majority is housed in an elementary school; but a few are located in rented space or in a middle or high school building. As stated above,

⁴ Note: eligibility is defined as 100 percent or below federal poverty guidelines.

more than half of school districts or SUs that offer pre-K programs also contract with private early care and education programs; hence, families often have an option in which type of program to enroll their children.

With the exception of two classrooms that offer prekindergarten education from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m Monday-Friday, school-operated Pre-K programs offer only part-day classes two, three, four or five days per week. In a few small schools, prekindergarten children use the kindergarten classroom after the half-day kindergarten class has left. A handful of schools offer a multiage pre-K-K classroom in which 4-year-olds join the kindergartners for the morning part of the day.

School-operated prekindergarten programs must meet the same program quality standards specified for partner early care and education programs: NAEYC accreditation or 4 STARS with two points in each arena. Table 6 provides information on the status of school-operated programs relative to these program quality standards.

Table 6 School-Operated Pre-K Programs Meeting Program Quality Requirements

	N	%	NOTES
NAEYC	14	13.59	All but 6 of these accredited programs also hold 4 or 5 STARS
5 STARS	18	17.48	Some of these programs also have NAEYC accreditation
4 STARS	40	38.83	Some of these programs also have NAEYC accreditation
3 STARS	26	25.24	24 of these have an approved plan for obtaining standard in 3 years
2 STARS	1	0.97	Working on obtaining 3 STARS
0 STARS	3	2.91	3 programs don't have STARS or NAEYC
PENDING	1	0.97	1 program has submitted an application for STARS and it's pending

In addition to meeting program quality standards, school-operated pre-K programs must also ensure that each classroom is taught by a teacher with an ECE or ECSE license. This requirement is stipulated in Act 62 as well as by Vermont's Educator Licensing Regulations to which all public schools must adhere.

Prekindergarten Assessments to Measure Child Progress

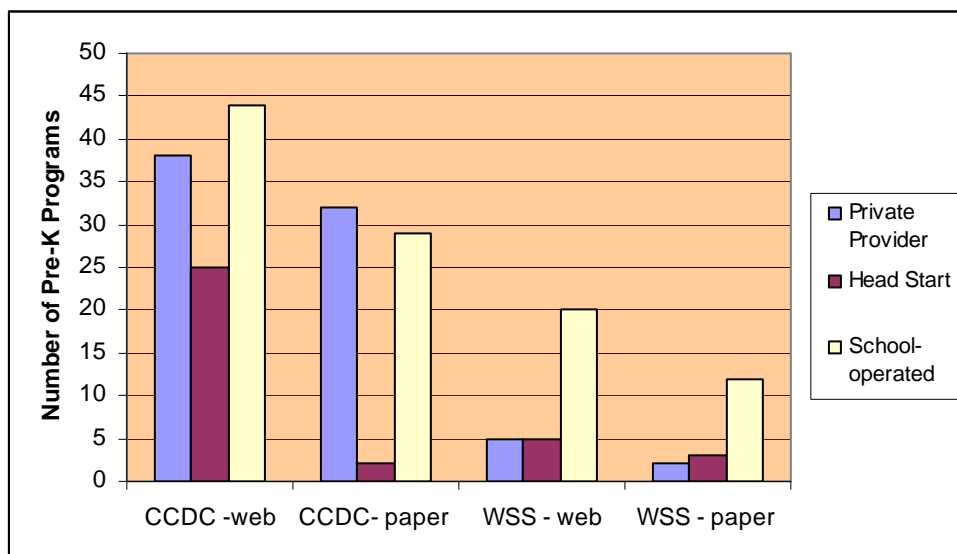
Act 62 requires all prekindergarten programs to gather information on the impacts they are having on children's development. A committee comprising a cross-section of early childhood educators and administrators was convened in early spring of 2008 to discuss the best approach to measuring child progress. The DOE and DCF commissioners accepted the committee's recommendation of allowing programs to choose either the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum (CCDC) or the Work Sampling System (WSS) for measuring child progress. Both tools are based on careful observations and documentation of young children rather than the inappropriate use of formal testing procedures. Furthermore, the results of these assessments inform planning and enable the educator to differentiate instruction.

As reported earlier, a training-of-trainers session for each assessment tool was offered in the summer of 2008. Onsite trainings on CCDC and WSS were provided during 2009 to early care and education providers, Head Start staff, Pre-K and EEE staff of school-operated programs, and any others who wished to join. Trainings were provided during weekdays, evenings and on

weekends in order to accommodate as many individuals' schedules as possible. Follow-up sessions on using the results to teach more effectively and intentionally are now being offered, as well as how to use the optional Web-based versions of CCDC or WSS.

Due to the one year delay imposed by Act 132 on measuring child progress, all pre-K programs are now in the midst of collecting their first year's data. Hence, data on prekindergarten education's impacts on children's development are not available in this report. The first set of results will be reported to the DOE on July 15, 2010. The information that is currently available is a breakdown of which prekindergarten assessment tool all pre-K programs are implementing; these data are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Selection of Prekindergarten Assessments and Format by Program Type



PART III – Costs and Caps

Prekindergarten Funding Under Act 68

Pre-K funding is included in the general funding law also known as Act 68 (of 2005); Pre-K is not funded separately. Under Act 68 the portion of the school district budget (including that for Pre-K) known as education spending is paid from the state's Education Fund. Under this law the state no longer pays out block grants driven by a pupil count. Instead, it funds education spending which is that portion of the district expenditure budget that is not funded from another source. On average education spending is about 80 percent of a district's budget.

The Average Daily Membership (ADM) of a district is the main component used in the equalized pupil calculation for the district. The equalized pupil calculation is used to determine the district's homestead property tax rates (percentage of property value or percentage of household income). Once the district's education spending amount is known it is divided by the number of the district's equalized pupils to give a spending- per-pupil amount. A district's homestead tax rate will be the same percentage above the base tax rate as the district's per-pupil spending is above the base amount. The base rates and base spending amount are set each year by the Legislature.

Understanding education spending is important to the discussion of Pre-K costs because it explains some of the variation in funding for partnership agreements across districts. There is no established dollar amount attached to Pre-K children counted in a district's ADM. Each district assigns Pre-K expenditures as part of its annual budget and negotiates individual agreements and payments with community partners for the Pre-K services they deliver to district Pre-K pupils.

Education Fund Expenditures for Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Education

It is clear that expenditures supporting publicly funded prekindergarten education have risen over the past few years. The magnitude of that increase is difficult to specify since reporting requirements have changed during that period. Prior to Act 62, the distinctions between Essential Early Education (EEE) and prekindergarten spending were blurred. Table 7 details the combined expenditures and enrollments for EEE and Pre-K from 2003 - 2007.

Table 7 Combined EEE & PreK Expenditures & Enrollments

	Expenditures	Pre-K & EEE Enrollments
FY04	\$17,867,253	3,027
FY05	\$21,060,572	3,698
FY06	\$18,105,481	4,059
FY07	\$18,555,093	4,310

While the combined Pre-K and EEE expenditures increased at a steady pace throughout this period (with the notable exception of the jump in FY05), the increase in combined enrollment numbers rose at a sharper incline indicating that cost for each enrolled child actually decreased by about 27 percent over these four years.

▪ ***Prekindergarten Expenditures in FY08 and FY09***

The enactment of Act 62 required SD and SU business managers to separate EEE and Pre-K expenditures to provide more detailed reporting of Pre-K costs. The effect of the mandated changes to accounting procedures on Pre-K expenditure reports in these first two years cannot be overestimated. Some districts that did not report Pre-K expenditures in FY08 did so in FY09. Some of these districts only began to offer prekindergarten education in FY09, others may have inaccurately reported Pre-K expenditures at the elementary level in FY08. There were a number of districts that reported Pre-K expenditures in FY08 but not in FY09. The DOE will be following up with these districts as it verifies FY09 expenditures later this winter and spring. Given these inconsistencies school districts' pre-K expenditure reports are best viewed as a preliminary consideration of actual pre-K costs.

Table 8 details the combined expenditures and enrollments for EEE and Pre-K as reported by districts in 2008 and 2009.

Table 8. Pre-K Expenditures & Enrollments

	Expenditures	Pre-K Enrollments
FY08	\$8,458,454	3,560
FY09 ⁵	\$14,877,483	3,690

Taken at face value it would appear that pre-K spending and per-child costs increased dramatically over this period but given the caveats expressed above, this may not be a true picture. The increase for districts that reported pre-K expenditures for both FY08 and FY09 is 34 percent lower than the overall increase reflected for all reporting districts in Table 8. The following are some possible explanations as to the increase in expenditures:

1. A substantial, but unknown, portion of the 34 percent increase is an actual increase in pre-K spending.
2. As districts' business managers understand and become more accustomed to using the new pre-K and EEE accounting practices, they are including more expenditures in Pre-K that were not reported in Pre-K previously.
3. As pre-K spending receives more state attention, business managers spend more time identifying those costs and presumably find more.
4. The DOE special education audit team is making an effort to educate districts to include certain expenses in pre-K that were erroneously reported in special education.

The DOE is continuing to work with districts to interpret the inconsistencies in expenditure reports, detect irregularities in reporting practices, and provide clear guidance for on-going identification and reporting of Pre-K expenditures. As districts become more experienced in distinguishing and accurately reporting Pre-K expenditures, a clearer picture will emerge.

⁵ FY 09 expenditure reports are not yet final – these are in the process of being verified by the DOE
Report to the Legislature on Prekindergarten Education
January 31, 2010

EEE Expenditures in FY08 & FY09

Since Act 62 became effective in FY08, the EEE costs for children 3 to 5 years of age with disabilities were separated from the combined “early education” spending. Table 9 presents EEE expenditures for FY08 and FY09 by funding source. In contrast to Pre-K, EEE is funded by federal, state and local funds.

Table 9. EEE Expenditures by Funding Source

	State EEE Grant	Local Funds (Education Fund)	Federal IDEA	Miscellaneous federal, state & local*	TOTAL
FY08	\$5,124,779	\$7,917,598	\$3,539,956	\$520,271	\$17,102,604
FY09	\$5,381,635	\$9,531,794	\$3,460,741	\$410,200	\$18,784,370
Percent change	5.0%	20.4%	-2.2%	-21.2%	9.8%

*NOTE: Miscellaneous includes: federal Medicaid Reinvestment, Title I and II; and state Early Education Initiative monies.

Based on the expenditures reported to the DOE, the increase in the EEE expenditures between FY08 and FY09 is 9.8 percent. However, the distribution of that increase across funding sources is uneven. While there was a 5 percent increase in state EEE grant funds and a *decrease* of 2.2 percent in expenditures supported with federal IDEA funds, there was a 20.4 percent increase in the use of local funds for EEE. The decrease in “miscellaneous federal, state, and local funds” of 21.2 percent is notable.

Other Sources for Funding Prekindergarten Education

Prekindergarten education for 3- and 4-year-old children in Vermont is also supported by a number of interconnected funding streams including public funds from federal, state and local sources, private philanthropic dollars and parent tuition payments.

Many Vermont preschoolers participate in learning experiences that meet Act 62 standards for prekindergarten while attending federally funded Head Start programs or as part of high-quality child care experiences funded primarily by parent tuitions with some subsidies from the DCF CC Financial Assistance Program and private philanthropy.

The layered funds supporting complementary services for young children are difficult to separate and discreetly quantify. The expenditures reported by school districts under Act 62 may actually identify only part of the cost for 10 hours a week of prekindergarten services for the children counted in ADM who comprise about 27 percent of all 3- 4 year-old children in Vermont. Community providers often supplement funding from partnerships with other public and private resources. Local school systems and their community partners may also be using Title I funds, Early Education Initiative competitive grant funds or other resources to fund Pre-K services that are not part of Act 62 or EEE reporting.

Report on Act 62 ADM Caps or Limitations

Every fall, the DOE conducts a census of children enrolled in school. The school census lists enrolled children by town of residence and grade level, and, in the case of EEE and Pre-K, by the number of hours per week the child receives services if less than 10 hours. This information

provides the DOE with the enrollment numbers included in Part II of this report. In the current 2009-2010 school census, 3,789 children were reported as enrolled in pre-K and 1,089 reported as enrolled in EEE.

The results of the school census are converted to full-time equivalents and used to calculate a school district's Average Daily Membership (ADM). In the case of Pre-K and EEE, a full-time equivalent (FTE) is 10 hours; fewer hours are prorated. Act 62 stipulates that Pre-K must be at least six hours per week in order to be counted. Since EEE services are dependent upon a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP), there is no such minimum. (It should be noted that children receiving both EEE and Pre-K services are only included in the school census under "EEE" for the combined number of hours.)

The weighting of FTEs varies by grade level: Pre-K or EEE is 0.46 whereas K-Grade 6 is calculated with a weight of 1.0. A school district's ADM is based on the average of the previous two years. Hence, the effects of adding Pre-K children to the school census are not fully realized until the third year after the increased numbers. This aspect of ADM has created many misconceptions throughout the state. Specifically, there was a practice of school districts partnering with private providers or Head Start, including those children in their school census, but not compensating the provider at all in Year 1, only 50 percent in Year 2, and finally 100 percent in Year 3. This practice should not have been used since school districts may only count children to whom they provide and fund an educational program, either directly or through a contract with a partner.

In an effort to contain costs, Act 62 imposed limits or caps on how many 3-5-year-old Pre-K children a school district may include in its ADM. Initially, there were four options. Act 132 added one more option (see #4 below) and created an operational definition for the original "all 4-year-olds" option (see #3 below). The five options for setting limits currently available to school districts are:

1. ten children;
2. one plus the average annual increase or decrease in the district's first grade ADM as counted over the last five years times the most recent first grade ADM;
3. the total number of children who are enrolled in Pre-K and who are eligible to enter kindergarten in the following academic year;
4. one-fifth of the total number of children in grades 1-5 who were included in last year's ADM; or
5. the highest number of Pre-K children a school district counted in 2004-5, 2005-6, or in 2006-7.

Table 10 on the following page details the number and percentages of school districts that have chosen each option since Pre-K caps came into existence. It is important to note that only 207 of the 260 town school districts included in this table currently include prekindergarten children in their school census.

Table 10 ADM Cap Options School Districts Selected FY08-FY10

Options	FY08		FY09		FY10	
	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
1	72	27.69	73	28.08	87	33.46
2	114	43.85	74	28.46	75	28.85
3	-	0.00	1	0.38	2	0.77
4*			78	30.00	70	26.92
5	74	28.46	34	13.08	26	10.00
Total	260		260		260	

NOTE: Option #4 in FY08 is the same as #5 in the FY09 and FY10 reporting.

There has been a steady decrease of districts opting for the highest number of children counted in the three years prior to the enactment of Act 62. Option #4, which was created in Act 132, appears to be popular. In 2009-2010, only two districts chose Option 3 which essentially allows including all children the year before they are eligible for kindergarten.

The Pre-K and EEE full-time equivalents over the three years since Act 62 became effective are presented in Table 11 along with the number of districts that exceeded caps and by how many FTEs. It should be noted that some districts failed to include all of the children they provided services to in their reports which effects the accuracy of this FTE data.

▪ ***Effects of Cap on Pre-K ADM***

Act 62 established the Pre-K caps, but it also provided for a legislative review of the caps in January 2010. Since the effects of imposing a limit on the number of Pre-K children town school districts could count were unknown, the “let’s try it for three years and see” approach was taken.

Table 11. FY08 through FY10 ADM for Pre-K and EEE

	FY08 ADM	FY09 ADM	FY10 ADM
Pre-K Only	3,147.64	3,233.70	3,352.24
EEE	762.79	724.33	838.03
Total	3,910.43	3,958.03	4,190.27
<i># districts that exceeded cap</i>	20	14	16
<i>ADM losses due to cap</i>	74.38	58.95	45.12

As is evident in Table 11, in FY10 a total of 16 school districts exceeded their Pre-K cap, although the total number of FTEs lost because the cap was nominal when compared with the total number of pre-K FTEs (i.e., 1.4 percent). It is not yet clear how these 16 town school districts were impacted by providing services to more children than the cap allowed.

There is little evidence to support a perception that caps pose a barrier to children's access to prekindergarten education and impede the growth of local partnerships. The available data show that 191 town school districts that counted Pre-K children in FY10 did not exceed their cap. In fact, in many instances, Pre-K enrollment in these districts was well below caps. Based on anecdotal information received, the slow growth of prekindergarten education after the enactment of Act 62 can be attributed more to school districts' budget constraints in a difficult economic environment than to the Pre-K caps. General lack of funding limits town school districts' ability to increase their capacity to serve more children by any means (establishing or expanding partnerships and/or school operated programs).

▪ ***Nondiscriminatory Enrollment Practices***

Act 62 stipulated that every child residing in a town school district that has opted to offer publicly funded prekindergarten must have an equal opportunity to attend a program. If the number of applications for children seeking to enroll in publicly funded prekindergarten does not exceed the district's cap or capacity, then all of the children should be enrolled. However, when the demand for publicly funded Pre-K education exceeds a town school district's capacity - either due to its ADM cap, finances, lack of qualified private providers, limitations of space, etc. - a nondiscriminatory or "blind" method must be used to select children since all children must have an equal opportunity to be selected.

Several early education coordinators across the state have reported that their inability to prioritize which children can attend when there is limited capacity or ADM cap is the most challenging aspect of implementing Act 62. Managing the application and selection processes and informing families of whether or not their children have been selected are time consuming and not the best way to start a relationship with families. This selection process also impacts private providers since there is no assurance that all of the children from a particular school district attending a program will be eligible for publicly funded Pre-K even when a partnership exists. The time it takes to finalize which children are eligible impacts families' and private providers' ability to plan for a school year.

Part IV – Commissioners’ Recommendations

A relatively short period of time has elapsed since the enactment of Act 62. The implementation of Act 62 has had an even shorter history since the prekindergarten rules only became effective in July 2008. Some sections of these rules, such as reporting child progress, have only taken effect this current school year. Therefore, the overall recommendation of our departments is to “stay the course”, continue providing technical assistance, and gather accurate data before making any major changes to Vermont’s publicly funded Pre-K education.

We respectfully submit the following recommendations:

- Use adjustments in rules and regulations to address any early concerns.
- Allow school districts, community partners, agencies more time to become established, report accurate data and fully assess how well the intent of Act 62 as enacted and amended has been met.
- Gather information from families on their experiences with publicly funded pre-K programs.
- DCF and DOE should continue to collaboratively administer publicly funded Pre-K implementation, committing lead staff from both departments to guide and support emerging programs and partnerships.
- Continue the Pre-K ADM caps until there is more evidence that the caps are adversely affecting children, families, providers and town school districts.
- Strengthen the requirement for a community needs assessment required in Act 62 when school districts seek to establish or expand publicly funded prekindergarten education. We suggest amending the prekindergarten rules in the following ways:
 - (1) School districts would need to notify DOE and DCF before conducting a community needs assessment.
 - (2) All community needs assessments should follow a required template and process.
 - (3) The plan developed for the establishment or expansion of Pre-K should be submitted to the DOE and DCF, and posted for the public’s review for a specified period of time.
 - (4) Any objections to the proposed plan would need to be submitted to the school district, and the DCF and DOE commissioners.
 - (5) If DCF and DOE commissioners determine that a school district has not met the intent of Act 62 in establishing or expanding a Pre-K program, that district will not be allowed to count enrolled children in the ADM.
- Provide the Legislature with a report of the effects of publicly funded prekindergarten education on children’s developmental progress in January 2011.
- Continue to explore how different funding streams can be used more effectively to support Pre-K partnerships and services.
- Provide the Legislature with an update on the cost of prekindergarten education to the Education Fund, and Pre-K enrollments in January 2011.
- Establish a strong public-private partnership to provide targeted technical assistance to districts and community partners working on implementation in communities.



STATE OF VERMONT

**Department for Children and Families
Child Development Division
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05671-5500**

1-800-649-2642 or 1-802-241-3110

<http://www.dcf.state.vt.us/cdd>

STEP AHEAD RECOGNITION SYSTEM (STARS) STANDARDS

Effective Date: January 3, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I Purpose	1
II Authority	1
III Terms and Definitions	1
IV STARS Framework	2
IV A STARS Arenas	2
IV B Five Levels of Quality and Required Points	2
IV C STARS Certificates	3
V Standards and Points	3
V A Regulatory Compliance History Arena of Action	3
V B Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena of Action	4
V C Families and Communities Arena of Action	5
V D Program Practices Arena of Action	6
V E Administration Arena of Action	8
V E 1 For Registered Homes	8
V E 2 For Licensed Programs	8
V E 3 For School-operated Pre-kindergarten Programs	9
VI Financial Incentive and Maintenance Payments	10
VI A Incentives for Initial Achievement or Advancement of Stars	10
VI B Incentives for Maintenance of Stars	10
VI C Enhanced STARS Rates for Children Eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance	10
VI D Limits on Incentive Payments and Enhanced Rates	10
VII Falsification of Information	11
VIII Grievances	11
IX Effective Date	11

STEP AHEAD RECOGNITION SYSTEM (STARS) STANDARDS

I Purpose

The purpose of these rules is to establish the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS). The specific purpose of this quality recognition system is to promote, reward and recognize child care and education programs that achieve standards above the licensing requirements of the Department for Children and Families (DCF), Child Development Division (CDD). STARS is designed to be applicable to public and private programs regulated by DCF/CDD, including prekindergarten education programs in public schools.

II Authority

Authority for this program is Act 132 of 2008, 33 V.S.A. § 307, 16 V.S.A. § 829 and the federal Child Care Development Block Grant, 45 CFR Parts 98 and 99.

III Terms and Definitions

- III A "After school" means services to kindergarten and elementary school age children. After school services take place in diverse settings, and before and after school, school vacations, and summer.
- III B "Arena" means a specific core area of program operations.
- III C "Average Daily Membership" (ADM) is defined in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 4001(1).
- III D "Child care" or "child care services" means developmentally appropriate care and supervision of a child under age 13 for fewer than 24 hours a day by a DCF/CDD regulated provider.
- III E "IPDP" is an Individualized Professional Development Plan that identifies personal learning needs and goals and how to achieve them. For teachers who hold a Department of Education (DOE) educator's license, an equivalent to this type of IPDP is a statement of annual professional development goals.
- III F "Licensed program" is an early childhood and/or after school program that provides care and education services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 306(b) and 33 V.S.A. § 3502(d).
- III G "Part-day/part-year program" is a program that children attend for fewer than 26 hours per week and fewer than 42 weeks per year.

- III H “Professional development” means documented learning experiences that provide a variety of ongoing opportunities for professionals to refine and expand their knowledge and skills.
- III I “Program staff” include the people who work for the early childhood, preschool or after school program and who are either counted in the staff-child ratios or serve a supervisory or administrative role.
- III J “Regulated provider” means a person or entity licensed or registered by the DCF/CDD to provide early care, education or school age care services.
- III K “School-operated” is a program for which the CDD license is applied for and maintained under the auspices of a public school, school district or supervisory union.
- III L “STARS” is the STep Ahead Recognition System, Vermont’s graduated system of quality recognition for child care, early education and after school programs.
- III M “Teaching staff” are those individuals responsible for planning, implementing, and/or evaluating the program’s curriculum and overall implementation.

IV STARS Framework

STARS is a graduated point system with five levels. Applicants determine the level of recognition their program has achieved according to the standards for each arena and submit evidence documenting their achievements on a regular basis.

IV A STARS Arenas

1. Regulatory Compliance History,
2. Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development,
3. Families and Community,
4. Program Practices, and
5. Administration.

Upon review and approval of the application materials, a certificate indicating the level of achievement and the date of achievement is awarded.

IV B Five Levels of Quality and Required Points

- One Star is achieved when the program obtains one to four points.
- Two Stars is achieved when the program obtains a total of five to eight points.
- Three Stars is achieved when the program obtains a total of nine to 11 points.
- Four Stars is achieved when the program obtains a total of 12 to 14 points including at least two points in the Program Practices Arena.
- Five Stars is achieved when the program obtains a total of 15 to 17 points.

IV C STARS Certificates

STARS certificates are valid for three years from the date of issue and a brief annual CDD/DOE approved report form must be submitted in which the program affirms maintenance of star level standards or formally reports changes. Documentation to reapply for STARS certification must be received at least 90 days prior to the expiration date of the valid certificate.

Holders of STARS certificates shall permit on-site visits, announced or unannounced, by representatives of the department for children and families and the department of education during the three year interval between renewals.

An applicant who fails to obtain any STARS after submitting an initial application may re-apply after a period of 6 months.

V Standards and Points

V A Regulatory Compliance History Arena of Action

Points in the Regulatory Compliance arena shall be awarded in accordance with the following criteria:

In Compliance means that the program is in compliance with all DCF/CDD regulations, a DCF licenser has conducted an onsite inspection within the last two years and any substantiated violations have been corrected.

1 Point:

The program is in compliance as defined above and within the past year has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification, and has not had any substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of regulatory non-compliance.

2 Points:

The program is in compliance as defined above and within the past three years has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification, and has not had any repeated substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of regulatory non-compliance.

3 Points:

The program is in compliance as defined above and within the past five years has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification, and has not had any repeated, substantiated violations of the same nature, or exhibited a general pattern of regulatory non-compliance.

V B Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena of Action

Points in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena shall be awarded in accordance with the following criteria:

In Compliance means that all program teaching staff or the registrant and any regular staff in his/her program meet applicable DCF/CDD and Department of Education (DOE) standards and regulations for qualifications and annual professional development. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

1 Point:

- All teaching staff members or the registrant have an updated Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or a statement of annual professional development goals.
- The program or registrant completes the DCF/CDD and DOE approved worksheet that assigns a numerical value to educational level, experience in the field and hours of participation in relevant professional development.
- The program's average score across all teaching staff, or the registrant's score, is between 0.31 and 1.3.

2 Points:

- All teaching staff members or the registrant have an updated Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or a statement of annual professional development goals.
- The program or registrant complete the worksheet described for 1 point.
- The program's average score across all teaching staff, or the registrant's score, is between 1.31 and 2.3.

3 Points:

- All teaching staff members or the registrant have an updated Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or a statement of annual professional development goals.
- The program or registrant complete the worksheet described for 1 point.

- The program's average score across all teaching staff, or the registrant's score, is between 2.31 and 3.0.

V C Families and Communities Arena of Action

In the Families and Community Arena, applicants achieve points as follows:

In Compliance means that the program meets DCF/CDD or Department of Education (DOE) Prekindergarten regulations related to parent/family handbooks and policies, and the program communicates with families as required. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

1 Point:

The program's practices and policies support and strengthen families by:

- Collecting annual family satisfaction surveys and using the results to inform program practices or, if applicable, having a school action plan that meets DOE requirements and includes plans for improving the prekindergarten programs.
- Actively making resources and information available to families.
- Having a written philosophy about the relationship between families and the program.
- The program maintains connections with the professional community through participation in at least 4 professional networking activities each year.

2 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for one point (above) plus the program's practices and policies support and strengthen families by providing:

- Opportunities for families to meet with program staff and other parents through at least 2 social events and 1 group event annually designed to discuss specific content.
- Opportunities for families to be involved in the program throughout the year.
- A program that is prepared to serve children with special needs, including children who have been abused or neglected. The program is either a Specialized Services provider or a school-operated program that ensures all staff is trained in policies regarding the care of all children, including children who are at-risk, have disabilities, have been abused or neglected or are in the foster care system.

- A program that maintains connections with the community to support and advocate for children, families or the profession through participation in family service teams, community-based groups, and similar activities for a total of at least 24 hours per year. Part-day/part year programs may have a total of 12 hours a year.

3 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for two points (above) plus the program demonstrates its commitment to strong families, strong communities or a strong profession through:

- Annually assessing the program's family-strengthening practices using a CDD/DOE approved tool that addresses strategies including: facilitating social connections among parents, parent education, response to families in crisis, connecting families to services and opportunities, support for children's social-emotional development and response to early signs of abuse and neglect.
- Creating a continuous improvement plan to implement and maintain practices related to strengthening families' protective factors (e.g., parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development)

~ OR ~

- Providing leadership in the profession through engagement in a variety of local, statewide or national activities and initiatives (e.g., activism, advocacy, teaching, mentoring).
- Having a written leadership philosophy for the program that details how staff leadership activities impact on the profession and quality of early childhood or afterschool care and education.

V D Program Practices Arena of Action

In the Program Practices Arena, applicants achieve points as follows:

In Compliance means that the program operates as required by DCF/CDD and DOE regulations, as applicable, related to curriculum, developmental appropriate activities, child guidance, child-adult interactions and care giving, use of the Vermont early learning standards or other age-appropriate learning standards, guidelines or frameworks. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

1 Point:

The program completes a self-evaluation using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved self-assessment tool and writes an improvement plan based upon self-assessment findings. Staff is involved in the self-assessment, is informed of the results and provides input into the written improvement plan.

2 Points:

- The program completes a self-assessment and is evaluated using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved program assessment tool by an approved validator. Staff members provide input for and receive feedback on the assessment and the program submits a written improvement plan.
- Also, the program regularly uses observation and other forms of informal assessments to document children's strengths, needs, interests and growth. The program maintains records of this documentation and utilizes the results of this ongoing system of assessment to inform curriculum planning.

3 Points:

- The program completes a self-assessment and is evaluated by an approved validator using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved program assessment tool, and the program reaches a specified minimum score on the assessment. Staff members provide input during the evaluation process and receive feedback. The program submits a written improvement plan.
- Also, the program regularly uses observation and documents children's strengths, needs, interests and growth. The program maintains related records and utilizes the results of this ongoing system of assessment to inform curriculum planning.

4 Points:

- The program completes a self-assessment and is evaluated by an approved validator using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved program assessment tool, the program has obtained a specified minimum score on the assessment, and staff members have provided input and receive feedback during the evaluation process. The program submits a written improvement plan and evidence that actions specified in previous improvement plans have been completed.
- Also, the program regularly uses observation and documents children's strengths, needs, interests and growth through the use of a DCF/CDD and DOE approved tool at least twice a year. The program maintains records of this documentation and uses the results from child assessments to inform curriculum planning.

5 Points:

- The program holds a current DCF/CDD and DOE approved accreditation or other approved standard, has a written improvement plan based upon the findings of an annual self-assessment, and submits evidence that actions specified in previous improvement plans have been completed.

- Also, the program regularly uses observation and documents children's strengths, needs, interests and growth through use of a DCF/CDD and DOE approved tool at least twice a year. The program maintains records of this documentation and uses the results from the child assessment to inform curriculum planning.

V E Administration Arena of Action

In the Administration Arena of Action, applicants achieve points as follows:

V E 1 For Registered Homes:

In Compliance means that the program meets all DCF/CDD regulations related to business practices, policies, required certifications, permits, applications and re-application materials. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

1 Point:

The program has a contract or other written agreement with parent signature and written policies for exclusions due to child illness, payment for services and daily routines for children.

2 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for one point (above) plus the program has established a fee structure. The program has clear policies for the registrant's vacation, sick, holiday and professional days. At least one person in the program is a member of a professional organization relevant to early childhood or after school professionals.

3 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for two points (above) plus has a parent handbook written specifically for this program. The handbook includes the registrant's program philosophy and guidance philosophy. The program operates a financially sound business that conforms to federal standards for small businesses. The program carries liability insurance.

V E 2 For Licensed Programs:

In Compliance means that the program meets all DCF/CDD regulations related to policies, required certifications, permits and business practices. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

1 Point:

The program has an employee handbook detailing how professional development is supported and how Individual Professional Development Plans are incorporated into staff supervision. Staff members have opportunities to refine their skills through a system of regular feedback and guidance. Also, the program's employee handbook details policies on hiring and firing, benefits, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment and reporting on child abuse or neglect.

2 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for one point (above) plus staff working five or more hours per shift have paid breaks within the scheduled work day. Staff members responsible for planning curriculum are given at least one hour per week of paid planning time. Also, all program staff receive at least two of the following benefits: paid vacation, sick, personal or professional days.

3 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for two points (above) plus staff members are provided with written policies addressing a salary system that recognizes professional achievement. The median adjusted pay for all employees is at least 85% of Vermont's livable wage for a "single person without employer paid health benefits".

V E 3 For School-operated Pre-kindergarten Programs:

In Compliance means that the program meets all DCF/CDD and DOE regulations related to policies, required certifications, permits and business practices. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

1 Point:

The teaching staff has a contract that includes terms of employment, access to benefits, and a salary scale. The staff supervision process is described and fully implemented. Staff is provided with information on policies related to sexual harassment.

2 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for one point (above) plus provides staff a description of their rights and grievance procedures.

3 Points:

The program adheres to all standards for two points (above) plus has an articulated and fully implemented process for staff supervision and professional development.

VI Financial Incentive and Maintenance Payments

VI A Incentives for Initial Achievement or Advancement of Stars

When a program initially achieves a star(s) or initially advances to a higher level of stars, the DCF may provide a one time financial incentive payment in an amount established at least annually by the DCF Commissioner. Initial incentive payments are subject to availability of funds and may otherwise be limited by these standards or by law.

VI B Incentives for Maintenance of Stars

When a program successfully maintains a star or stars level over time, the DCF may provide a financial maintenance incentive payment in an amount established at least annually by the DCF Commissioner. Maintenance incentive payments shall be subject to availability of funds and may otherwise be limited by these standards or by law. The Commissioner shall define annually the term “successive years” for purposes of maintenance incentive payments.

VI C Quality Factor Payments to STARS Participating Programs

When a program achieves a star level, the DCF may pay on behalf of an eligible child a quality factor amount above the CDD base payment. Such payments may be adjusted by the DCF Commissioner at least annually to coincide with available funding and may otherwise be limited by these standards or by law. Suspension, reduction or increase of these payments by the DCF Commissioner shall not require modification of these regulations through the rule-making process.

VI D Limits on Incentive Payments and Enhanced Rates

In the event that annual funds are insufficient to meet payment rates established at least annually by the DCF Commissioner, the Commissioner reserves the right to exercise discretion and limit or suspend award of one time financial incentive payments, maintenance incentive payments and enhanced rates otherwise payable under this program. If limitation or suspension of payments is necessary due to lack of funds, maintenance payments shall be limited or suspended before one time incentive payments.

The DCF Commissioner shall make reasonable efforts to notify any pending and prospective applicants prior to limitation or suspension of incentive payments and/or enhanced rates due to the lack of funding.

Financial incentives, including enhanced rates, awarded under this program are subject to re-payment if awarded in error or due to applicant fraud or misrepresentation. Financial incentives awarded under this program are subject to garnishment, recoupment, other attachment or legal remedy pursued by DCF, the State of Vermont, or as otherwise authorized by law.

VII Falsification of Information

An applicant or STARS participant who has interfered with, impeded, deterred, provided false information to or in any manner hindered the DCF or its agents in investigation or inspection of a regulated facility or program, or in the validation of a STARS application, shall not be eligible for participation in STARS for a period of at least three years.

Concern about misrepresentation or false information made on a STARS application may be referred to the CDD or DOE for investigation.

VIII Grievances

Applicants or program participants have the right to appeal rejection of their application materials or other adverse decision related to the STARS program, such as the suspension or revocation of a STARS certificate in connection with enforcement of licensing regulations, subsidy regulations or these standards.

Appeals must be in writing and received by the DCF Commissioner within 30 days of the date of rejection or other adverse decision. If the appeal is from a school-operated pre-kindergarten program, the Commissioner of the Department of Education shall join the Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families in deciding the appeal.

The applicant or grievant shall have the opportunity to present the appeal to a STARS grievance committee. The committee shall be appointed by the Commissioner(s), consist of at least three members including one from the regulated provider community, and provide the Commissioner(s) with a recommendation. The Commissioner(s) shall make a final decision on the grievance and provide the grievant with a written decision. The grievant may appeal the final decision of the Commissioner(s) to the Human Services Board within thirty days of the date of the final decision.

Financial incentives shall not be paid while an appeal is pending. If a successful final appeal results in a determination that a STARS program participant is due a financial incentive or maintenance payment, DCF will award payment in full within 60 days.

IX Effective Date

These rules shall become effective on January 3, 2010. Providers shall have a two year transition period during which they shall have the option to apply for or renew their stars participation under these new rules or under the procedures used prior to the adaptation of these rules. Beginning on January 3, 2012, all new star applications and renewals shall comply with these rules.

What is STARS?

STARS stands for the **ST**ep **A**head **R**ecognition **S**ystem. It is Vermont’s system for recognizing and improving quality in:

- Registered child care homes;
- Licensed family child care homes;
- Licensed early childhood programs;
- Licensed school-age care programs;
- Preschool (PreK) programs that receive public education funding;
- Non-recurring child care programs (i.e., child care at ski resorts); and
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

How does it work?

Programs may apply for recognition in five areas:

1. Regulatory history;
2. Staff qualifications;
3. Families and communities;
4. Program practices; and
5. Administration.

Programs can earn up to 5 points in *program practices* and up to 3 points in all other areas, for a total of up to 17 points.

What do the points mean?

Programs are awarded 1 to 5 stars, based on the total number of points earned.

- 1 - 4 points = ★
- 5 - 8 points = ★ ★
- 9 - 11 points = ★ ★ ★
- 12 - 14 points = ★ ★ ★ ★
- 15 - 17 points = ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One-star programs may be just starting on a path to improvement or may be stronger in one area.

Two-star programs may have made some progress in many areas or more progress in one or two areas.

Three-star programs have either made substantial progress in two or three areas or some improvements in all five.

Four-star programs have documented quality in all five areas. Many are also nationally accredited.

Five-star programs are outstanding in all five areas. Many are also nationally accredited.

Do programs have to participate in STARS?

According to Vermont statute, programs that receive public education funding for preschool age children *must*:

- a. Be nationally accredited;
- b. Have 4 or 5 stars; OR
- c. Have a plan in place to achieve 4 or 5 stars.

While other programs are not required to participate in STARS to become licensed or registered, participation has benefits for both parents and programs.

How does STARS benefit me as a parent?

- STARS can help you find a quality program for your child.
- You may pay less for child care if you receive child care financial assistance AND use a program that has stars. This is because the Child Development Division pays a higher rate to programs with stars. *Note: Financial assistance payments are made directly to providers.*
- You may qualify for a tax credit on your Vermont state income tax if you meet income guidelines AND use a program that has 3, 4, or 5 stars.

How does STARS benefit programs?

Programs that participate in STARS get:

- A higher reimbursement rate from the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (5% to 40% above base rate) based on the number of stars earned.
- Bonus payment for each level achieved ranging from \$250 to \$1,550.
- Help promoting their participation in STARS (e.g., listing on the STARS website, supply of STARS brochures, and a customized press release).
- The opportunity to apply for grants open only to programs that have stars or national accreditation.
- Discounts from some companies.



“STARS builds confidence for you to try something new and to not be afraid.”
- Center Director

Who can apply?

All programs registered or licensed with the Child Development Division may apply. However, programs need to be in regulatory compliance before applying.

When should we apply?

You may apply at any time. STARS is meant to begin where you are and help your program improve over time.

How do we apply?

You can either:

- Download a STARS application at dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars; or
- Contact the coordinators at (802)398-2037 or STARS@mjcvt.org to request an application by mail.

You may apply for recognition in five areas: regulatory history; staff qualifications; families & communities; program practices; and administration.

Certificates are good for three years. An annual report is required.

"This is a wonderful way for providers to get recognized for their commitment in the field."

- Registered Provider

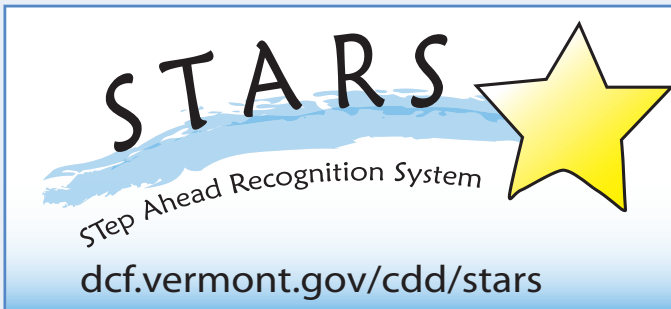
What if my program is accredited?

There is a streamlined application for:

- Nationally accredited programs. These programs have already gone through an accreditation process and earned an accreditation certificate.
- Head Start programs that are in high compliance with national Head Start performance standards.

Is help available?

Yes. Technical assistance is available. Contact a STARS coordinator at (802) 398-2037 or STARS@mjcvt.org. The coordinator can explain how the program works and what you need to include with your application. You'll continue to have access to technical assistance after you have achieved a star level.



10/2010 • 10,000

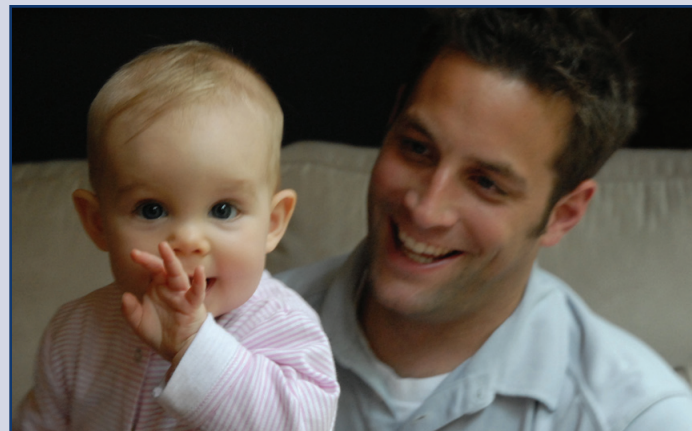
How can STARS help me find a program?

Choosing the right program for your child is one of the most important decisions you'll face as a parent. STARS can help!

STARS can make it easier for you to find a quality program for your child. STARS recognized programs have demonstrated their commitment to quality care and education. The more stars a program has, the more involved it is in a wide range of practices that support children, families, and professionals.

How do I find STARS programs?

Go to dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars or call the Child Development Division (CDD) at 1-800-649-2642.



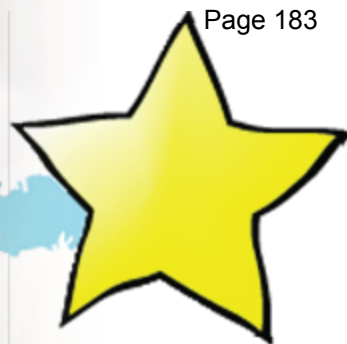
STARS

Information for Parents & Programs

 **VERMONT**
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

STARS

Step Ahead Recognition System



STARS is Vermont's quality recognition system for child care, preschool, and afterschool programs. Programs that participate in STARS are stepping ahead – going above and beyond state regulations to provide professional services that meet the needs of children and families.

How STARS works:

Regulated early childhood and afterschool programs apply for points in one or more of the five arenas of quality.

- Regulatory history
- Staff qualifications and annual Professional development
- Families and Communities
 - Program practices
 - Administration

There are three to five points possible in each arena. Providers identify the points their program is eligible to earn based on their specific achievements. The point total determines the star level.

1 – 4 points = ★

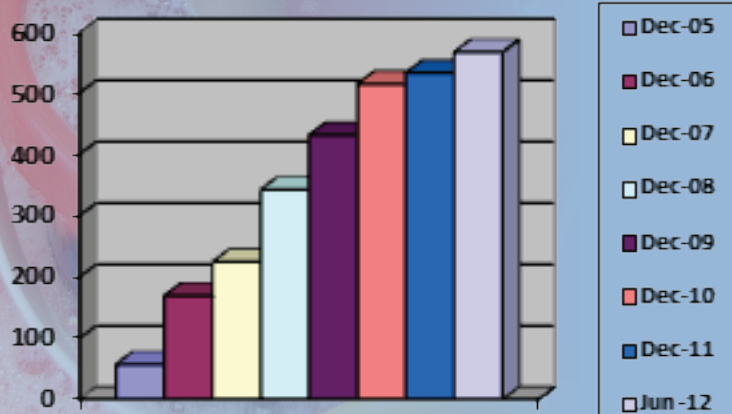
5 – 8 points = ★★

9 – 11 points = ★★★

12 – 14 points = ★★★★

15 – 17 points = ★★★★★

More child care programs are joining every day!



How Does a Regulated Program Achieve STARS?*

Arena	No Points Requested	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points	5 points	Total Points
Regulatory History	In regulatory compliance	Operated as a regulated program for 12 months to 35 months with no serious or reoccurring violations	Operated as a regulated program for 36 months to 59 months with no serious or reoccurring violations	Operated as a regulated program for 60 months or more with no serious or reoccurring violations			
Staff Qualifications	In compliance with Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations for staff training and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an individual professional development plan AND Score based on achievements in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course work Experience Annual Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an individual professional development plan AND Score based on achievements in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course work Experience Annual Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an individual professional development plan AND Score based on achievements in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course work Experience Annual Training 			
Families and Communities	In compliance with Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations for working with families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a family satisfaction survey Create a plan based on what was learned from the family satisfaction survey Have a written philosophy on relationships with families Share community information & resources with families Do some professional networking activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for one point Have social & education events for families Have opportunities for families to be involved in the program Be an approved Specialized Child Care Provider Refer families to community supports as needed 	Criteria for one and two points AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Strengthening Families Child Care Assessment Tool Develop a Strengthening Families program improvement plan OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a leadership statement Do leadership activities Professional reference about your leadership role 			
Program Practices	In compliance with Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations for program practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do an evaluation of the program using an approved tool Develop a program improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With a trained mentor do an evaluation of the program using an approved tool Develop a program improvement plan Do child observations Use child observations to plan curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an independent assessor evaluate the program using an approved tool. Achieve a specific score Develop a program improvement plan Do child observations Use child observations to plan curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an independent assessor evaluate the program using an approved tool. Achieve a specific score Develop a program improvement plan Do child observations Use child observations to plan curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have national accreditation Program improvement plan Do child observations Use child observations to plan curriculum 	
Administration	In compliance with Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations for administrating a child care program.	Family Homes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a written agreement or contract Licensed Centers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy about planning individual professional development and benefits and salary scale 	Family Homes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for one point Policy on program closures Professional membership Licensed Centers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for one point Staff breaks policy 	Family Homes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for one & two points Parent handbook Liability insurance Written budget Licensed Centers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria for one & two points Wage at least 85% of the livable wage 			
						Total Points	

VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

*Guiding the Development and Learning
of Children Entering Kindergarten*



A companion guide to the
Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

FALL 2003

Developed by
Standards, Monitoring & Technical Assistance Sub-Committee of
The Vermont Early Childhood Work Group

VERMONT'S VISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

*Every family in Vermont has the right
to comprehensive, high quality child
development services for its children.*

*Every Vermont community shall
nurture the healthy development of
young children and strengthen families.*

*To support communities, the state of
Vermont will create a unified system of
child development services which shares
common standards for quality and
respects the diversity and uniqueness of
individuals and programs.*

Richard Cate

Commissioner, Vermont Department of Education

Charles P. Smith

Secretary, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Standards, Monitoring & Technical Assistance Committee

Shawn Dubois, Rutland Head Start

Christina Manna, Vermont Agency of Human Services – Child Care Services Division

James Squires, Vermont Department of Education

Janice Stockman, Vermont Head Start – State Collaboration Office

Vermont Early Childhood Steering Committee

Brenda Bean, Program Planning Specialist,
Department of Developmental and
Mental Health Services

Julie Cadwallader-Staub, Director,
Child Care Fund of Vermont

Linda Dean, Director, Sunrise Family Resources
Center

Terri Edgerton, Director, Rutland County Parent
Child Center

Cherie Hammond, Coordinator, Lamoille County
Success By Six/ Early Childhood Council

Kim Keiser, Deputy Commissioner, Department of
Social and Rehabilitation Services

Helen Keith, Director, Family, Infant, Toddler
Program, Depts. of Health and Education

Marianne Miller, Director, Central Vermont Action
Council Head Start

Leslie Mitrano, Coordinator, Rutland County
Early Childhood Council

Daphne Moritz, Early Childhood Council of
Orange/Windsor County

Joanne Pye, Early Educator, Rutland Northeast
Supervisory Union

Madge Rossinoff, Coordinator, Orleans/Essex
Success By Six

Karen Ryder, Operations Administrator, Dept. of
Prevention, Assistance, Transition & Health Access

Sue Shepard, Public Health Nurse Specialist,
Department of Health

Betsy Shuey, Maternal Child Health Administrator,
Department of Health

Jim Squires, Early Education Programs Coordinator,
Department of Education

Janice Stockman, Assistant Director, Vermont Head
Start State Collaboration Office

Kay Van Woert, Public Engagement Coordinator,
Vermont Parent to Parent

Roy Walker, Liaison, Administration of Children and
Families, US Dept. of Health & Human Services

K.C. Whiteley, Director, Vermont Head Start State
Collaboration Office

The Vermont Early Learning Standards were produced with generous support by the Vermont Department of Education, Vermont Agency of Human Services, and the Vermont Head Start-State Collaboration Office, and the A. D. Henderson Foundation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Uses of the Vermont Early Learning Standards	1
Overview of the Vermont Early Learning Standards	2
The Role of Play	2
Guiding Principles	3
Vermont Early Learning Standards	4
Approaches to Learning	5
Social and Emotional Development	7
Language, Literacy and Communication	10
Mathematics	14
Science	16
Social Studies	18
Creative Expression	20
Physical Development and Health	23
Vermont Early Learning Standards — Quick Reference Guide	25
References and Resources	29
Appendix 1: Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success	32
Appendix 2: Advisory Panel Members	34
The Power of Play	36

Introduction

The importance of quality early childhood education as the foundation for school success and life long learning has been demonstrated by research and in practice. Before children enter school, they have accumulated five years of learning experience with their families, in their communities and in settings with other children and adults outside their homes. These early childhood experiences can ensure that all children get a strong and healthy start in life, which leads to success in school. Throughout these five years, parents, caregivers, teachers, legislators, schools and community agencies all influence how prepared children are to enter school eager to learn and ready to succeed.

The Vermont Children's Cabinet, created by Executive Order from Governor Dean with support of the Vermont Legislature, is committed to the goal that *All Children Arrive at School Ready to Succeed* regardless of socio-economic status, home language, special health needs, disabilities, or family situation. With early care and education being provided in a wide variety of settings, in programs governed by different regulations, the Vermont Department of Education; Agency of Human Services; the Head Start State Collaboration Office and Vermont Early Childhood Work Group initiated a project to collaboratively develop a set of appropriate expectations for children as they exit preschool programs to enter kindergarten. It is firmly believed that a shared understanding of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that children gain through high quality early childhood experiences leading to success in school should exist, regardless of where they may spend their waking hours. As parents and programs work from one set of child-focused standards across all settings, the opportunity to assure greater continuity across settings and form closer working partnerships will ultimately support the child's early learning experiences.

The task of developing a common set of child outcomes was assigned to the Standards, Monitoring and Technical Assistance Sub-Committee of the Vermont Early Childhood Work Group. The sub-committee consisted of practitioners drawn from early care and education programs, Head Start, public schools, state agencies, higher education, and parents. Information from several documents that are currently being used for the development of curriculum, instruction and assessment was incorporated to create a document that reflected the priorities of practitioners in Vermont. These resources included recommendations of the National Education Goals Panel, Head Start Child Outcomes, guidelines from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Vermont Frameworks of Standards and Learning Opportunities, The Work

Sampling System of Child Assessment, and standards from several other states. Rhode Island's Early Learning Standards was particularly useful because developers had engaged in a similar process of examining and consolidating various documents and instruments.

The resulting document, *Vermont Early Learning Standards: Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten* (VELS), is based upon current scientific child development research and best practice. VELS has the potential to improve program effectiveness and serve as a means to direct information strategically to parents and technical assistance to early childhood programs. The immediate and ultimate purpose, however, is to benefit young children.

Uses of the Vermont Early Learning Standards

The *Vermont Early Learning Standards* is intended to provide guidance for families, teachers and administrators on what children should know and be able to do as they enter kindergarten. While VELS should be used to guide development of curriculum, it should not be used as a curriculum or assessment in and of itself. It should be noted that children may meet the standards at different times in a variety of ways. VELS is intended to be inclusive of all children. The standards are written to include children with special health care needs, children with disabilities, children living in disadvantaged environments, English language learners, and children who are typically developing. It is the educator's responsibility to appropriately adapt these standards to accommodate all children. There are several purposes of these standards:

VELS **SHOULD** be used to:

- Inform families about the development and capabilities of children who are about to enter kindergarten;
- Inform educators in the development of curriculum and educational strategies;
- Guide the selection of assessment tools that are appropriate for learners from a variety of backgrounds with differing abilities;
- Support referrals of children to qualified specialists when concerns about development become apparent;
- Provide a framework for administrators to oversee curricular practices and advocate for resources;

- Focus a conversation among families, community members and legislators about the education of young children; and,
- Link the development and learning of young children to the future curriculum goals and learning outcomes of public schools.

VELS **SHOULD NOT** be used to:

- Assess the competence of young children (VELS is not designed to function as a valid and reliable assessment instrument);
- Diagnose and “label” children;
- Mandate specific teaching practices or materials;
- Determine rewards or penalties for educational personnel or programs;
- Prohibit any child from entering kindergarten; or,
- Exclude any child from participating in early childhood programs.

Overview of the Vermont Early Learning Standards

The Vermont Early Learning Standards is comprised of two sections. The first describes a set of guiding principles that serve as the core for making informed decisions about what is appropriate for young children and learning standards. The second section describes the specific standards for children as they prepare to enter kindergarten. In addition, a section emphasizing the importance of play in children’s development is contained as well as referencing play in each of the general areas of children’s learning.

Guiding Principles

To ensure that the standards reflected an understanding of teaching and learning based upon current educational research and practice, a set of Guiding Principles was adopted. These principles frame the Learning Goals and Examples in ways that would be considered typical for four-year-old children in eight areas of learning. Although this document focuses on the learning goals for four year olds,VELS has significant value for persons involved with three-year olds and kindergartners as well. The Guiding Principles also address the roles played by families, communities, and policymakers in supporting the development and learning of young children.

Structure of the Standards

The Vermont Standards for Early Development and Learning are written using a four-tier structure:

Domains: general areas of learning

Learning Goals and Definitions: categories of knowledge and skills within each Domain

Examples: examples of behaviors that demonstrate competence in relation to each Learning Goal.

Support for Learning: descriptions of ways adults can interact with children and design environments conducive to children’s development and learning.

The eight domains in the Vermont Early Learning Standards overlap with the dimensions of school readiness identified by the National Education Goals Panel, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework (HSCOF), and in standards used in other states. They also align closely with the Vital Results and Fields of Knowledge contained within Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities (VFSLO) for PreK-Grade 12.

The eight domains include:

- I. Approaches to Learning
- II. Social and Emotional Development
- III. Language, Literacy and Communication
- IV. Mathematics
- V. Science
- VI. Social Studies
- VII. Creative Expression
- VIII. Physical Health and Development

Throughout the Vermont Early Learning Standards, relevant standards from both the Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities and Head Start Child Outcomes Framework are cross-referenced and cited by the acronyms “VFSLO “ and ‘HSCOF’ respectively.

The Role of Play in Addressing the Standards

The sub-committee acknowledged the important role of play in how children learn by including it as a guiding principle and as the first Learning Goal in each of the domains. There is abundant evidence that children learn best through play. The sub-committee based its thinking about each domain on the understanding that children should be provided with opportunities to play in a learning environment that addresses their developmental needs for movement, problem-solving, creativity, and social interaction with adults and other children. Teachers and families can best guide learning in all domains by providing opportunities for children to explore and apply new skills in natural contexts. Responsive adults teach young children by interacting through play with each child according to the child’s interests, abilities, and cultural preferences. Through play, children enhance the learning of skills, knowledge and dispositions that guarantees success in later schooling. In VELS, therefore, play is one way that children can achieve the Examples described in each of the eight learning Domains.

Vermont Early Learning Standards

Guiding Principles

- u Child development provides a foundation for teaching that recognizes that learning is sequential, dependent upon experience, and based upon knowledge of the child, including the child's culture and individual differences.
- u All children will be regarded and respected as competent individuals who differ in their learning, their home lives, and in the ways that they understand and represent their world.
- u Children learn best in an environment where their physical and psychological needs are met because they feel safe, valued as unique individuals, and are actively engaged in acquiring new skills and knowledge.
- u A child's sense of responsibility to self and others is best supported when teachers design environments and select materials that take into consideration the ways that society and culture influence learning and support citizenship.
- u Educators will base their decisions upon current knowledge of predictable sequences of child development and how children learn, the differences among children and families, and subjects that are related to the interests of children.
- u Families are respected and supported as partners in the education and development of their child.
- u Educational programs will be developed in partnership with families, teachers, and the community in order to inspire children to acquire knowledge, build new skills, seek challenges and develop as citizens.
- u Teachers, families, and children employ play as a valuable way to develop the whole child, generate knowledge of the larger world, and support the development of qualities for lifelong learning.
- u Policymakers will take into consideration and be knowledgeable about the education, care and support of children and families when developing and assessing legislation, regulation, and funding of programs for young children.
- u Respect for and the well-being of children and families will be given the highest priority in the organization and planning of community action.

THE VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

*Guiding the Development and Learning
of Children Entering Kindergarten*

Approaches to Learning

As early as infancy, children display some of the dispositions and styles of learning that lead to success in school. Some children seem to be born well-organized and bursting with initiative while others require some structure and encouragement as they discover their unique capacity as learners. Some children participate readily in active, hands-on exploration while others may observe quietly as they learn new information. All children, regardless of innate abilities or the presence of disabilities, are able to learn and be successful. The ways in which they approach new learning opportunities,

however, will be as varied as the individuals themselves. It is important for children to develop a sense of wonder, a willingness to participate, persistence in their efforts, and the ability to connect past learning to new situations. These dispositions and skills will better enable children to construct meaning about the world around them and attain new levels of mastery. Adults must ensure that every child has the opportunity to direct his or her own learning in this process as the child nurtures initiative and habits for life-long learning.

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
I. Approaches to Learning Children demonstrate positive attitudes, habits and learning styles. VFSLO¹ <i>Vital Results-Reasoning and Problem Solving</i> <i>Learning Opportunities-Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, and Connections, Best Practices</i> HSCOF² <i>Initiative & Curiosity, Engagement & Persistence, Reasoning & Problem Solving</i>	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their individual approach to learning. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1-3 2. Curiosity and Initiative Children demonstrate curiosity and a willingness to participate in tasks and challenges. VFSLO 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10 – 2.12, 2.14 3. Persistence Children demonstrate an increased ability to show initiative, accept help, take risks, and work towards completing tasks. VFSLO 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.14, 3.14 4. Self-organization Children demonstrate an increased ability to establish goals, develop and follow through with plans. VFSLO B.4, C.3 5. Reasoning Children demonstrate an increased ability to identify, evaluate and provide possible solutions to problems. VFSLO 2.1 – 2.14 6. Application Children use their prior experiences, senses, and knowledge to learn in new ways. VFSLO B.4	a. Initiate play with peers that is engaging and long lasting. b. Enter into and play cooperatively with other children. c. Choose from a variety of play activities. a. Demonstrate an eagerness and interest in learning through questioning and adding ideas b. Initiate questions about people, things, and the world around them. c. Choose to participate in an increasing variety of activities, tasks, and play areas. d. Engage in activities that are new and unfamiliar. a. Invest time in an activity and pursue it for a meaningful period of time despite distractions and interruptions b. Seek and/or accept help from another child or adult when encountering a problem. a. Increase their ability to understand a task as a series of steps. b. Increase their ability to organize themselves and materials. c. Follow through to complete tasks and activities. a. Increase ability to generate several approaches to carry out a task. b. Pursue alternative approaches to problem-solving. a. Reflect upon events and experiences. b. Use prior knowledge to understand new experiences.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S APPROACHES TO LEARNING BY:

- Encouraging children to try new experiences.
- Being responsive to children's questions, ideas, interests, and concerns.
- Serving as models in how to approach new situations and engage in learning.
- Being available as resources without interfering with children's opportunity to experience and discover things for themselves.
- Being knowledgeable about and sensitive to individual children's styles and dispositions and responding accordingly.
- Allowing children enough time to thoroughly investigate and complete tasks and projects to the children's satisfaction.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S APPROACHES TO LEARNING BY:

- Offering children a variety of choices appropriate for the different levels of development.
- Being of sufficient interest to the children in order to encourage their engagement.
- Offering opportunities for children to explore interests in greater depth by having activities that expand over time.
- Evolving as time passes to capture interest, increasing in complexity and variety.
- Reflecting a sense of order and predictability.
- Displaying the efforts and accomplishments of children.
- Offering children opportunities to explore interests individually and in groups.



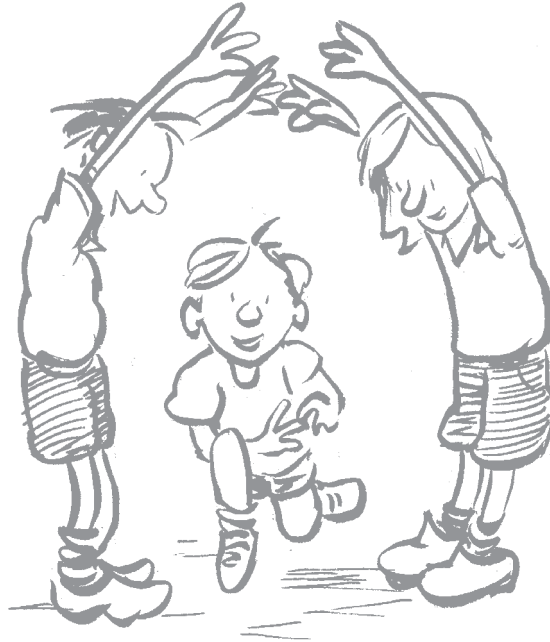
Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development are two distinct domains of children's development. Emotional development refers largely to how a child views oneself as a valuable and valued individual. Social development refers to ways the child relates to and interacts with others. Social and emotional development are typically grouped together, however, because of their reciprocal and intertwined relationship. A shift in one domain can have a tremendous impact on the other.

Although the roots of relationships begin during the child's first days of life, they evolve rapidly throughout the preschool years as the child's world expands beyond the home environment. Much of children's learning occurs through their interactions with others. Children who develop and maintain strong, positive relationships with other children and adults are better equipped to be active, successful learners. The quality of preschoolers'

relationships strongly influences how they feel about themselves, ways they interact with others, how they approach and respond to new and challenging tasks, and shape their attitudes toward school and life-long learning. When children feel good about themselves, they are more inclined to treat others with respect and care.

Children's interactions with their environment also influence their social and emotional development. When children are able to safely explore their world and be satisfied by what it has to offer, they will be more trusting and engaged. Similarly, when children are able to accomplish meaningful and appropriately challenging tasks presented to them by their environment, they are likely to gain a sense of achievement, self-worth, and positive self-esteem.



DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
II. Social and Emotional Development Children demonstrate a strong and positive self-concept, appropriate self-control, and growth in their awareness of their responsibilities when interacting with others. <i>VFSLO¹</i> Vital Results- Personal Development, Reasoning & Problem Solving, and Civic/Social Responsibility Fields of Knowledge- History & Social Science Learning Opportunities- Connections <i>HSCOF²</i> Self-Concept, Self-Control, Social Relationships, Cooperation, and Knowledge of Families & Communities	1. Play Children use play as a vehicle to build relationships and to develop an appreciation for their own abilities and accomplishments. VFSLO 3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 6.9, 6.12, D.3 2. Self Concept Children demonstrate and express a positive awareness of self and confidence in their capabilities. VFSLO 3.3- 3.5, 6.19 3. Self-Control Children increase their capacity for self-control and for dealing with frustrations, and increase their awareness of their own capabilities. VFSLO 3.3-3.7, 3.11, 3.12, 6.18 4. Interactions with Others Children develop successful relationships with other members of their learning community. VFSLO 3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3 5. Sense of Community Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to the classroom/program, family and community. VFSLO 3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3	a. Participate in a variety of individual and group play experiences. b. Play cooperatively with others by developing rules, solving problems, and dealing with frustrations and limitations. c. Explore and understand new experiences and differences among people. d. Discover unique abilities and preferences through play. a. Identify self according to such things as: gender, ethnicity and family membership. b. Separate from familiar people, places, or things. c. Demonstrate confidence in their range of abilities and express pride in accomplishments. a. Understand, accept and follow rules and routines within the learning environment. b. Begin to accept the consequences of their behavior. c. Use materials purposefully, respectfully, and safely. d. Effectively manage transitions between activities. e. Progress in expressing feelings, needs and opinions f. Begin to cope with frustration and disappointment. a. Play, work and interact easily with one or more children and/or adults. b. Develop friendships with peers. c. Demonstrate empathy and caring for others. d. Develop ability to take turns and to interact without being overly submissive or directive. e. Participate in resolving conflicts and disagreements with others. a. Begin to understand the rights of others. b. Demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation of the relationships, people and places that make up their communities. c. Participate in the maintenance of the classroom environment. d. Demonstrate progress toward an understanding and valuing of similarities and differences among people, including gender, race, culture, special needs, language and family membership. e. Recognize the needs of others and offer help.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

**ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY:**

- Treating children with unconditional respect.
- Accepting and acknowledging children's feelings, and helping them to identify those feelings.
- Helping children express their feelings appropriately.
- Genuinely praising and encouraging children, appreciating them for who they are and what they try to do.
- Creating opportunities for children to interact cooperatively with other children and adults.
- Providing children with a sense of personal security and trust.
- Setting clear limits and expectations.
- Assuming responsibility for establishing positive relationships with every child.

**THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY:**

- Providing space and materials for children to be alone or with others.
- Displaying the contributions of each child through their work, photographs, and words.
- Incorporating important elements of children's lives outside of the program (e.g., their families, homes, etc.) into the curriculum, reflecting the diversity of the group.
- Inviting family members to visit the program to talk about special things (e.g., favorite recipes, occupations, new babies, etc.).
- Offering dramatic play opportunities for children to pretend and explore other roles.
- Providing children with opportunities to do meaningful work, experience success, and show their accomplishments.
- Allowing children to take responsibility for the care of their environment and other living things.

Language, Literacy, and Communication

Research confirms that language has an essential impact on the rapid development of a child's brain that occurs during the first years of life. When adults speak with children in a timely, responsive manner, the brain is shaped so that children understand the construction of speech, learn new words, and become capable conversationalists. It is important that young children have many opportunities to learn language and practice communication skills in order to obtain information and express themselves in a variety of ways and settings.

Children increase their language and communication skills by engaging in meaningful experiences that require them to effectively express their ideas and feelings, listen, and understand others. Teachers must plan for the many ways that children communicate verbally and/or non-verbally. Educators must respect and incorporate the rich diversity of families' languages and dialects into the educational environment as children make progress in speaking and understanding English.

Literacy is the foundation for creating a well-educated and responsible citizen. It is essential that each child arrive at kindergarten able to take advantage of the materials, activities, and interactions in classrooms that nourish literacy. The ways in which children learn to read and write are similar to how they develop language. In environments filled

with language, symbols, and books, children become excited about using pictures, letters, and words to communicate. At the same time, educators may employ intentional strategies to build children's literacy skills.

The printed word, whether in a storybook or in the environment, is the bridge that allows children to connect their own lives to distant places, quality literature, and to new ideas. Through natural exposure to books and print, and through conversations that prompt children to discuss the people and important events in their lives, children discover that written words are another way to share ideas. A child who enters school having recognized the joy of a storybook, a developing awareness of letters and sounds, and the ability to write a few letters, is a child well prepared to learn to read and write.

Language, literacy, and communication skills are not developed solely by focusing on reading, writing and conversation during circle time. There are many avenues for children to develop and refine their communication skills- when they play with others, engage in informal conversations during meal times, speak with their dolls, paint at the easel, and read street signs. It is important for children and adults to understand that communication can take many forms, and that all children can learn to effectively convey their thoughts, feelings, and desires to others in ways that they feel comfortable and confident.

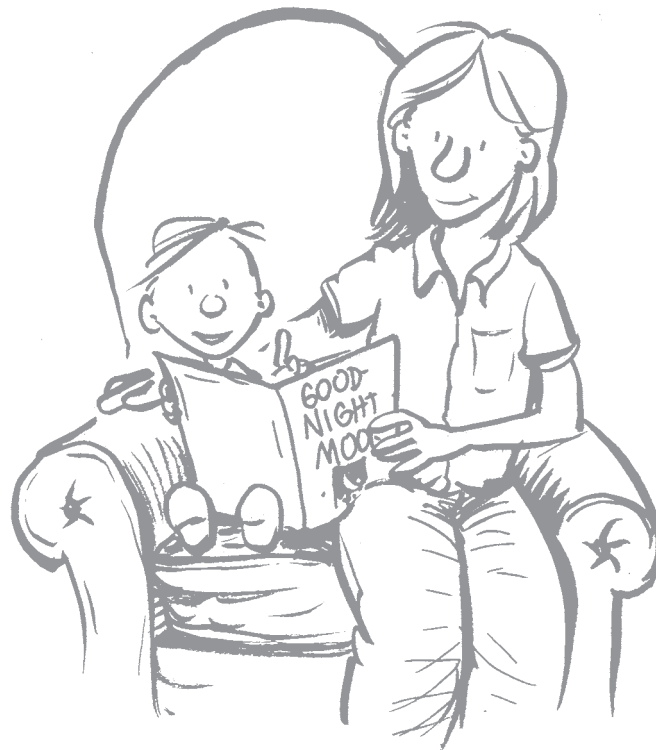
DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
III. Language, Literacy, and Communication Children develop skills in listening and in expressing their thoughts and ideas. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Communication Standards Fields of Knowledge- Arts, Language & Literature Standards	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their receptive and expressive language skills. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1 Children engage in play as a means to develop early reading and writing skills. VFSLO 1.1, 1.9, 1.13, 1.15, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.12, 5.13, 5.16, A.3, A.4, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2 2. Listening and Understanding Children develop skills in listening and in understanding language. VFSLO 1.13, 1.14	a. Develop and experiment with conversation during daily activities and interactions. b. Represent stories and experiences through play. c. Think and talk about play experiences. d. Create play ideas that come from favorite stories, poems, rhymes, songs and conversation . e. Use symbols and forms of early writing to create more complex play. f. Use writing tools and materials in all areas of the learning environment. a. Listen to and understand stories, songs, and poems. b. Listen and increasingly understand directions, conversations, and questions. c. Follow directions that involve multiple steps. d. Learn to wait and take turns during conversations. e. Progress in listening and understanding English while maintaining home language.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
<i>Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Connections, and Best Practices</i>	3. Speaking and Communicating Children will use verbal and non-verbal language to express and to communicate information. VFSLO 1.15, 2.1, 2.2, 5.17, 5.19	a. Communicate needs or thoughts through non-verbal gestures, actions, expressions or words. b. Participate in communication around a topic. c. Use more complex and longer sentences. d. Speak clearly enough to be understood by unfamiliar listeners. e. Begin a conversation with other children and adults. f. Understand an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary. g. Progress in communicating and using English while maintaining home language. h. Communicate with familiar and unfamiliar adults and children.
<i>HSCOF² Language Development - Listening & Understanding, Speaking & Communicating</i> Children develop skills in writing and reading while exploring print in books and in the environment.	4. Vocabulary Children will acquire and use new words to increase their understanding and express ideas. 5. Early Writing Children demonstrate an interest in and ability to use symbols to represent words and ideas. VFSLO 1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12, 1.17, 5.21	a. Increases the number of words understood. b. Uses new vocabulary and grammatical constructions. c. Responds appropriately to open-ended questions. d. Chooses words to convey intended messages with increasing detail and specificity. a. Begin to print letters in own name and some other meaningful letters. b. Understand that writing and pictures convey messages. c. Experiment with a variety of writing tools and materials. d. Use scribbles, shapes, letter-like symbols and/or letters to write or represent words or ideas. e. Begin to dictate ideas, sentences, and stories.
<i>HSCOF² Literacy- Phonological Awareness, Book Knowledge & Appreciation, Print Awareness & Concepts, Early Writing, Alphabet Knowledge</i>	6. Early Reading Children demonstrate an interest in: <p>A. Phonemic and Phonological Awareness Learning that language is comprised of distinct sounds and the combination of these sounds; discriminating sound and sound patterns. VFSLO 1.1</p> <p>B. Book Knowledge and Appreciation Understanding and appreciating that books and other forms of print have a purpose. VFSLO 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.8 – 5.10, 5.12 – 5.15, 5.20</p>	a. Show increasing ability to discriminate and identify the sounds of language. b. Demonstrate growing awareness of the beginning sounds of words. c. Show growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words. d. Begin to associate sounds with words. e. Recognize and generate rhymes. a. Choose to read books for enjoyment without prompting. b. Begin to read or tell a story and predict what happens next in stories. c. Listen to and talk about a variety of types of literature. d. Retell parts of a story using props. e. Take care of and handle books in a respectful manner.

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
	<p>C. Print Awareness and Concepts Recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud. VFSLO 1.1</p>	<p>a. Show curiosity about letters and words. b. Explore and investigate books and other forms of print. c. Understand that print carries a message. d. Show an increasing awareness of how books are organized and used. e. Show an interest and recognize some letters and words captured in books and in the environment. f. Recognize own name in print.</p>
	<p>D. Alphabet Knowledge Recognizing that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words. VFSLO 1.1</p>	<p>a. Know the names of some letters and words. b. Identify some letters in print. c. Know the names of most letters in own name.</p>



ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BY:

- Providing a variety of rich experiences that will encourage children to talk, read, draw, and write.
- Having informal, meaningful conversations with children regularly throughout the day and extending rather than directing the conversation.
- Asking open-ended questions and encouraging children to ask questions and seek answers.
- Exposing children to varied and progressively more complex vocabulary.
- Talking with children beyond the “here and now”, using language that extends their world beyond everyday experiences to provide information and explanations related to topics that are interesting to children.
- Making storybook reading and discussion a regular part of the day and talking about the stories.
- Noticing and commenting on letters and their sounds in the words children use and in the environment.
- Modeling the writing of simple notes, signs, children's names, children's conversations as a tool for communication.
- Modeling positive reading habits by reading for their own enjoyment and information.
- Taking children to libraries and bookstores to look at books together.
- Engaging in sound play through rhymes, stories and songs.
- Offering children opportunities to create their own books by writing their stories to pictures they have drawn.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT BY:

- Providing a large variety of high quality children's books and reading materials.
- Providing appropriate spaces for children to use books independently, with peers, and with adults, including a comfortable book corner that is aesthetically and physically inviting.
- Offering materials such as felt boards, story gloves, puppets, and magnetic story boards.
- Including print and symbols that identify locations within the classroom, provide information, or communicate expectations.
- Building reading time into the schedule and routine of the day.
- Including pictures of places, people, and things reflective of the children's day-to-day lives as well as life beyond the “here and now.”
- Having drawing and writing materials always available.
- Using computers and educational software selectively to promote children's development and learning.
- Displaying children's work with their dictated descriptions.
- Making available writing tools and literacy props throughout the entire environment.

Mathematics

Mathematics helps young children make sense of the world around them and understand their physical world. Children are inclined to make comparisons, notice similarities and differences in objects, and group their toys and materials. This ability to organize information into categories, quantify data, and solve problems helps children to learn about time, space, and numbers.

When children play in the sandbox, cook applesauce, and complete a puzzle, they are engaging in activities that allow them to develop the thinking skills that are naturally used in daily life. Children learn the uses of mathematics to describe and explore relationships among objects and materials in the environment. They increasingly develop the vocabulary and skills to measure, describe patterns, and to express order and position.

“Mathematics is the ability to think logically, to solve problems, and to notice relationships. It is one way to make sense of the world because it helps us find order and logic by noticing patterns, making predictions, and solving problems.” (Dodge, Colker & Heroman, 2000, p. 40)

*“The foundation of children’s mathematical development is established in the earliest years. Mathematics learning builds on the curiosity and enthusiasm of children and grows naturally from their experiences. Mathematics at this age, if appropriately connected to a child’s world, is more than “getting ready” for school or accelerating them into elementary arithmetic. Appropriate mathematical experiences challenge young children to explore ideas related to patterns, shapes, numbers, and space with increasing sophistication.” (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, *Principles and Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics*, 2000, p. 73).*

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
IV. Mathematics Children develop ways to solve problems and to think about math. VFSLO¹ <i>Vital Results- Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving</i> <i>Fields of Knowledge- Science, Mathematics, & Technology</i> <i>Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Connections, and Best Practices</i> HSCOF² <i>Numbers & Operations, Geometry & Spatial Sense, Patterns & Measurement</i>	1. Play Children engage in play to develop and add to their mathematical thinking and problem solving. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2, E.3 2. Numbers and Operations Children show interest and curiosity in counting and grouping objects and numbers. VFSLO 1.20, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.10 3. Geometry and Spatial Sense Children show an interest in recognizing and creating shapes and an awareness of position in space. VFSLO 7.7 4. Patterns and Measurement Children show an interest in recognizing, creating, and predicting patterns; comparing objects; and measuring time and quantity. VFSLO 1.21, 7.7, 7.11	a. Begin to group and match objects indicating an understanding of same and different b. Use counting and number vocabulary as a natural part of play. c. Experiment with patterns and shapes. d. Explore measurement, number, and quantity with various materials. a. Match, sort, put in a series, and regroup objects according to one characteristic. b. Begin to use numbers and counting as a means for solving problems and measuring quantity. c. Use one-to-one correspondence in counting objects and matching groups of objects. d. Begin to associate a number of objects with the names and symbols for numbers. e. Use such words as “more than/ less than” and “add/subtract” to express some number concepts. a. Describe and name common shapes found in the natural environment. b. Use language to understand the arrangement, order, and position of objects such as: behind, on top of, next to, bottom, underneath, beside, and in front of, etc. c. Group objects according to their shape and size. a. Group and name a number of similar objects into simple categories. b. Begin to understand the concepts of time in terms of past, present, and future. c. Begin to order, compare or describe objects according to size, length, height, and weight using standard or non-standard forms of measurement. d. Place events in a logical sequential order.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MATHEMATICAL THINKING BY:

- Becoming knowledgeable about prekindergarten mathematical concepts, principles, and standards, including:
 - Numbers and Operations
 - Algebra
 - Geometry
 - Measurement
 - Data Analysis and Probability
 - Problem Solving
 - Reasoning
 - Communicating
 - Making Connections
 - Representing
 (From: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, *Principles and Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics*, 2000).
- Fostering mathematical thinking by providing environments rich in mathematical language and concepts through play, problem solving, and expression.
- Orchestrating early learning activities that engage children in mathematical experiences in individual, small group, and large group settings.
- Helping children to communicate mathematically and represent their thinking.
- Observing, listening to, and assessing children's level of mathematical thinking to plan developmentally effective experiences for all children.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MATHEMATICAL THINKING BY:

- Providing children with a variety of concrete materials to explore, manipulate, and organize (e.g., blocks, sand/water table, cubes, geoboards).
- Scheduling self-directed and teacher-guided activities to promote emergent mathematics understanding (e.g., circle time, explore time, snack time).
- Displaying abundant evidence of children's mathematical representation (e.g., numbers, graphs, patterns).
- Offering opportunities through a balanced and unhurried daily schedule to engage in and express evolving mathematical thinking in a manner integrated with other learning areas.
- Bringing mathematics outdoors during everyday activities. (e.g., gardening, "shapes" field trip, charting growth of plants)
- Supporting children working together to construct and refine mathematical thinking and expression through everyday activities (e.g., , shopping, dialing the telephone, set table, sort laundry, cook following recipes).

Science

Children are captivated by the natural world and physical events. They insist that teachers and family members answer their questions about the world around them. By cultivating this sense of wonder, we help children to become scientific thinkers.

Children are natural investigators – as they try to make sense of the world, they develop hypotheses and theories. For young children, science is much more than learning facts and skills. It's about looking at things and making observations. It's about putting ideas together to form new ideas. It's wondering about something, forming questions, and then experimenting to see what happens. Then, it's about drawing conclusions about the world based on the results of those experiments. Children ask many questions about

how the world works, how insects fly, how to make a shadow, what happens if two paints are mixed together. Good teachers don't just provide children with answers; they use these opportunities to provide children with the resources, tools, and attitudes to “do what scientists do” – observe, experiment, record, explain, predict and conclude.

“The contribution of early childhood education toward scientific literacy is to lay a solid foundation for the continuing development of an interest in and an understanding of science and technology by ensuring that every child—regardless of gender, racial or cultural background, or disabilities—actively participates in science experiences and views (one)self as successful in this endeavor.”

(Kilmer and Hofman, 1995)

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
V. Science Children will understand and use the scientific method of asking questions, observing and recording their findings and discussing their conclusions. VFSLO¹ <i>Vital Results- Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving</i> <i>Fields of Knowledge- Science, Mathematics, & Technology</i> <i>Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Connections, and Best Practices</i> HSCOF² <i>Scientific Skills & Methods, Scientific Knowledge</i>	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop their scientific skills. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.3 2. Scientific Knowledge Children learn about the development of the natural and physical worlds, including: Space, Time and Matter; The Living World; The Human Body; The Universe, Earth, and Environment; and Technology. VFSLO 7.12 - 19 3. Scientific Skills and Methods Children begin to use scientific tools and methods to learn about their world, including design and technology. VFSLO 1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 7.1-3, 7.16	a. Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing. b. Use play to discover, question, and understand the natural and physical world. c. Use scientific tools as props in their play. d. Investigate different natural habitats. a. Collect, describe and learn to record information through discussion, drawings and charts. b. Use tools and their senses to make observations, gather and record information, and make predictions of what might happen. c. Investigate changes in materials and cause-effect relationships. d. Answer questions through simple investigations. a. Explore and describe the natural processes of growing, changing and adapting to the environment. b. Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real life experiences. c. Explore describe time, temperature, and cause-effect relationships based on everyday experiences.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

ADULTS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S SCIENTIFIC THINKING BY

- Wondering out loud: "What do you think will happen if . . . ?" "What will work best here . . . ?"
- Describing changes taking place around us in the classroom, on the playground, in the woods.
- Waiting before answering children's questions; allowing children to discover things for themselves and with each other.
- Encouraging children to make a prediction and then comparing their response with the real-life outcome.
- Paying attention to children's interests and providing opportunities for them to investigate and think more deeply about what fascinates them—whether it's bubbles or worms or dinosaurs.
- Modeling how to use new equipment and materials at home and in the classroom to explore and understand their world more fully.
- Documenting evidence of children's scientific exploration and discoveries.

THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S SCIENTIFIC THINKING BY:

- Having child-size tools available for children to do real work (e.g., digging, chopping, sweeping, transporting) and real tools (e.g. microscopes, magnifying glasses, magnets, scales and, pulleys) to aid in their investigation.
- Including living things that require care and feeding such as non-poisonous plants and fish.
- Giving children have access to the outdoors so they may explore changes in weather, amount of light, temperature, and seasons.
- Having sand or dirt, water, and other sensory materials available inside and outdoors to play and experiment with.
- Having materials like notebooks or clipboards accessible in learning areas so children can record their observations and display their documentation.
- Encouraging scientific thinking by incorporating a variety of tools in all learning centers - medicine droppers at the art table, plastic tubing at the water table, pulleys in the block area, stethoscopes and Band-Aids in the dramatic play area - and allowing space for objects to be observed over time.



Social Studies

Human beings are social creatures. Living in social settings, we develop customs and traditions that reflect who we are as a community in relation to our environment. Social studies builds upon a child's social development by exploring the child's broadening relationship to community, environment, and world. It examines how children and adults live together as a group, influenced by both the land they occupy and their moment in history.

"Social studies is the study of people and place and how each is connected to the other, now and in the past. Social studies is the study of people--how people live today and how they lived in the past, how they work, get along with others, solve problems, shape and are shaped by their surroundings... Every day experiences pertinent to children's lives are the foundation for learning social studies"

(Dodge, Colker & Heroman, 2000, p. 40)

Children depend upon their interactions with peers and adults to construct a sense of self and to view themselves as learners. They willingly explore similarities and differences among others as they mature. This natural curiosity about other people helps children to develop a strong sense of identity and provides teachers and families with opportunities to associate schools and programs with a child's home and community.

Ideas of citizenship are based upon meaningful daily events and a classroom environment that ensures that children are aware of and respect another person's interests, preferences, and cultural background. When children participate in activities that bring the community into the classroom, they feel good about themselves and find out about how different groups of children live. Teachers and family members who help children negotiate the rules, responsibilities, and challenging issues that characterize a vibrant learning environment can expose children to a community based upon kindness, equity and justice.

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
VI. Social Studies Children learn about their place in the world, their relationships with other people and the environment, and their connection to the past. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Personal Development, Civic/Social Responsibility Fields of Knowledge- History and Social Sciences HSCOF² Knowledge of Families and Communities, Social Relationships	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to develop an understanding of social studies. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3 2. Spaces and Geography Children will demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for their physical environment. VFSLO 3.3, 4.5, 6.7, 6.8 3. People and How They Live Children demonstrate skills related to understanding, communication, sharing, cooperation, and participation with others in a community. VFSLO 1.18, 2.2, 3.8, 3.10-15, 4.1-4, 6.4-6, 6.7, 6.12-15, 6.18-19	a. Engages in play as a means of discovering and experimenting with their relationship to the environment, other people within the community, and the customs and traditions of people throughout the world and across time. a. Matches objects to their usual geographic location (e.g., dishes go in the sink, cars go on the street, cows live in the barn). b. Begins to create simple representations of their physical environment (e.g., making "maps" of buildings, murals of the neighborhoods, shoebox houses). c. Begins to use words to indicate spatial relationships (e.g., behind, near, far). d. Begins to understand how people can move from place to place. e. Describes different features of the Vermont landscape. a. Begins to understand family structure and roles. b. Begins to have an awareness of technology and how it affects us. c. Begins to have awareness of money and how it is used to buy things. d. Describes some jobs and what is required to perform them. e. Begins to understand rules, why they exist, how they are made, and who enforces them. f. Recognizes own characteristics and similarities and differences to others.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
	4. People and Their Environment Children demonstrate an awareness of and appreciation for people's relationship to the environment. VFSLO 3.9, 3.13, 3.15, 4.6, 6.7-8	a. Shows an interest in the environments where they live (e.g., classroom, neighborhoods, play yards, state) b. Participates in activities that demonstrate care and respect for their environment. c. Demonstrates an understanding of roles played by people within the community. d. Describes the reciprocal relationship between people and the environment.
	5. People and the Past Children demonstrate an understanding of past events and their connection to the present and future. VFSLO 1.19, 4.3, 4.6, 6.4-6, 6.13, 6.19	a. Begins to understand that there are different stages of time (e.g., yesterday, today, tomorrow, past, present, future,) b. Begins to be aware of how we measure time (e.g., clocks, calendars) c. Is aware of changes in self and others over time d. Describes basic similarities and differences of people's lives throughout time.

ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL STUDIES BY:

- Providing ample opportunities for children to explore their surroundings by taking field trips in their neighborhood and beyond.
- Discussing how people rely upon one another to live in families and communities, and the need to develop rules and customs for getting along.
- Inviting community members into the classroom to talk about their jobs.
- Modeling, teaching, and facilitating problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Helping children to notice and appreciate similarities and differences among people.
- Talking to children about their relatives, their heritage, and traditions.
- Reading stories and looking at photographs about other people living in different places and times.
- Providing opportunities for young children to participate in rule-setting and self-governance

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL STUDIES BY:

- Displaying photographs of children, teachers, and their families.
- Exploring features that make where they live unique from other places (e.g., weather, geography, geology, cities).
- Exhibiting and letting children play with culturally diverse materials reflecting people and ways of living from all over the world.
- Supporting children's play in small and large groups and allowing them to construct rules for getting along.
- Scheduling ample, flexible dramatic play opportunities that allow children to assume different roles of families and others living in the community.
- Offering a variety of reading materials and posters reflecting human diversity, interdependence, and their relationship with the environment.
- Designing the learning space and schedule to promote predictability, order, and a respect for all materials and people sharing the space.
- Supporting recycling efforts.

Creative Expression

Investigating and appreciating the arts allows children to integrate a number of different domains. The arts provide each child with a way to creatively express one's ideas and feelings. Music, movement, drama, and visual art stimulate children to use words, manipulate tools and media, and solve problems in ways that simultaneously convey meaning and are aesthetically pleasing.

Through experimenting with sounds, colors, forms, motion and words, children communicate in ways that are distinctly their own and that reflect their individual learning style. Each painting, dramatic play scenario, and improvised tune provides teachers and families with insights into a child's interests and abilities and allows children to express what they know. In an environment that fosters the arts, children learn to

appreciate the contributions of other children and the works of others that reflect different experiences, cultures, and views.

Children learn by being actively engaged in the world around them. Children's imaginations are enhanced when given the opportunity to explore and create. They participate and experiment for the joy of creating and discovering. Children experience the world through their own eyes and they form their own meanings.

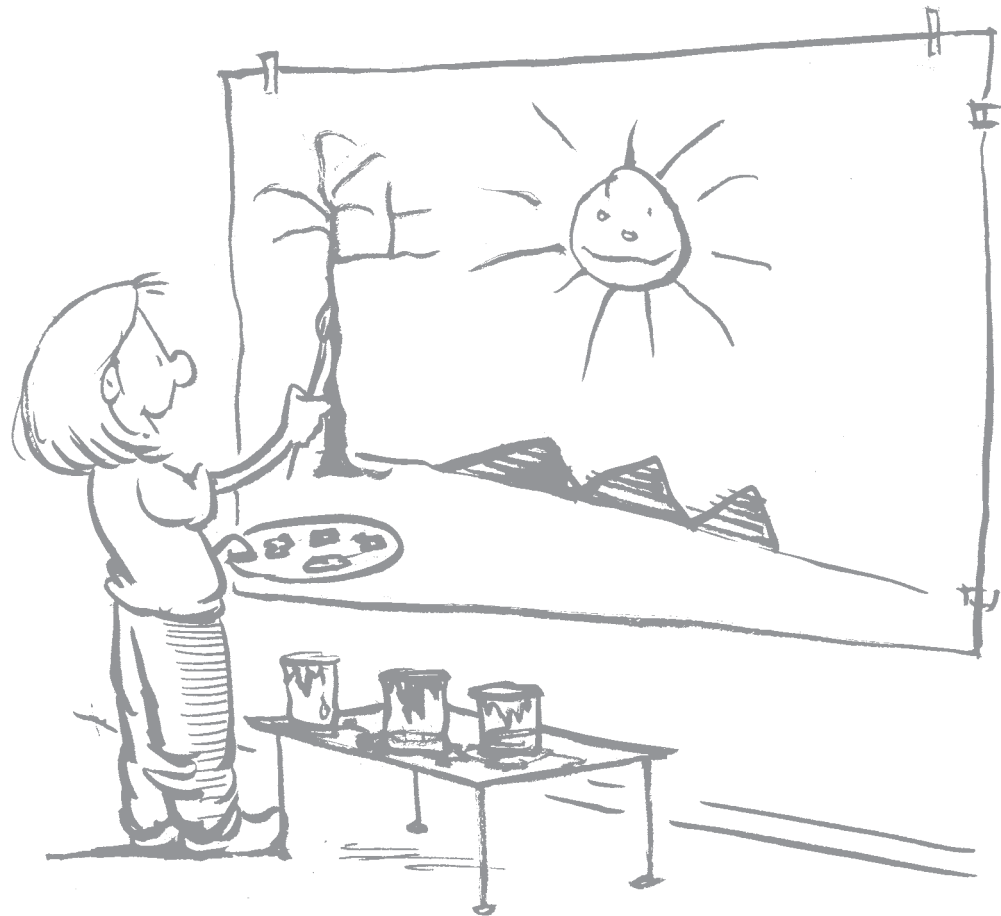
"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist when he grows up."
— Pablo Picasso

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
VII. Creative Expression Children enjoy, express themselves, create and learn about the arts through experiences with a variety of art forms and media. VFSLO <i>Vital Results- Communication, Reasoning and Problem Solving, Personal Development</i> <i>Fields of Knowledge- Arts, Language & Literature, History and Social Sciences</i> HSCOF <i>Music, Art, Movement, Dramatic Play</i>	1. Play Children engage in play as a means of self expression and creativity. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3, E.1 2. Creative Expression Children engage in individual or group activities that represent real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings and fantasy. VFSLO 1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37 3. Tools Children use a variety of tools and art media to creatively express their ideas. VFSLO 1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37	a. Engage in pretend play using a variety of materials to dramatize stories and experiences. b. Use movement, a variety of media, and music to represent stories, moods, and experiences while playing. c. Bring musical instruments and tools from various art forms as props into dramatic play. a. Explore various roles in dramatic play through the use of props, language, and fantasy roles with others. b. Use movement and a variety of musical styles to express feelings, understand and interpret experiences. c. Participate in musical activities using a variety of materials for expression and representation. d. Plan and work cooperatively to create drawings, paintings, sculptures, and other art projects. e. Demonstrate care and persistence when involved in art projects. a. Experiment with different tools to creatively express and present ideas. b. Select and use a variety of tools to accomplish tasks.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
	<p>4. Appreciation of the Arts Children express interest in and begin to build a knowledge base in the arts. VFSLO 1.16, 5.14, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 –</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Begin to understand and to develop a vocabulary to share opinions about artistic creations and experiences. b. Enjoy participating in a variety of art experiences. c. Appreciate and demonstrate respect for the work of others. d. Enjoy looking at works of art from different cultures.



ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S CREATIVE EXPRESSION BY:

- Offering materials that foster music and movement such as instruments, scarves, shakers through which children can experience a variety of music.
- Allowing children ample time to freely explore different ways of expressing themselves.
- Exhibiting a positive attitude toward creativity and serving as a role model for children by participating in, initiating, and demonstrating a creative process.
- Offering children opportunities to follow movements, repeat beats and patterns, and create new ones of their own.
- Encouraging children to experiment with a variety of materials (e.g., clay, playdough, glue, scissors, woodworking, papier mache', etc.) and talking about the process.
- Demonstrating the use of different tools or instruments yet allowing children to design and make their own creations.
- Acknowledging children's creative efforts.

THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S CREATIVE EXPRESSION BY:

- Providing space to promote music and movement experiences; including headphones, cassette recorder, tapes, CD's, scarves, and instruments.
- Having tools and materials present that encourage the creative process such as blocks, drawing supplies, paint, dramatic play props, clay, play dough and providing opportunities to problem solve.
- Making the creative process a part of all learning centers. Putting snow in the sensory table, using music for transitions or recording children's solutions to problems.
- Having materials like tap shoes, shakers and wood blocks available so children can explore creating rhythm and patterns.
- Having a schedule that offers children enough time and materials to freely explore and manipulate on their own so they may see where their creativity leads them.
- Offering a schedule and space that permits children to continue their work over the span of several days or weeks.
- Having materials and supplies readily available and at children's reach.

Physical Development and Health

Children enthusiastically explore how to move their bodies. They investigate and practice with intensity the small motions that lead to the mastery of fine and large motor tasks that adults often take for granted. How a child learns to sit, walk, or hold a spoon has implications for how the child understands space, coordinates thinking, and holds a pencil. Children often describe their competence according to their physical accomplishments.

Children use their senses and bodies to explore their physical environment. Children may appear uninterested in nutrition and sensible health habits, but they appreciate learning how to enhance their strength, balance, muscle control, and coordination. When children

can take an active role in preparing nutritious snacks, maintaining a clean and healthy environment, and caring for their bodies, they feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in their independence.

All children will develop in individual and unique ways. No two children will be identical in body size, shape, or skills. Some children may never attain the capabilities that their peers achieve. Rather than focusing on what children can't do and pushing them to accomplish things that are not possible at that time or ever, it is important to build upon each child individual physical capabilities, making accommodations when appropriate.

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS & DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
VIII. Physical Development and Health Young children's future health and well-being are directly related to the development and strengthening of their large and small muscles, sensory experiences and practicing healthy behavior. VFSLO¹ Vital Results- Personal Development Learning Opportunities- Access, Instruction (Adaptive Learning Environments), and Connections HSCOF² Fine Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills, Health Status & Practices	1. Play Children engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their physical bodies. VFSLO A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3 2. Gross Motor Children increasingly move their bodies in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination. VFSLO 3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3 3. Fine Motor Children use their fingers and hands in ways that develop hand-eye coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation. VFSLO 3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3 4. Senses Children increase their understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose, and mouth, and how the senses work together. VFSLO 3.4 – 3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3 5. Healthy Habits Children begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety. VFSLO 3.4-3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3	a. Participate in games, outdoor play, and other forms of play that enhance physical fitness. b. Use their senses to explore materials and experience activities. c. Begin to practice safe and healthy behaviors. d. Initiate activities that challenge their bodies in new ways. a. Build strength and stamina in movement activities. b. Demonstrate body and space awareness to move and stop with control over speed and direction. c. Develop coordination and balance with a variety of playground equipment. a. Build strength and stamina to perform fine motor tasks. b. Use eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks with a variety of manipulative materials. c. Show increased awareness and control of tools for various learning activities. a. Discriminate between a variety of sights, smells, sounds, textures, and tastes. b. Explore and learn to manage a wide variety of sensory input. c. Combine and use different senses depending on the activity. a. Demonstrate safety awareness when purposefully using materials. b. Increasingly perform self-care skills independently when eating, dressing, toileting, and washing hands. c. Care for many personal belongings. d. Begin to understand that some foods have more nutritional value than others.

¹Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities

²Head Start Child Outcomes Framework

**ADULTS CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH BY:**

- Helping children to understand their bodies, how they work, and how to care for them.
- Incorporating health practices (e.g., tooth brushing, hand washing, active play, rest) into the daily routine.
- Ensuring that there are ample hands-on opportunities and sufficient time for children to practice self-help skills.
- Being positive role models for healthy behaviors.
- Fostering awareness of different types of food and encouraging healthy, nutritious eating habits.
- Including discussions about health and personal safety in all kinds of learning.
- Including children during the pick-up and cleaning activities by modeling.
- Offering a balance of active and quiet activities throughout the day and permitting children the option of not participating if they do not feel well.
- Making appropriate accommodations in experiences and the environment so all children can participate in all activities.
- Helping children to be familiar and comfortable with community health helpers.
- Encouraging children to be physically active and challenge themselves while providing supervision that ensures their safety.

**THE ENVIRONMENT CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN'S
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH BY:**

- Being safe, clean, and well-supervised.
- Providing hands-on health-related materials (e.g., toothbrushes, stethoscopes, scales, dramatic play props) to reinforce children's ideas about health.
- Giving children opportunities and time to explore health-related ideas and issues through dramatic play, art, movement, and other everyday experiences.
- Including spaces designed to accommodate relaxation and rest as well as safe, active physical play.
- Encouraging self-help skills and sound health practices by having child-sized equipment and easily accessible supplies (i.e., paper towels, tooth brush and paste, tissues).
- Having space dedicated to posting information on resources, health practices, and other related topics for parents and staff.
- Including materials, space, experiences and time to foster small and large muscle development.
- Providing healthy snacks and meals.

Vermont Early Learning Standards

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO ¹ REFERENCE
I. Approaches to Learning <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Initiative & Curiosity,</i> <i>Engagement & Persistence,</i> <i>Reasoning & Problem Solving</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to develop their individual approach to learning.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1-3
	2. Curiosity	Children demonstrate curiosity and a willingness to participate in tasks and challenges.	2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10 – 12, 2.14
	3. Persistence	Children demonstrate an increased ability to show initiative, accept help, take risks, and work towards completing tasks.	2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.14, 3.14
	4. Self-organization	Children demonstrate an increased ability to establish goals, develop and follow through with plans.	B.4, C.3
	5. Reasoning	Children demonstrate an increased ability to identify, evaluate and provide possible solutions to problems.	2.1 – 14
	6. Application	Children use their prior experiences, senses, and knowledge to learn in new ways.	B.4

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
II. Social and Emotional Development <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Self-Concept, Self-Control, Social Relationships, Cooperation, and Knowledge of Families & Communities</i>	1. Play	Children use play as a vehicle to build relationships and to develop an appreciation for their own abilities and accomplishments.	3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 6.9, 6.12, D.3
	2. Self Concept	Children demonstrate and express a positive awareness of self and an awareness of limitations.	3.3- 3.5, 6.19
	3. Self Control	Children increase their capacity for self-control and to deal with frustrations, and increase their awareness of limitations.	3.3-3.7, 3.11, 3.12, 6.18
	4. Interactions with Others	Children develop successful relationships with other members of their learning community.	3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3
	5. Sense of Community	Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to the classroom/program, family and community.	3.3, 3.10 – 3.13, 4.1-4.4, 6.9, 6.12, D.3

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
III. Language, Literacy & Communication <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Language Development -Listening & Understanding, Speaking & Communicating</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to develop their receptive and expressive language skills.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.1
		Children engage in play as a means to develop early reading and writing skills.	1.1, 1.9, 1.13, 1.15, 5.4, 5.7, 5.12-.3, 5.16, A.3-4, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2
	2. Listening and Understanding	Children develop skills in listening and in understanding language.	1.13, 1.14
	3. Speaking and Communicating	Children will use verbal and non-verbal language to express and to communicate information.	1.15, 2.1, 2.2, 5.17, 5.19
	4. Vocabulary	Children will acquire and use new words to increase their understanding and express ideas.	1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12, 1.17, 5.21
	5. Early Writing	Children demonstrate an interest and ability in using symbols to represent words and ideas.	1.1
	6. Early Reading	Children demonstrate an interest in: <i>Phonemic and Phonological Awareness</i> - Learning letters and the combination of letter sounds with letter symbols <i>Book Knowledge and Appreciation</i> – Understanding and appreciating that books and other forms of print have a purpose. <i>Print Awareness and Concepts</i> - Recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud. <i>Alphabet Knowledge</i> - Recognizing that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.8 – 5.10, 5.12 – 5.15, 5.20 1.1 1.1

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
IV. Mathematics <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Numbers & Operations, Geometry & Spatial Sense, Patterns & Measurement</i>	1. Play 2. Numbers and Operations 3. Geometry and Spatial Sense 4. Patterns and Measurement	<p>Children engage in play to develop and add to their mathematical thinking and problem solving.</p> <p>Children show interest and curiosity in counting and grouping objects and numbers.</p> <p>Children show an interest in recognizing and creating shapes and an awareness of position in space.</p> <p>Children show an interest in recognizing and creating patterns, comparing, and measuring time and quantity.</p>	<p>A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, C.4, D.1-2, E.3</p> <p>1.20, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.10</p> <p>7.7</p> <p>1.21, 7.7, 7.11</p>

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
V. Science <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Scientific Skills & Methods, Scientific Knowledge</i>	1. Play 2. Scientific Knowledge 3. Scientific Skills and Methods	<p>Children engage in play as a means to develop their scientific skills.</p> <p>Children learn about the development of the natural and physical worlds.</p> <p>Children begin to use scientific tools and methods to learn about their world.</p>	<p>A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-2, E.3</p> <p>7.12 – 19</p> <p>1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 7.1-3</p>

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
VI. Social Studies <i>Head Start Child Outcomes Framework No corresponding domain</i>	1. Play 2. Spaces and Geography 3. People and How They Live 4. People and Their Environment 5. People and the Past	<p>Children engage in play as a means to develop an understanding of social studies.</p> <p>Children will demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for their physical environment.</p> <p>Children shall demonstrate skills related to understanding, communication, sharing, cooperation, and participation with others in a community.</p> <p>Children demonstrate an awareness of and appreciation for the environment.</p> <p>Children demonstrate an understanding of past events and their connection to the present and future.</p>	<p>A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3</p> <p>3.3, 4.5, 6.7, 6.8</p> <p>1.18, 2.2, 3.8, 3.10-15, 4.1-4, 6.4-6, 6.7, 6.12-15, 6.18-19</p> <p>3.9, 3.13, 3.15, 4.6, 6.7-8</p> <p>1.19, 4.3, 4.6, 6.4-6, 6.13, 6.19</p>

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
VII. Creative Expression <i>Head Start</i> <i>Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Music, Art, Movement,</i> <i>Dramatic Play</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means of self expression and creativity.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3, E.1
	2. Creative Expression	Children engage in individual or group activities that represent real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings and fantasy.	1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37
	3. Tools	Children use a variety of tools and art media to creatively express their ideas.	1.16, 5.22 – 24, 5.28 – 37
	4. Appreciation of the Arts	Children express interest in and begin to build a knowledge base in the arts.	1.16, 5.14, 5.22 –24, 5.28 – 37

DOMAIN	LEARNING GOALS	DEFINITION	VFSLO REFERENCE
VIII. Physical Health and Development <i>Head Start</i> <i>Child Outcomes Framework</i> <i>Fine Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills, Health Status & Practices</i>	1. Play	Children engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their physical bodies.	A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3
	2. Gross Motor/ Large Muscle	Children increasingly move their bodies in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination.	3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.3-5, D.1-3
	3. Fine Motor/ Small Muscle	Children use their fingers and hands in ways that develop hand-eye coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.	3.4, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3
	4. Senses	Children increase their understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose, and mouth, and how the senses work together.	3.4 – 3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3
	5. Healthy Habits	Children begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety.	3.4-3.6, A.3-5, B.1, B.5, D.1-3

References And Resources

Assessment

- Bredenkamp, S., & T. Rosengrant. 1992. *Reaching potentials: Appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children. Volume 1.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- 1995. *Reaching potentials: Appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children. Volume 2.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Dodge, D., L. Colker, & C. Heroman. 2000. *Connecting content, teaching and learning.* Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.
- High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. 1992. *High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for children ages 2 1/2 - 6.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.
- Krechevsky, M. 1998. *Project Spectrum: Preschool assessment handbook.* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Meisels, S. 1989. High-stakes testing in kindergarten. *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 46, No. 7, pp. 16 - 22.
- 1987. "Uses and abuses of developmental screening and school readiness testing." *Young Children*, Vol. 42, pp. 68-73.
- Mesiels, S., J. Jablon, D. Marsden, M. Dichtelmiller, & A. Dorfman. 1994. *The Work Sampling System®.* Ann Arbor, MI: Rebus, Inc.
- Work Sampling System for Head Start.* Samuel Meisels, Margo Dichtelmiller, Judy Jablon and Dorothy Marsden, Rebus, Inc. Ann Arbor, MI, 2001.
- National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. 2001. *Still unacceptable trends in kindergarten entry and placement: A position statement of the NAECS/SDE.* National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. "NAEYC Position Statement on School Readiness." *Young Children*. Vol. 46, No. 1, November 1990, pp. 21-23.
- 1988. "NAEYC position statement on standardized testing of young children 3 through 8 years of age." *Young Children*, Vol. 43, No. 3, pp. 42-47.
- 1988. *Testing of young children: Concerns and cautions.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. 1991. Guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving children ages 3 through 8. *Young Children*, Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 21-38.
- Puckett, M. & J. Black. 1994. *Authentic assessment of the young child: Celebrating development and learning.* New York: Merrill.
- Shepard, L., S. Kagan & E. Wurtz. 1997. *Principles and recommendation for early childhood assessments.* Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Bredenkamp, S., & T. Rosengrant. 1992. *Reaching potentials: Appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children. Volume 1.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- 1995. *Reaching potentials: Appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children. Volume 2.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Chen, J., E. Isberg & M. Krechevsky. 1998. *Project Spectrum: Early learning activities. Volume 2.* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Copple, C., I. Sigel, & R. Saunders. 1984. *Educating the young thinker: Classroom strategies for cognitive growth.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dodge, D., L. Colker, & C. Heroman. 2002. *The Creative Curriculum® for preschool. Fourth edition.* Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.
- 2000. *Connecting content, teaching and learning.* Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.
- Helm, J. & L. Katz. 2001. *Young investigators: The Project Approach in the early years.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Curriculum – General

- Bredenkamp, S., & C. Copple. 1997. *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs. Revised edition.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Jones, E. & J. Nimmo. 1994. *Emergent curriculum*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Meisels, S., D. Marsden & Charlotte Stetson. 2000. *Winning ways to learn*. New York: Goddard Press, Inc.

Mitchell, A. & J. David. 1992. *Explorations with young children: A curriculum guide from the Bank Street College of Education*. Mt. Ranier, Maryland: Gryphon House.

National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. 1991. Guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving children ages 3 through 8. *Young Children*, Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 21-38.

Curriculum – Approaches to Learning

Gardner, H. 1983. *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.

Helm, J. & L. Katz. 2001. *Young investigators: The Project Approach in the early years*. New York: Teachers College Press.

National Education Goals Panel. 1998. *Getting a good start in school*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Vygotsky, L. 1934. *Thought and language*. London: MIT Press.

Curriculum – Creative Arts

Althouse, R, M. Johnson, & S. Mitchell. 2002. *The colors of learning: Integrating the visual arts into the early childhood curriculum*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Anderson, B.D. 2001. *Learning and growing with the arts. A resource guide for working with young children*. Montpelier, VT: Head Start Arts Partnership.

Burton, L. & T. Kudo. 2001. *SoundPlay: Understanding music through creative movement*. Washington, DC: National Association for Music Education.

Laskey, L. & R. Mukerji-Bergeson. 1999. *Art: Basic for young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Mcdonald, D. 2000. *Music in our lives: The early years*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Rickett, P. 2001. *For a child, life is a creative adventure: Supporting development and learning through art, music, movement, and dialogue*. New York: Educational Services, Inc.

Curriculum – Language, Literacy & Communication

International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children. 1998. *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children. Position statement*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Koralek, D. 2003. *Spotlight on Young Children and Oral Language*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Owocki, G. 2001. *Make way for literacy: Teaching the way young children learn*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

2000. *Literacy through play*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Neuman, S, C. Copple, & S. Bredekamp. 2000. *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Schickendanz, J. 1999. *Much more than the ABCs: The early stages of reading and writing*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Strickland, D. & L. Morrow. 1989. *Emerging literacy: Young children learn to read and write*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

U.S. Department of Education. 2000. *Reading: Knowing what works*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Curriculum – Mathematics

Baratta-Lorton, M. 1976. *Mathematics their way*. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Copley, J. 2000. *The young child and mathematics*. Reston, VA: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

— 2002. *Mathematics in the early years*. Reston, VA: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Kamii, C. 1985. *Children reinvent arithmetic*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Koralek, D. 2003. *Spotlight on Young Children and Math*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. 2000. *Principles and standards for school mathematics*. Reston, VA: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Curriculum – Physical Development and Health

- Aronson, S. 2002. *Healthy young children: A manual for programs*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Engstrom, G. 1971. *The significance of young children's motor development*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Gallahue, D. 1982. *Understanding motor development in young children*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Sanders, S. 1997. *Active for life: Developmentally appropriate movement programs for young children*. New York: Human Kinetics Publishers.
- Smith, C., C.Hendricks, B. Bennett, & R. Bennett 1997. *Growing, growing strong: A whole health curriculum for young children*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.
- Torbert, M. & L. Schneider. 2001. *Follow me too: A handbook of movement activities for three- to five-year-olds*. New York: Addison Wesley.

Curriculum – Science

- Doris, E.. 1991. *Doing what scientists do*. Portsmouth, NH: Northeast Foundation for Children.
- Ross, M. E.. 2000. Science their way. *Young Children*, Vol. 55, No. 2, pp. 6-13.
- Chaille', C & L. Britain. 1991. *The young child as scientist: A constructivist approach to early childhood science education*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Koralek, D. & L. Colker. 2003. *Spotlight on Young Children and Science*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Holt, B. 1999. *Science with young children*. Revised edition. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Curriculum – Social & Emotional Development

- Katz, L. & D. McClellan. 1988. *Fostering children's social competence: The teacher's role*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Meyerhoff, M. 1999. *The power of play*. Lindenhurst, IL: The Epicenter, Inc.
- Shonkoff, J. 2000. *Neurons to neighborhoods*. Bethesda, MD: National Research Council.
- Van Hoorn, J., P. Nourrot, B. Scales, & K. Alward. 1993. *Play at the center of the curriculum*. New York: MacMillan Publishing.

Curriculum – Social Studies

- Seefeldt, C. & A. Galper. (2000). *Active experiences for active children: Social studies*. New York: Merrill.
- Mitchell, L. 1991. *Young geographers*. New York: Bank Street College of Education.
- National Council for Social Studies 1988. *Position statement: Social studies for early childhood and elementary school children preparing for the 21st Century*. School Silver Springs, Maryland: NCSS.

Standards And Outcomes

- American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, & National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, 2002. *Caring for our children-National health and safety performance standards: Guidelines for out-of-home child care programs*. Washington, DC: American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Maryland Commission on the Early Learning Years. 1992. *Laying the foundation for school success: Recommendations for improving early learning programs*. Baltimore: Maryland State Department of Education.
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2003. *Early learning standards: Creating the conditions for success*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. 2000. *Principles and standards for school mathematics*. Reston, VA: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- Rhode Island Early Childhood Task Force. 2002. *Rhode Island Early Learning Standards*. Providence: Author.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2001. *Head Start Child Outcomes Framework*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Appendix 1

Early Learning Standards: Creating The Conditions For Success

A Joint Position Statement of
The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and
The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE)

Approved November 19, 2002

Executive Summary

Introduction

Early childhood education has become part of a standards-based environment. More than 25 states have standards¹ describing desired results, outcomes, or learning expectations for children below kindergarten age; Head Start has developed a Child Outcomes Framework; and national organizations have developed content standards in areas such as early literacy and mathematics. This movement raises significant educational, ethical, developmental, programmatic, assessment, and policy issues. Rather than writing a new set of standards, in this position statement NAEYC and NAECS/SDE address those issues, describing four features that are essential if early learning standards are to be developmentally effective. The recommendations in this position statement are most relevant to young children of preschool or prekindergarten age, with and without disabilities, in group settings including state prekindergarten programs, community child care,

family child care, and Head Start. However, the recommendations can guide the development and implementation of standards for younger and older children as well.

The Position

The first years of life are critical for later outcomes. Young children have an innate desire to learn. That desire can be supported or undermined by early experiences. High-quality early childhood education can promote intellectual, language, physical, social, and emotional development, creating school readiness and building a foundation for later academic and social competence. By defining the desired content and outcomes of young children's education, early learning standards can lead to greater opportunities for positive development and learning in these early years. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State

Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) take the position that early learning standards can be a valuable part of a comprehensive, high-quality system of services for young children, contributing to young children's educational experiences and to their future success. But these results can be achieved only if early learning standards (1) emphasize significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes; (2) are developed and reviewed through informed, inclusive processes; (3) use implementation and assessment strategies that are ethical and appropriate for young children; and (4) are accompanied by strong supports for early childhood programs, professionals, and families.

Because of the educational and developmental risks for vulnerable young children if standards are not well developed and implemented, the recommendations in this position statement are embedded in and refer to the principles set forth in NAEYC's code of ethical conduct.

According to this code, early childhood professionals and others affecting young children's education must promote those practices that benefit young children, and they must refuse to participate in educational practices that harm young children. Thus, a test of the value of any standards effort is whether it promotes educationally and developmentally positive outcomes and whether it avoids penalizing or excluding children from needed services and supports.

Essential Features

A developmentally effective system of early learning standards must include four essential features:

1. Effective Early Learning Standards Emphasize Significant, Developmentally Appropriate Content and Outcomes

- Effective early learning standards give emphasis to **all domains** of early

development and learning.

- The content and desired outcomes of effective early learning standards are **meaningful and important** to children's current well-being and later learning.
- Rather than relying on simplifications of standards for older children, the content and desired outcomes of effective early learning standards are **based on research about** the processes, sequences, and long-term consequences of **early learning and development**.
- Effective early learning standards create **appropriate expectations** by linking content and desired outcomes to specific ages or developmental periods.
- The content of effective early learning standards, and expectations for children's mastery of the standards, must **accommodate variations**—community, cultural, linguistic, and individual—that best support positive outcomes. To do so, early learning standards must encompass the widest possible range of children's life situations and experiences, including disabilities.

2. Effective Early Learning Standards Are Developed and Reviewed Through Informed, Inclusive Processes

- The process of developing and reviewing early learning standards relies on relevant, valid **sources of expertise**.

- The process of developing and reviewing early learning standards involves **multiple stakeholders**. Stakeholders may include community members, families, early childhood educators and special educators, and other professional groups. In all cases, those with specific expertise in early development and learning must be involved.
- Once early learning standards have been developed, standards developers and relevant professional associations ensure that standards are shared with all stakeholders, creating multiple opportunities for **discussion and exchange**.
- Early learning standards remain relevant and research based by using a systematic, interactive process for regular **review and revision**.

3. Early Learning Standards Gain Their Effectiveness Through Implementation and Assessment Practices That Support All Children's Development in Ethical, Appropriate Ways

- Effective early learning standards require equally effective **curriculum, classroom practices, and teaching strategies** that connect with young children's interests and abilities, and that promote positive development and learning.
- **Tools to assess young children's progress** must be clearly connected to important learning represented in the standards; must be technically, developmentally, and culturally valid; and must yield comprehensive, useful information.

- Information gained from **assessments** of young children's progress with respect to standards must be **used to benefit children**. Assessment and accountability systems should be used to improve practices and services and should not be used to rank, sort, or penalize young children.

4. Effective Early Learning Standards Require a Foundation of Support for Early Childhood Programs, Professionals, and Families

- Research-based standards for early childhood **program quality, and adequate resources** for high-quality programs, build environments where standards can be implemented effectively.
- Significant expansion of **professional development** is essential if all early childhood teachers and administrators are to gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to implement early learning standards.
- Early learning standards have the most positive effects if **families**—key partners in young children's learning—are provided with respectful communication and support.

¹ NCRESST defines standards as “the broadest of a family of terms referring to expectations for student learning.” This position statement uses the term early learning standards to describe expectations for the learning and development of young children. Narrower terms included in standards and early learning standards are content standards (“summary descriptions of what it is that students should know and/or be able to do within a particular discipline” [McREL]); benchmarks (“specific description of knowledge or skill that students should acquire by a particular point in their schooling” [McREL]); usually tied to a grade or age level); performance standards (“describes levels of student performance in respect to the knowledge or skill described in a single benchmark or a set of closely related benchmarks” [McREL]). Important, related standards that are not included in this position statement's definition of early learning standards are program standards—expectations for the characteristics or quality of schools, child care centers, and other educational settings. It should be noted that Head Start uses the term Performance Standards in a way that is closer to the definition of program standards, describing expectations for the functioning of a Head Start program and not the accomplishments of children in the program. A working group of representatives from NAEYC, CCSO, ERIC, and other groups is developing a more complete glossary of terms related to standards, assessment, and accountability.

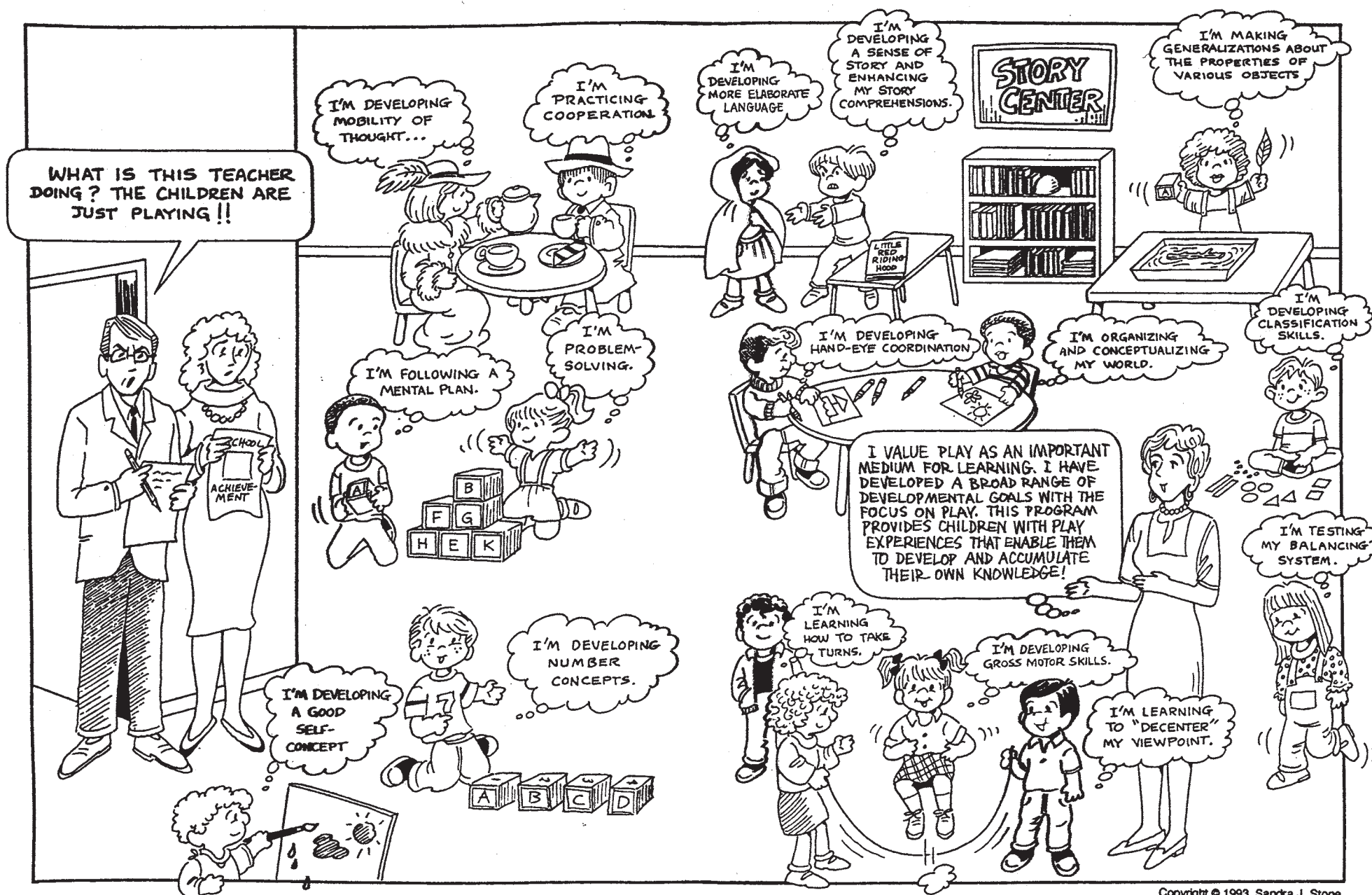
Appendix 11

Vermont Early Learning Standards Advisory Panel Members

The Vermont Early Learning Standards were reviewed by over 100 principals, early education coordinators, preschool teachers, child care providers, faith-based preschool educators, kindergarten teachers, educational consultants, higher education faculty, and parents.

Judy Adams	<i>Early Education Coord.</i>	Bennington Rutland SU	Irene Gilles	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Sherburne Elementary School
Robin Amber	<i>Gr. 1-2 Teacher</i>	Calais Elementary School	Theresa Gleason	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
Christopher Ashley	<i>Principal</i>	White River School	Elaine Gordon	<i>Early Educator</i>	Westminster Central School
Catherine Audette	<i>Student</i>	Greenfield Community College	Carolyn Guest	<i>Early Educator</i>	Essex Caledonia SU
Christine Barnes	<i>Principal</i>	Twinfield Elementary School	Hope Hutchinson	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU
Judy Bartlett	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU	Birdi Kaplan	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU
Julie Benay	<i>Asst. Principal</i>	Swanton Elementary School	Bev Keck	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Union Elementary School / Mont.
Carol Birdsall	<i>Early Educator</i>	Addison Northeast SU	Beth Kinney	<i>EEE Coordinator</i>	Windham Southwest SU
Laura Brines	<i>Director/Teacher</i>	Springhill School	Paula Kitchel	<i>Early Education Coord.</i>	Caledonia Central SU
Mary Jane Broughton	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Bristol Elementary School	Joan Knight	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	St. Albans Elementary School
Karen Burnell	<i>Early Education Coordinator</i>	Southwest Vermont SU	Mary Koen	<i>Early Education Coord.</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
Jane Cameron	<i>Early Education Director</i>	Good Shepherd Catholic School	Sharon Ladago	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
Susan Cano	<i>Dir. of Student Support</i>	Lamoille North SU	Michele LaRouche	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
Anne Cerasoli	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	White River School	Susan Lavigne	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Charlotte Central School
Pat Chamberlin	<i>Early Educator</i>	Georgia Elementary School	Sally Lawyer	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	St. Albans Elementary School
Mary Charbonneau	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU	Mary Leadbetter	<i>Early Educator</i>	Guildhall Elementary School
Martha Clavelle	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Calais Elementary School	Shauna Lee	<i>Early Educator</i>	Addison Central SU
Bonnie Coulter	<i>Early Educator</i>	Addison Central SU	Deb Lendway	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
Elaine Daniels	<i>Early Educator</i>	Lamoille South SU	Marion Leonard	<i>Early Educator</i>	Addison Central SU
Kathy Davidow	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU	Susan Linskey	<i>Coordinator</i>	CVOEO Head Start
Linda Dean-Farrar	<i>Director</i>	Sunrise Parent Child Center	Ellen Livingston	<i>Early Educator</i>	Lamoille Family Center
Mary Drew	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Union Elementary School / Mont.	Mary Macomber	<i>Early Educator</i>	Miller's Run School (Sheffield)
Barbara Dune	<i>Director</i>	Magic Mountain Children's Center	Carol Mandracchia	<i>Early Educator</i>	Deerfield Valley Elem. School
Early Education Faculty		University of Vermont – PreK – Grade 3 Teacher Prep. Program	Diane Marcoux-LaClair	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Hyde Park Elementary School
Cami Elliot-Knaggs	<i>Early Educator</i>	Putney Central School	Jean Mayer	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
Elizabeth Fairchild	<i>Early Education Coord.</i>	Addison Northeast SU	Dona Meltzer	<i>Early Educator</i>	Randolph Elementary School
Lynn Fitzgerald	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Highgate Elementary School	Diane Minton	<i>Early Educator</i>	Lamoille North SU
Pat Fitzsimmons	<i>Science Enrich. Teacher</i>	Barre Town Schools	Sue Moore	<i>Early Educator</i>	Lamoille South SU
Carol Fjeld	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU	Carmen Murray	<i>Principal</i>	Brighton Elementary/Island Pond
Wendy Fjeld	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU	Patti O'Donohue	<i>Early Educator</i>	Addison Central SU
Joyce Gagne	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Richford Elementary School	Sue Owings	<i>Early Educator</i>	Deerfield Valley Elem. School
Cindy Gauthier	<i>Early Educator</i>	Berlin Elementary School	Jean Peterson	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Calais Elementary School
Julie Gebo	<i>Early Educator</i>	Addison Central SU	Carol Pickett	<i>Principal</i>	Bridgewater Elementary School
Theresa Giffin	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Union Elementary School / Mont.	Joann Pye	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
			Rob Reade	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU

Amy Rider	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Sue Rogers	<i>Early Educator</i>	Chelsea Elementary School
Ellen Rose	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	St. Albans Elementary School
Kathleen Rowe	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
John Rowell	<i>Special Services Coord.</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Linda Rowell	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Lesley Rower	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU
Ebeth Scatchard	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Charlotte Central School
Allison Shantz	<i>Speech/ Lang. Pathologist</i>	Windham South SU
Chris Schillhammer	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Charlotte Central School
Vicki Shaw	<i>Parent / Success By Six</i>	Franklin County Success By Six
Sue Smiel	<i>Early Educator</i>	Rutland Northeast SU
Carolyn Smith	<i>Early Educator</i>	Lamoille North SU
Paulette Staats	<i>Early Educator</i>	Randolph Elementary School
Lesley Stanley	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Townsend Elementary School
Sue Stanley	<i>Child Care Trainer</i>	Family Center of NW Vermont
Mark Sustic	<i>Instructor</i>	University of Vermont
Deborah Tewksbury	<i>Reading Specialist</i>	Calais Elementary School
Sue Tougas	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>	Georgia Elementary School
Lowell VanDerlip	<i>Principal</i>	Berlin Elementary School
Early Education Curriculum Com.		
Cill Waterhouse	<i>Early Educator</i>	Washington West SU
Rebecca Webb	<i>Early Educator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
Cathi Weist	<i>Early Educator</i>	Grand Isle SU
Beth West	<i>Early Educator</i>	Grand Isle SU
David White	<i>Science Consultant</i>	Vergennes Union Elem. School
Kate Williams	<i>Early Educator</i>	Vermont Institutes
Alice Worth	<i>Curriculum Coordinator</i>	Bennington Rutland SU
Wendy Wright	<i>Early Educator</i>	Orange East SU
		Brighton Elementary/Island Pond





For additional copies, contact Jim Squires at the Vermont Department of Education,
jsquires@doe.state.vt.us or 802-828-3892
or visit the Vermont Early Childhood web site, www.ahs.state.vt.us/EarlyChildhood



Guiding Your Child's Early Learning

A Parent's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards



VERMONT'S VISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Every family in Vermont has the right to comprehensive, high quality child development services for its young children. Every Vermont community shall nurture the healthy development of young children and strengthen families. To support communities, the state of Vermont will create a unified system of child development services which shares common standards for quality and respects the diversity and uniqueness of individuals and programs.

(EARLY CHILDHOOD WORK GROUP, 1992)

Guiding Your Child's Early Learning: A Parent's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards is the third in a series of publications on Vermont's Early Learning Standards. It is designed to be a companion to *The Vermont Early Learning Standards: Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten* (2004); and *The Instructor's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards* (2005). This document was published with support from the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office, in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Education.

The Vermont Early Learning Standards can be found at www.state.vt.us/educ/new/pdfdoc/pgm_earlyed/vels_03.pdf. The Instructor's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards can be found at http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_earlyed/pubs/vels_instructors_guide_05.html.

The authors are grateful to the parents, colleagues, and Head Start policy council members who contributed suggestions and encouragement throughout the development of *Guiding Your Child's Early Learning: A Parent's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards*.

Meg Baker
Disa Clarner
Sue Dyer
Julianne Eagan
Kathy Emerson
Deb Gass
Radha Heathe
Mary Ann Hertz
Rus Janis

Shari Kampitsis
Kelly Lagasse
Shela Linton
Anne Marie
Chrystal Michaud
Jeanette Mills
Amethyst Peaslee
Jody Ryan
Wendy Scott

Ami Seese
Nancy Sugarman
Cynthia Tarail
Holly Tippet
Ann Traverso
Cassandra Vachss-Vandervalk
Thea Waite
Maureen Young-McCarthy

Janice Stockman, M.S.,

Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Development Division, Agency of Human Services

James H. Squires, Ph.D.,

Vermont Department of Education

Guiding Your Child's Early Learning:

A Parent's Guide to the Vermont Early Learning Standards

For young children, learning is fun and rewarding. It happens naturally as they begin to explore and understand the world around them. When children learn, they satisfy their natural curiosity and develop confidence. This sense of confidence and understanding helps them throughout their lives. By the same token, when parents help their child learn, they also develop greater confidence in themselves as their child's first and most important teachers.

This guide was developed for families who want to strengthen their understanding of how everyday activities promote early learning in young children while preparing them to begin school as confident and eager learners. It is also meant as a reminder to families that learning is fun.

Is My Child Ready For School?

This is an important question many parents ask themselves about their preschooler. Some parents think school readiness means possessing academic skills, such as knowing letters, numbers, colors and shapes. Others view it as having social skills — like listening to the teacher, following directions and getting along with others. Being ready for school is all this and much more.

Whatever readiness means to you, we believe it includes children developing the knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes they will need to successfully participate in, and benefit from, kindergarten activities.

Fortunately, this can be accomplished through the everyday activities and routines of family life. You shouldn't feel pressured to "teach" your child to get him or her ready for school. In fact, you're probably already doing a great job in this respect! This guide will help you feel better about what you do and also give you some new ideas.

What Are The Vermont Early Learning Standards?

The Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) were developed to help parents, teachers and others share reasonable expectations for what preschoolers are capable of knowing and doing. VELS provides consistent, appropriate information about what many children are capable of as they enter kindergarten.

Used by Head Start, public schools, child care programs and others, VELS focuses on eight areas of development and learning:★

- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Creative Expression
- Physical Development and Health

★ *The learning goals for each of these areas can be found in the back of this guide. The complete version of VELS can be viewed by going to: http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/pdfdoc/pgm_earlyed/vels_03.pdf*

Your Child and the VELS

VELS can help you and your child's early educators provide opportunities that will help make kindergarten a great learning experience. Based on research, reality, and common sense, VELS provides a menu of skills, knowledge and behaviors that many five-year-old children are capable of knowing or doing. VELS is not a checklist of everything your child must know or do before going to kindergarten. Likewise, it is not a test for determining your child's readiness for kindergarten.



Consider Your Child's Uniqueness

Before looking at the standards and how they may apply to your child, take a few moments to think about your child's unique characteristics and situation.

- What are your child's strengths?
- What fascinates your child?
- What is your child trying to do better?
- What are some of the challenges you see your child experiencing?
- What are your hopes and dreams for your child?
- Which significant people in your family, neighborhood and community have shaped your child's life so far?

Once you've thought about your child's abilities, interests and needs, you can use VELS as a "road map" for helping her continued development and learning. Also, if your child is enrolled in an early childhood program, you can use VELS as a common language when you talk with your child's teachers. Teachers throughout Vermont are using VELS in their preschool classrooms and child care programs.

We all believe the learning that happens before kindergarten is important and provides a solid foundation for life. However, children aren't expected to have all the skills, behaviors and knowledge of the VELS before entering kindergarten.

Young children develop at their own pace so don't be distressed if your child doesn't display all these characteristics by the time kindergarten begins. Kindergarten is where your child will learn many of these and other essential things. Please note also that some children with unique challenges will develop according to their own timelines, and with extra support.

As a parent, one of the most important things you can do is to help your child look forward

to going to kindergarten with enthusiasm, curiosity, excitement and confidence. The more you are involved with your child and your child's school, the more successful your child's learning experience will be.



A Word About Children's Play

Some people think children's play is a waste of time. Nothing could be farther from the truth! When children play, they develop important skills, knowledge and behaviors that support their learning, now and for the rest of their lives.

For example, it's through play that children:

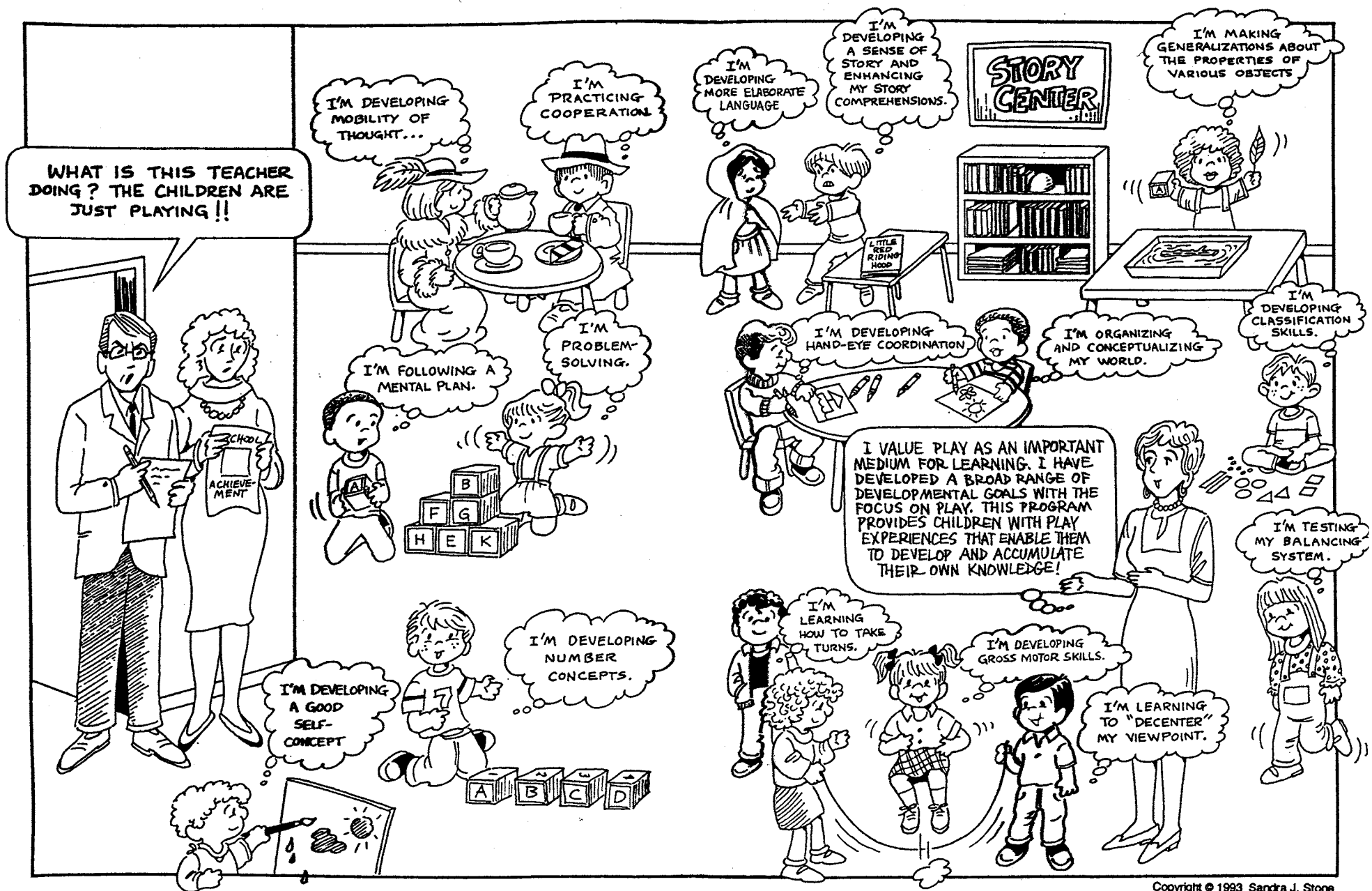
- Understand how things work
- Connect what they already know to new situations
- Improve on previously acquired skills
- Cooperate with others
- Make choices
- Make predictions
- Solve problems
- Persist in the face of challenge and
- Develop confidence.

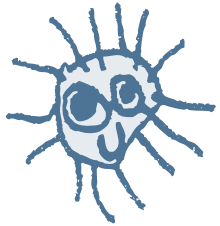
VELS recognize play as an important part of learning. When children play, they challenge themselves to do and learn more. As a parent, you can help your child to learn through play, and by involving them in family activities. Remember, learning *is* fun!

How Can I Help My Child With the Vermont Early Learning Standards?

There is no one right way to help your child achieve the learning goals of the VELS. In fact, *everything* families do together — including talking about what they do — sets the stage for their child's development and learning.

Many everyday activities contribute significantly to your child's readiness for school. In the following pages you will find examples of how everyday family activities support your child's learning and address many of the goals of the VELS.





APPROACHES TO LEARNING

As an infant, your child came into this world with his own unique way of learning that leads to success in school. You might say he was “wired to learn.” One child may be well-organized and bursting with initiative, while another requires more structure and encouragement. Some children dive right in with a new experience; others observe quietly as they learn new information.

All children, regardless of their unique abilities and characteristics, are able to learn and be successful. The ways in which they approach new learning opportunities, however, will be as varied as the individuals themselves.

It is important for children to develop a sense of wonder; a willingness to participate and share their ideas; the quality of persistence; and the ability to draw on past experiences to inform new situations. Parents and other adults must ensure that every child has the opportunity to make choices and be actively involved in his or her own learning. In this process, your child will develop initiative, curiosity, confidence and many other positive habits of lifelong learning.

Children's books that address approaches to learning:

- *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Kraus
- *Little One Step* by Simon James
- *We Were Tired of Living in A House* by Liesel Moak Skorpen
- *Mirette on the Highwire* by Emily Arnold McCully
- *The Big Brown Box* by Marisabina Russo

What you can do

- Encourage your child to try new experiences.
- Respond to your child's questions, ideas, interests and concerns.
- Be eager yourself as you approach new learning situations.
- Learn something, or try something new, together with your child.
- Be sensitive to your child's need to approach new situations slowly, and with caution.
- Praise your child's attempts, not just his successes.
- Offer your child a variety of choices, all of which are acceptable to you.
- Give your child unconditional love and acceptance.

A Family Activity: Making Playdough

Making and playing with playdough is one of the best tried-and-true activities you can do with your child. Follow this simple recipe to make cooked playdough:

2 cups flour
1 cup salt
2 tsp. cream of tartar
2 Tbsp. cooking oil
2 cups water
Food coloring

Stir and cook all ingredients over medium heat until they form a lump. Cool slightly; the mass will be too hot to handle at first. Knead until smooth. Store in an airtight container or plastic bag.

How does using playdough help develop a child's approach to learning?

Playing with playdough is an “open-ended” activity — there is no right or wrong way to do it, no steps that must be done in order, and no winners or losers. How a child uses the playdough gives parents and other adults a view of how your child approaches learning.

Your child may dig right in, or need a little encouragement. Your child may be curious about the cooking process and barely be able to wait for the playdough to cool off. Or, he may seem less interested in cooking it and more curious about how it will smell and feel once it's done.

Initiative, persistence, curiosity, reasoning and self-organization contribute to a child's developing approach to learning. Playing with playdough together gives you a chance to observe your child's approach to learning — *and* your own. This is also fun for children of all ages, which makes it an activity families can enjoy together.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development refers to how your child interacts with others. **Emotional development** refers to your child's awareness of herself as a valued and valuable individual.

The roots of relationships take hold during your child's first days of life, and develop rapidly through the preschool years. A great deal of your child's learning occurs through play and interactions with family members, other children and adults. Children who develop and maintain strong, positive relationships tend to be active, successful learners. These relationships influence how your child feels about herself; this affects how she approaches new and challenging tasks, along with her attitude toward school and lifelong learning.

When your child feels good about herself, she is more likely to treat others with care and respect.

What you can do

- Follow your child's lead in play. Let your child direct you, and follow her plan in the play scenario she creates.
- Accept your child's feelings.
- Help your child identify her feelings with words, facial expressions and gestures.
- Play simple games with your child like Simon Says, I Spy, and Duck, Duck, Goose.
- Be consistent about rules and expectations for your child's behavior.
- Accept your child's need to be alone sometimes.
- Offer to have your child's friend over for a play date.
- If you have pets, encourage your child to care for a pet by feeding, walking or cleaning up after it.
- Grow and care for house or garden plants with your child.

A Family Activity: Making a Family Album

Special moments and events that are captured in photographs contribute to your family's unique history. Make a family album together using photos of each member of the family and special friends, pets and others who are important to you.

This is an activity that also promotes language and communication because there is usually a story connected to each photograph... "Remember when we went to the lake?"... "This was the first time you ate ice cream — you loved it so much!"... "This is you getting mad at Bobby for taking your bear"... "This is you right after you were born — we were so happy to see you!"

Family albums can be very simple or quite elaborate. The simple ones are inexpensive, and easy to make. Children may want to look at their albums alone with you, or take them to school or a friend's house if needed to ease separation. Make sure to include pictures of important people and of your child when she was much younger. This acknowledges your child's special relationships, as well as lets her appreciate how much she's grown.

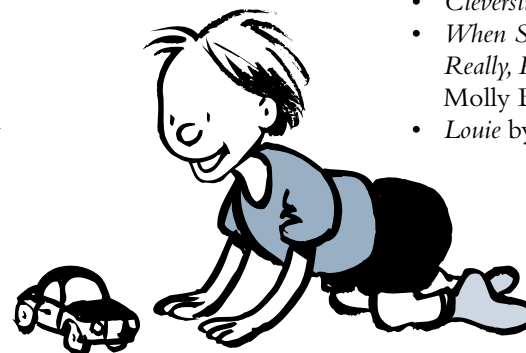
An easy alternative to a family album is to make a Treasure Box of Family Memories by decorating a shoebox and storing your favorite family pictures inside.

How does a family album help promote social and emotional development?

In their family album, children will see pictures of themselves at play and in the relationships they hold dear. Pictures of themselves at various stages of their lives help them develop a self-concept, especially when they acknowledge how much they've grown and how dependent they once were. Through conversations as you look at the album together, these pictures will highlight the importance of interactions and relationships with others, including adult friends and special people. A family album is the beginning of creating a sense of community by showing who we belong to and who we care about.

Children's books that address social and emotional development:

- *Koala Lou* by Mem Fox
- *Tacky the Penguin* by Helen Lester
- *A Color of His Own* by Leo Lionni
- *Cleversticks* by Bernard Ashley
- *When Sophie Gets Angry, Really, Really Angry* by Molly Bang
- *Louie* by Ezra Jack Keats.



LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION

Your child has been developing language from birth. Crying, cooing and those first words were his early communications with you and others. In the years between three and five, children become quite capable as communicators. Language development is the foundation for building the skills of reading and writing, which we also call literacy.

It is important that young children have many opportunities to learn language and practice communication skills. These will help them develop relationships, obtain information and express themselves in a variety of settings.

Your child builds language and communication skills by being involved in meaningful experiences that require him to express his ideas and feelings, listen and understand sounds and language, and learn new words.

A Family Activity: Simon Says

You probably know the game “Simon Says.” It goes like this: Tell your child to follow the directions that include the words, “Simon says,” but not to follow the directions that don’t. Give your child a series of directions on moving his body, beginning with the words “Simon says.” Then throw in a direction that leaves out that phrase, and see if he notices the difference.

For example, “*Simon says touch your head. Simon says turn around. Simon says touch the ground. Simon says jump in place. Simon says stop jumping. Sit down.*” (That really means don’t sit down, because Simon didn’t say to!) The older the child, the more complex the directions could be. At that stage, try two-step directions like “rub your tummy and blink your eyes.”

While your child will most likely learn to read and write in school, you can help him take advantage of the materials, activities and interactions in the classroom that nurture literacy. Children learn to read and write the same way they learn language — slowly, over time, and with many opportunities to practice using words, letters, books and stories, and of course, play.

What you can do

- Talk with your child a lot. Explain things, teach him new words, have conversations, ask open-ended questions (questions without a one-word answer), talk about feelings, describe what you are doing.
- Point out signs and print in the environment. Notice common signs like “Exit,” “Stop,” “In,” “Closed,” “Open,” and so on. Identify the letters in the words.
- Help your child identify favorite food items in the grocery store, and then see if he can find that item by “reading” the label.
- Teach your child the letters in his name, and then teach your child to write his name. (Don’t worry if your child writes backwards or upside down before he gets it right — that will come later.)
- Play simple rhyming games like “I’m thinking of a word that rhymes with bark. That’s right, park. We’re going to the park.”
- Have a supply of pens, markers and crayons, and paper available and encourage your child to play, scribble, draw, and color with writing materials.
- Read with your child every day. Early exposure to books and stories builds knowledge about books and a lifelong love of reading.
- Eat together as a family and have dinner conversations. Research shows that family conversations around the dinner table build vocabulary, listening and speaking skills that contribute to your child becoming a successful reader.

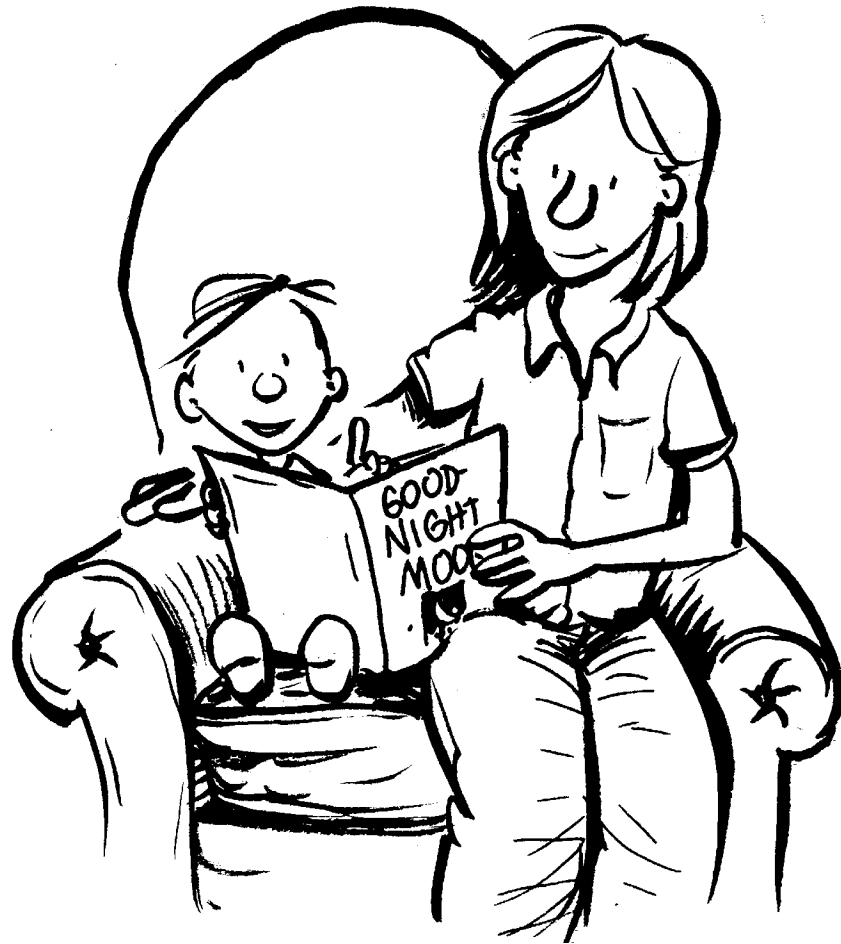
How does this help promote language, literacy and communication?

Simon Says is a listening game, and listening is one of the major learning goals for building language, literacy, and communication. Listening is one of the ways your child learns to understand language and build his vocabulary. It's also very important to social development. Children who are good listeners get along better with others; and this is especially true at school.

Listening is an important component of conversations, too. Having a conversation involves taking turns listening and speaking. Since conversations build vocabulary, introduce new ideas and contribute to good relationships, you will reinforce your child's listening, learning and communication skills simply by engaging him in a conversation.

Children's books that address language, literacy and communication:

- *Poems for the Very Young* by Michael Rosen
- *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin
- *Alphabet Room* by Sarah Pinto
- *Bunny Cakes* by Rosemary Wells
- *Sheep in a Jeep* by Nancy Shaw

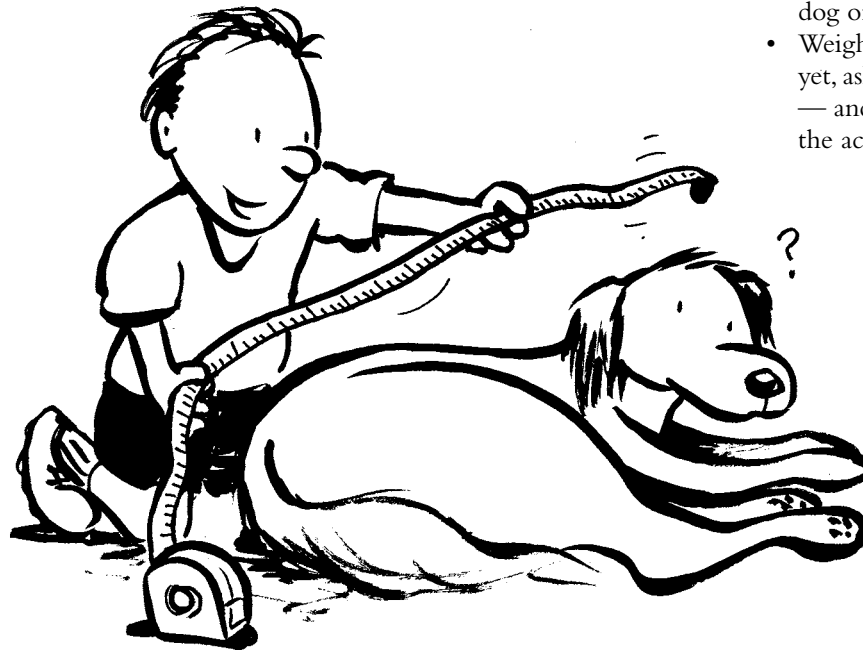


MATHEMATICS

Did you know that your child uses mathematics in her play all the time? When she complains to you that Joey had more time on the swings than she did, she is estimating and making a comparison — two very important math skills.

Children are inclined to notice similarities and differences in objects, group their toys and materials together, organize information, and sort objects into categories. Math helps children think logically, solve problems and make connections in the world around them.

When your child plays in the sandbox, cooks applesauce with you, completes a puzzle or collects all the socks from the laundry basket, she is developing the mathematical thinking skills that will be useful when learning about math in school. When she learns the words for her mathematical thinking, she is developing a math vocabulary that helps her talk about mathematics.



Math for young children isn't something you have to teach in a structured way. Rather, build on your child's natural experiences with people, places and things by encouraging her curiosity, making observations together and talking about what you notice.

What you can do

- Group your child's toys together when you clean up. All the books go in one place, the cars and trucks in another.
- Use numbers when you talk to your child. "We'll have three potatoes for dinner," or "Why don't you wear the jacket with five buttons?"
- Go on a shape hunt. Look for all the different shapes naturally occurring in the environment, like the neighborhood playground, the laundromat or her bedroom.
- Talk about the shapes on her dinner plate.
- Keep track of your child's growth with a height chart or a series of pencil marks on a wall. Talk about taller and shorter, measure how tall he is and mark the number of inches on the wall. Compare her height with a friend or sibling.
- Use a ruler or yardstick to measure things — toys, the rug, your dog or cat.
- Weigh a bunch of bananas on a scale at the grocery store. Better yet, ask your child to guess how much they weigh (estimating) — and then actually weigh them. Compare her estimate with the actual weight.

A Family Activity: Doing Laundry

Think of all the actions involved in doing laundry. You put clothes into a basket, then transfer them into a washer or dryer. You sort, match, fold and then put them away where they belong. There is a predictable sequence to the process of doing laundry. Make sure to emphasize the sequence you use. What comes first, next and last?

Measure how much laundry detergent to put in. Compare different piles of laundry and see if your child can estimate which one is bigger. Which has more clothes? Why does this pile look bigger when that pile has more clothes in it? Sort the laundry by color. Then see if there are other ways to sort it: Put all the towels together, all Mommy's clothes together, all the pajamas together. Believe it or not, children don't think of laundry as a chore — well, not a tiresome one anyway!

Involve children in doing simple chores when they are young and they will reap the benefits by learning about math, developing language and increasing their physical skills, both gross- and fine-motor. They will also develop an understanding that their help is needed and appreciated, that they are capable of doing “real work,” and that they can make important contributions to the family or classroom community.

How does this help promote mathematical thinking?

Sorting, matching, doing things in a particular order (sequencing), and making comparisons are all skills that mathematicians use. Your child uses these skills too, in everyday play and in simple family activities.

You may have heard people say that math is all around us, and it certainly is true for children. This is one example of how a family activity or chore is a greater learning opportunity than sitting down to try to “teach” your child to count or put numbers together. Early mathematical thinking is best learned through play and everyday experiences, not through adult-directed instruction.

Children's books that promote mathematical thinking:

- *Each Orange Had Eight Slices* by Paul Giganti
- *The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins
- *Round is a Mooncake* by Roseanne Thong
- *Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina
- *Who Sank the Boat?* by Pamela Allen
- *10 Minutes till Bedtime* by Peggy Rathman

SCIENCE

Children are fascinated by the natural world and physical events. They insist that parents and other adults answer their questions about the world around them. By encouraging this sense of wonder, parents help children to become scientific thinkers.

Your child is a natural investigator. As he tries to make sense of the world, he develops predictions and theories, just as scientists do. For a young child, science is much more than learning facts and skills. It's about making observations and putting ideas together ... It's about wondering, forming questions, and then experimenting to see what happens ... Then it's about drawing conclusions about the world based on observations, ideas and experiments.

Your child is likely to ask many questions about how the world works — how insects fly, how to make a shadow, what happens if two paints are mixed together, and much more. You can do more than provide your child with answers. You can use these opportunities to offer him resources, tools and attitudes to “do what scientists do” — pose questions, observe, experiment, record, explain, predict and conclude.



What you can do

- Ask questions aloud, such as: “I wonder what will happen if?” or “What do you think will work best here?”
- Describe the changes taking place around you and your child — in your home, in your yard, in the woods and in weather.
- Wait before answering your child’s questions. Allow your child to discover things for himself, then ask him to explain his thinking.
- Encourage your child to make a prediction, then compare that with what really happened.
- Pay attention to your child’s interests, and provide opportunities for him to investigate and think deeply about what fascinates him, whether it’s dinosaurs, bubbles or insects.
- Take a walk in the woods and look under a fallen log. Talk together about what you see.
- Help your child to take care of plants and animals in your home. While you remain the responsible adult, your child can be involved in the care, feeding and observation of living things.
- Write things down. Help your child keep a notebook of his special discoveries, experiments and observations. Recording these things is just what scientists do!

How does making pancakes promote scientific thinking?

Making food together is a learning opportunity that involves science knowledge and scientific thinking. Children use their senses, along with tools like measuring spoons, egg beaters and spatulas, to make observations, gather and record information, and predict what might happen.

You can ask your child to guess what will happen when he mixes the wet and dry ingredients together. Talk about what you both observe when you pour the batter onto the griddle. See if she can describe the taste and smell of pancake batter. Compare that to the cooked pancakes. What happens if you leave out the eggs? What would happen if you left out the milk? What happens if you add blueberries? Or bananas? How would you make a square pancake? Why did goeey liquid turn to a solid?

A Family Activity: Making Pancakes

It's Saturday morning. Everyone's a little more relaxed, and many families enjoy preparing breakfast together. Children love to get in the kitchen with parents and do real work — so by all means, let them help set the table, wash the dishes and participate in cooking!

Pancake recipe

Nonstick spray
1 1/3 c. flour
1 egg
1 c. buttermilk
1/4 c. granulated sugar
1 heaping tsp. baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1/4 c. cooking oil

Preheat griddle or frying pan over medium heat. Use a pan with a nonstick surface or use spray. Mix all of the remaining ingredients together by hand (or use a blender or mixer) until smooth. Pour batter by spoonfuls into hot pan, forming 5-inch circles. When bubbles form and the edges appear to harden slightly, flip the pancakes. They should be light brown. Cook the other side the same amount of time.

Makes 8-10 pancakes.

Children's books that promote science and scientific thinking:

- *What Do You Do With A Tail Like This?* by Steve Jenkins
- *Bear Shadow* by Frank Asch
- *Actual Size* by Steve Jenkins
- *One Little Seed* by Elaine Greenstein
- *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen



SOCIAL STUDIES

Human beings are social creatures. We live together in families, neighborhoods and communities. We develop customs and traditions that reflect who we are and what we value. Social studies build upon your child's social development by encouraging her to explore her relationship to her community, the environment and the world around her. Social studies also examine how your child lives together with other children and adults as a group, and how that group is influenced by the land, our work and our time in history.

What you can do

- Explore your community. Go on a variety of different outings. For recreation, visit parks or local playgrounds. To get to know what people do for work, visit the post office, fire station or a farm. To feel connected to others, explore parent-child play groups, libraries, newspapers or your faith community.
- Use a map to plan your route. Explain how maps help us locate places, and direct us where we want to go.
- Talk about how members of your family rely on one another.
- Make family rules together, and explain the reasons for the rules.
- Develop a list of chores, giving each member of the family age-appropriate tasks. Explain the importance of work to your family's well-being.
- Be a role model for peacefully resolving conflicts. Teach your child to be a problem-solver who uses words, not fists.
- Talk to your child about her heritage, extended family, and family customs and traditions.
- Read books about people living in different places and times.
- Help your child to notice and appreciate similarities and differences among people.

A Family Activity: Going to the Store

In Vermont, going to the store can mean a trip to the general store, the supermarket, a co-op, a convenience store or a department store. While shopping with children may have some challenges, it is also an experience filled with social studies learning opportunities!

Under the right conditions — with children well-rested and fed — a brief outing to the store offers possibilities to learn about geography, the difference between the present and the past, and people: how they live, and their relationship and responsibility to the environment.

Tips for making shopping a pleasant and safe experience for you and your child:

- Keep shopping outings brief. Don't overdo it by trying to get all your shopping done at once.
- If possible, avoid going to the store when your child (or you) are tired, need a nap or feel under the weather.
- Position your child in a shopping cart, so that you can make eye contact with each other.
- Describe what you see. Talk about what you are doing, how you will use the things you buy, and where they came from — a farm or a factory, nearby or across the world?
- Never leave your child alone in the car while you run into the store, even for just a minute!

How does going to the store help promote social studies?

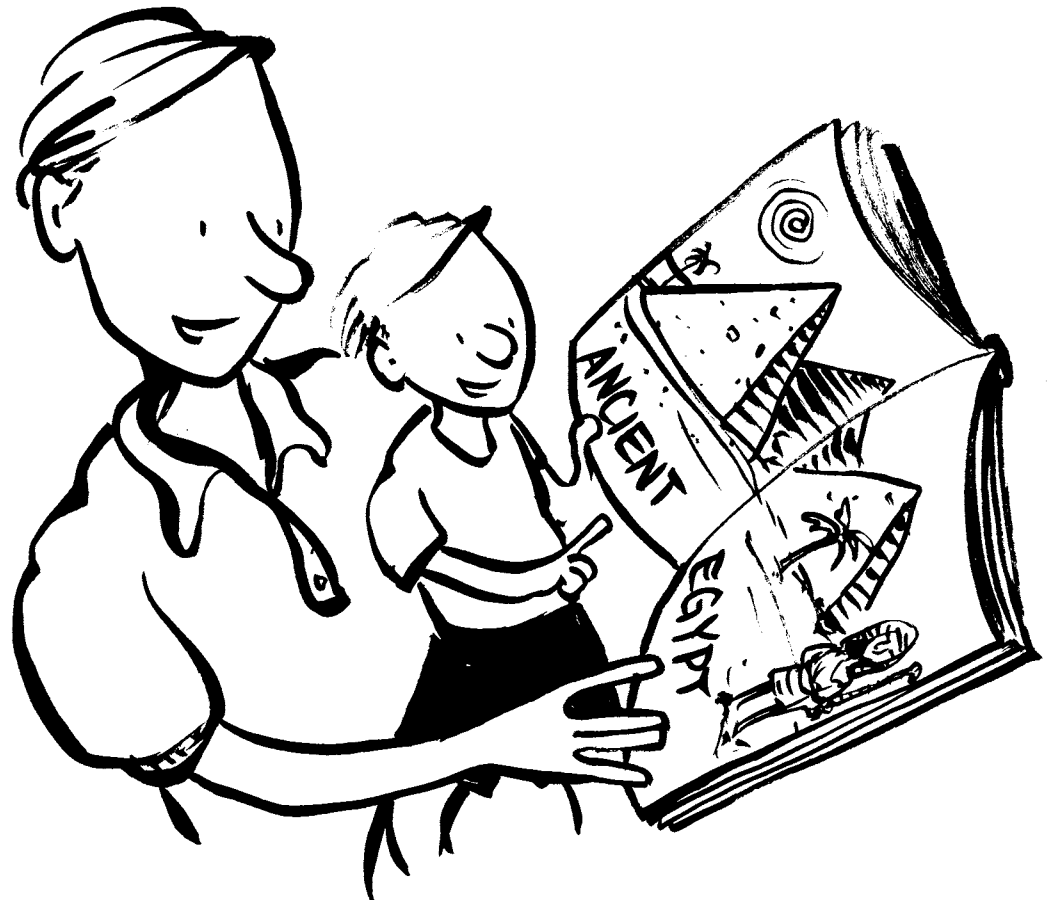
A big part of understanding social studies is understanding people and how they live. Children begin to understand, communicate, share, cooperate and participate with others in a community, by going to the store with you.

You can talk to your child about how and why money is used to purchase the things we need. Or, talk about all the jobs people do in the store, and the types of jobs in your community. To live together and enjoy each other, we make rules and laws; talk about the rules we follow in the store and elsewhere.

Another important part of social studies is understanding the physical environment. Some of the items your child sees in stores are grown or produced right here in Vermont, but many others are made in other parts of the world. Talk about where things are made or grown, how they got to the store, and what natural and man-made resources were used to produce the items we purchase.

Children's books that promote social studies:

- *Are We There Yet, Daddy?* by Virginia Walters
- *On the Go* by Ann Morris
- *The Big Trip* by Valerie Gorbachev
- *On Mother's Lap* by Ann H. Scott
- *Families* by Ann Morris
- *Hush! A Thai Lullaby* by Minfong Ho



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

This section might be better named “The Arts and More” — because while the arts may be the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the words “creative expression,” there is a lot more to creativity than making pretty pictures.

Your child has a natural desire to express herself and to create. Expression can come in the form of words, or it can come through the arts — painting, drawing, dancing, making music, sculpting and dramatic play. It can also come in the form of ideas, such as looking at a problem in a new way to find a brilliant solution, mediating conflicts with peers, making choices and showing leadership.

Through language, the arts and ideas, your child is able to be creative without worrying about what other people will think — an anxiety that often inhibits adults and diminishes our creative urges. As Pablo Picasso once said, “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist when he grows up.”

What you can do

- Have a positive attitude about your own creativity. Even if you don't think of yourself as artistic, share your love of the arts, or create something together with your child.
- Give your child the gift of time. Creativity shouldn't be rushed, so try to allow him to finish his projects at his own speed.
- Have a variety of creative materials on hand. Playdough, markers, glue and paper are simple and easy to find or make, and your child can use these items independently.
- Acknowledge your child's creative efforts. Remember that creativity isn't about making something that looks conventionally beautiful. Your child is more interested in the process of being creative — and that is what you should encourage. Too much emphasis on the product can make your child feel like he can't measure up to adult expectations.
- Display your and your child's artwork to show you value what he created or what you created together.

- Expose your child to music. You don't need an extensive CD collection; just turn on the radio and you'll find many types of music to enjoy.
- Incorporate movement with music. Dance, march or rock your child to sleep, with a volume and rhythm that matches the activity.
- Collect clothes, hats and shoes for dress-up play and keep them in a special place.
- Admire artwork at museums, libraries and in books. Fine art isn't just for adults!

A Family Activity: Turn on the Radio and Dance!

You can find almost any kind of music on the radio: classical, country, rock and roll ... you name it. Maybe you remember when your child first stood upright; he liked to bounce up and down to the rhythm of the music. As a preschooler, he may move his body in a much more sophisticated way. He can twirl, jump and move from side to side or up and down.

We can all move our bodies to music, whether we're standing or sitting. Make big movements. Make small movements. Move fast or slow. Move like animals or machines. Move like a soccer player or move like a ballet dancer. Wear your regular clothes or dress up to dance. Dancing to music is good exercise for your child, and for you, too. Don't forget to laugh at yourselves!

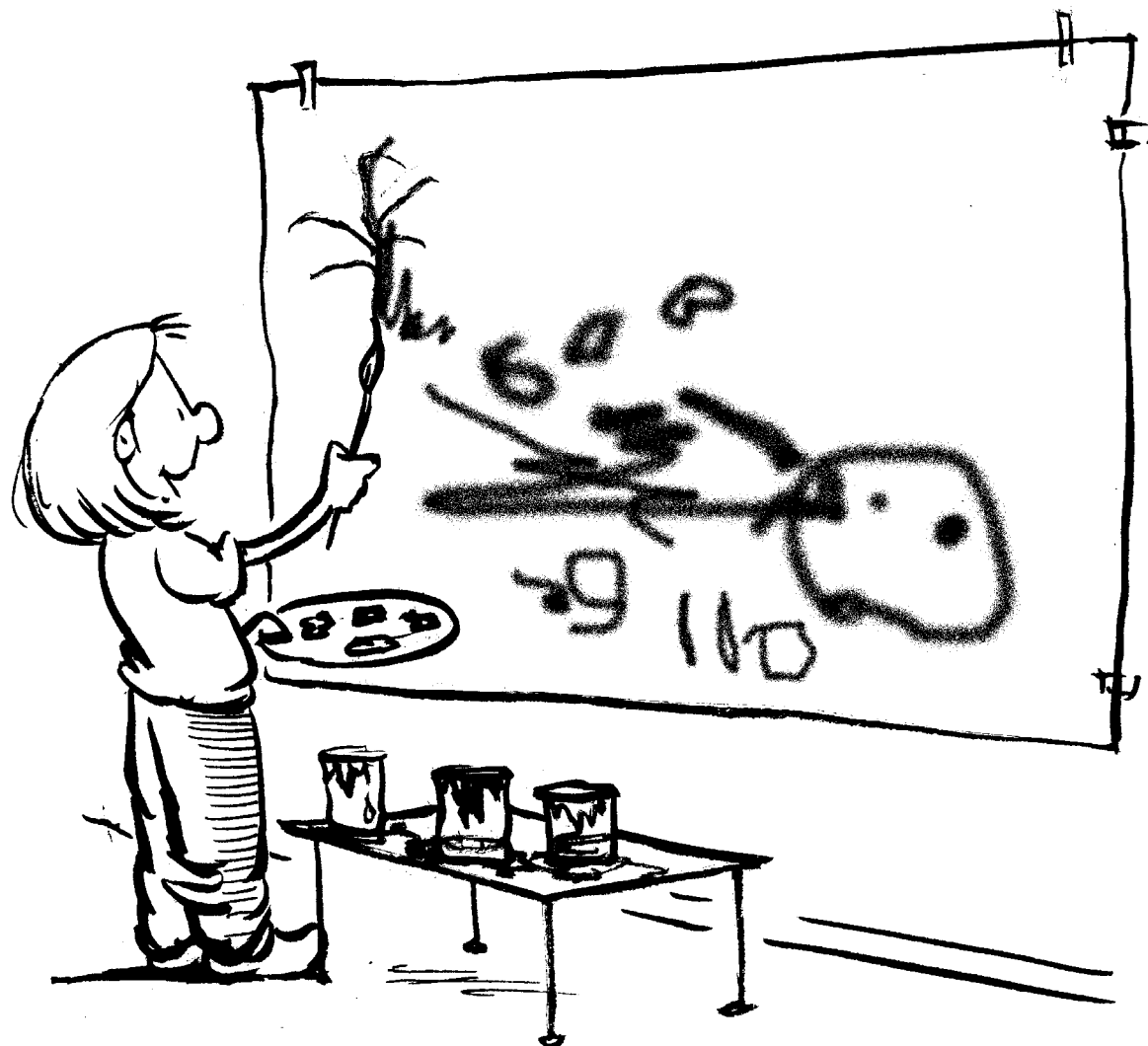
How does dancing to music help promote creative expression?

Because dancing to music is something anyone can be good at, it is a creative activity that isn't judged or subjected to comparison. It can express a variety of feelings, and help children show their understanding and interpret their experiences. It is playful, and can be used to represent stories, moods and ideas.

When you add scarves or musical instruments, (use containers with rice inside as "shakers" or wooden sticks) dancing becomes an activity that uses "tools" of creativity and expands your child's experiences. Your child's imagination is also at work — so dancing can represent both fantasies and real-life experiences.

Children's books that promote creative expression:

- *Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran
- *Clap Your Hands* by Lorinda Cauley
- *Pretend You're a Cat* by Jean Marzollo
- *Mouse Paint* by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- *Matthew's Dream* by Leo Lionni
- *Max Found Two Sticks* by Brian Pinkney



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH

All children develop in individual and unique ways. No two children are identical in body size, shape, skills or rate of development. Still, there is a predictable sequence in developing physical skills. For example, before your child learned to run, she sat, crawled and walked. Before she writes her name, she needs to learn to hold a spoon, string beads and use a crayon.

Your child uses her senses to explore her physical environment. While she may not appear interested in nutrition and sensible health habits, from a very early age she is learning and developing attitudes about health, safety, nutrition and physical activity. How does she form these attitudes and habits? From her experiences, and from the messages you and other adults send through your words and actions. You are a powerful force in your child's healthy growth and development.

What you can do

- Help your child learn how to care for her body — wash hands, use a tissue and dispose of it properly to keep sneeze and cough germs from spreading, brush her teeth and wash her body.
- Use routines to reinforce taking care of your child's own body. For instance, build time for a bath and brushing teeth into your evening schedule.
- Encourage healthy eating by offering your child nutritious food choices and a balanced diet. Be a good role model by eating healthy foods yourself, and talking about why certain foods are good to eat.
- Involve children in preparing healthy food.
- Turn off the TV and limit screen time — which includes watching videos or DVDs, playing video games, and using the computer.
- Encourage active play outdoors. Supervise their play, or better yet, join in. Find activities you enjoy as a family — such as swimming, hiking, playing ball, sledding, and riding bikes — and make them part of your family routine.

- Teach your child about safety. Hold hands when crossing the street; require that she wear a bike helmet just as adults do when riding a bike (even a tricycle!); walk, don't run, indoors; and use car seats and seat belts appropriately.

A Family Activity: Playing Ball

Playing ball is an activity families can do together from infancy through adulthood. Babies enjoy rolling balls, while young children learn, practice and master more complex ball skills like throwing, catching, bouncing, kicking and batting. Balls come in a variety of shapes, sizes and weights, and they can be used indoors or outdoors.

Most people recognize that ball play contributes to children's physical development — but it also builds social and emotional skills, and teaches science concepts. Lightweight balls are easier for young children to manipulate than full-size ones.

Remember that play and having fun together is as important as learning ball skills, and that physical activity is a habit you want your child to develop for a lifetime.

How does playing ball help promote physical development?

While playing with balls, your child moves his body in ways that demonstrate control, balance and coordination. Just steadying a ball and then propelling it through space by rolling, throwing, kicking or bouncing requires control and coordination. Ball play also helps children begin to understand that daily activity promotes overall health because it's a great form of exercise. Setting time aside for ball play without calling it "exercise" makes physical activity part of your, and your child's, daily routine.

Ball play develops many important skills that your child may use as she grows older and participates in teams or organized activity. While organized team sports are not usually appropriate for

preschoolers, many early-elementary-age children learn to play soccer, T-ball and other games. If your child becomes interested in such activities, her early experiences and ball skills may ease her way into this type of active play.

Children's books that promote physical development and health:

- *We're Going On a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen
- *Jonathan and His Mommy* by Irene Smalls
- *Oliver's Fruit Garden* by Vivian French
- *Gregory the Terrible Eater* by Mitchell Sharmat
- *Good Enough to Eat*, by Lizzie Rockwell
- *Baby Duck and the Bad Eyeglasses* by Amy Hest
- *The Lion Who Had Asthma* by Jonathan London
- *Eyes, Nose, Fingers and Toes* by Judy Hindley



RESOURCES FOR FAMILY FUN

Here are some recipes for art materials and projects:

Cornstarch Goop

3 cups corn starch

2 cups warm water

Gradually add water to corn starch. Mix ingredients together with your hands. Goop is done when mass goes from lumpy to satiny texture.

Goop hardens in the air and turns to liquid when held. Make fingerprints or hand prints and describe the texture. Does it feel firm and powdery? Try holding a ball of it in the palm of your hand. What does it feel like now? Can you keep it from dripping through your fingers?

This is fun, but it can get messy. It's best to do this in the kitchen or bathroom.

Make a collage

Collect almost any kind of material — pictures from magazines, calendars or cards, yarn, ribbon, tissue paper, recycled gift wrap, scraps of fabric, Styrofoam, leaves, dried flowers ... the list is endless. Use glue or glue sticks to attach the material to paper or cardboard with your child's (or your own) unique design.

Make a theme collage: "People," or "Food," or "Things I like to do in the winter." Or make a three-dimensional structure using scraps of wood, cardboard boxes, pieces of Styrofoam, recycled "beautiful junk." Let your imagination go wild!

"Foolish" Putty

In a large bowl, mix equal amounts of Elmer's glue and liquid starch by hand. Then you can see how it stretches or make copies of the Sunday funnies by pressing it hard against the paper and stretching it.

Biggest Best Bubbles

2 cups of Joy or Dawn dish detergent

6 cups of water

3/4 cup Karo light corn syrup

1 tbsp. glycerin (optional)

The name brands are important to this recipe — other brands of detergent won't work as well. Combine ingredients in a plastic bottle or container with a tight-fitting lid. Shake well. Allow solution to settle for at least four hours before using. Pour solution into a cake pan or any wide flat tray for dipping and blowing.

You'd be amazed at what you can use to blow bubbles. Try funnels, recycled plastic cherry tomato boxes, a coat hanger loop for really big bubbles, pipe cleaners, or your fingers. Anything that can make a loop can be used to blow bubbles. The bubble solution improves with age and can be saved in a container with an air-tight lid.

Note: the area around the bubble pan can get very slippery with spilled solution. Lay lots of large towels under your bubble station to sop up the drips. For more art ideas and recipes, go to www.vermontartscouncil.org/hsap/download_docs.htm.

Add these songs and fingerplays to your family's collection.

Home Sweet Home

A nest is a home for a robin (cup hands to form a nest)
A hive is a home for a bee (turn cupped hands over)
A hole is a home for a rabbit (make hole with hands)
And a house is a house for me (make roof with peaked hands)

Quiet Cats

We are little pussy cats (use hands, crawl, or tip-toe)
Walking round and round
We have cushions on our feet (whisper)
And never make a sound

Taller, Smaller

When I stretch up, I feel so tall
When I bend down, I feel so small
Taller, taller, taller, taller
Smaller, smaller, smaller, smaller
Into a tiny ball

The Apple Tree

Way up high in the apple tree (point up high)
Two little apples smile at me (make two circles with hands)
I shook that tree as hard as I could (wrap hands around "trunk" and shake)
Down came the apples and (two circle hands come down)
Mmmm, they were good! (rub tummy)

The Itsy Bitsy Spider

The itsy, bitsy spider went up the water spout
Down came the rain and washed the spider out
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain
And the itsy, bitsy spider went up the spout again

Variations:

Use a great, big voice to sing about the "great, big spider" or a small, squeaky voice to sing about the "eensy, weensy spider"

Apples and Bananas

I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas
I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas
I like to ate, ate, ate ay-ples and ba-nay-nays
I like to ate, ate, ate ay-ples and ba-nay-nays
I like to eat, eat, eat ee-ples and bee-nee-nees
I like to eat, eat, eat ee-ples and bee-nee-nees
I like to ite, ite, ite i-ples and by-ny-nys
I like to ite, ite, ite i-ples and by-ny-nys
I like to ote, ote, ote oh-ples and bo-no-nos
I like to ote, ote, ote oh-ples and bo-no-nos
I like to oot, oot, oot oo-ples and boo-noo-noos
I like to oot, oot, oot oo-ples and boo-noo-noos

You Are My Sunshine

You are my sunshine,
My only sunshine.
You make me happy
When skies are grey.
You never know, dear
How much I love you.
Please don't take
My sunshine away.

Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Row, row, row your boat
Gently down the stream
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream.



THE VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

I. Approaches to Learning

1. **Play** Children engage in play as a means to develop their individual approach to learning.
2. **Curiosity** Children demonstrate curiosity and a willingness to participate in tasks and challenges.
3. **Persistence** Children demonstrate an increased ability to show initiative, accept help, take risks, and work towards completing tasks.
4. **Self-organization** Children demonstrate an increased ability to establish goals, develop and follow through with plans.
5. **Reasoning** Children demonstrate an increased ability to identify, evaluate and provide possible solutions to problems.
6. **Application** Children use their prior experiences, senses, and knowledge to learn in new ways.

II. Social and Emotional Development

1. **Play** Children use play as a vehicle to build relationships and to develop an appreciation for their own abilities and accomplishments.
2. **Self Concept** Children demonstrate and express a positive awareness of self and an awareness of limitations.
3. **Self Control** Children increase their capacity for self-control and to deal with frustrations, and increase their awareness of limitations.
4. **Interactions with Others** Children develop successful relationships with other members of their learning community.
5. **Sense of Community** Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to the classroom/program, family and community.

III. Language, Literacy & Communication

1. **Play** Children engage in play as a means to develop their receptive and expressive language skills.

Children engage in play as a means to develop early reading and writing skills.

2. **Listening and Understanding** Children develop skills in listening and in understanding language.
3. **Speaking and Communicating** Children will use verbal and non-verbal language to express and to communicate information.
4. **Vocabulary** Children will acquire and use new words to increase their understanding and express ideas.
5. **Early Writing** Children demonstrate an interest and ability in using symbols to represent words and ideas.
6. **Early Reading** Children demonstrate an interest in:

Phonemic and Phonological Awareness – Learning letters and the combination of letter sounds with letter symbols

Book Knowledge and Appreciation – Understanding and appreciating that books and other forms of print have a purpose.

Print Awareness and Concepts – Recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud.

Alphabet Knowledge – Recognizing that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words.



IV. Mathematics

1. **Play** Children engage in play to develop and add to their mathematical thinking and problem solving.
2. **Numbers and Operations** Children show interest and curiosity in counting and grouping objects and numbers.
3. **Geometry and Spatial Sense** Children show an interest in recognizing and creating shapes and an awareness of position in space.
4. **Patterns and Measurement** Children show an interest in recognizing and creating patterns, comparing, and measuring time and quantity.

V. Science

1. **Play** Children engage in play as a means to develop their scientific skills.
2. **Scientific Knowledge** Children learn about the development of the natural and physical worlds.
3. **Scientific Skills and Methods** Children begin to use scientific tools and methods to learn about their world.

VI. Social Studies

1. **Play** Children engage in play as a means to develop an understanding of social studies.
2. **Spaces and Geography** Children will demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for their physical environment.
3. **People and How They Live** Children shall demonstrate skills related to understanding, communication, sharing, cooperation, and participation with others in a community.

4. **People and Their Environment** Children demonstrate an awareness of and appreciation for the environment.

5. **People and the Past** Children demonstrate an understanding of past events and their connection to the present and future.

VII. Creative Expression

1. **Play** Children engage in play as a means of self expression and creativity.
2. **Creative Expression** Children engage in individual or group activities that represent real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings and fantasy.
3. **Tools** Children use a variety of tools and art media to creatively express their ideas.
4. **Appreciation of the Arts** Children express interest in and begin to build a knowledge base in the arts.

VIII. Physical Health and Development

1. **Play** Children engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their physical bodies.
2. **Gross Motor/Large Muscle** Children increasingly move their bodies in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination.
3. **Fine Motor/Small Muscle** Children use their fingers and hands in ways that develop hand-eye coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.
4. **Senses** Children increase their understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose, and mouth, and how the senses work together.
5. **Healthy Habits** Children begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety.

To view the complete version of the Vermont Early Learning Standards, go to www.state.vt.us/educ/new/pdfdoc/pgm_earlyed/vels_03.pdf



For comments or more information, contact:

Janice Stockman
Head Start State Collaboration Office
36 Park Place
Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-257-8015
jjstock@sover.net

To view this document online, go to:

www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_earlyed/pubs.html

ALLIANCE DRAFT FOR VERMONT HOME VISITING RULES

As required under Act 66

DRAFT September 25, 2013

I. Authority

This rule is adopted pursuant to Act No. 66 of the Acts of the 2013 Session (2013) (An act relating to home visiting standards.), Section 2.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this rule is to ensure that home visiting services are of the highest quality by establishing standards that foster the contributions of varied home visiting program approaches to address diverse family and community needs.

III. Definitions

- **“Home visiting services”** means regular, voluntary visits with a pregnant woman or family with a young child for the purpose of providing an array of services designed to improve maternal and child health; prevent child injuries, abuse, or maltreatment; promote social and emotional health; improve school readiness; reduce crime or domestic violence; improve economic self-sufficiency; and/or enhance coordination and referrals among community resources and supports, such as food, housing, and transportation. “Home visiting programs” are intentionally designed to use trained staff working in a long term (months or years) relationship to provide services in-home that will strengthen families and improve outcomes.
- **“Home visitor”** means an individual with specific training in delivering services in a family’s home through a home visiting program.
- **“Provider”** means the entity or organization that provides programs of home visiting services.
- **“Home visiting program”** means an approach or model defined and supported by specific protocols, staff training, visit schedules, and measures.

- **“Participants”** means young children and their family members (as defined by the family) who voluntarily engage with home visitors and participate in home visiting programs.
- **“Agency”** means the Vermont Agency of Human Services.
- **“Secretary”** means the Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Human Services.
- **“Home visiting system”** means the network of home visiting services, providers, and programs provided to Vermont families which are supported by public funding and state administrative structures, and/or use the outreach and intake functions of Children’s Integrated Services (CIS).
- **“Support”** means funding, promotion, coordination, or assistance with coordination.

IV. Home Visiting Provider Qualifications

Home visiting service providers shall:

- 1) Be only a supervisory union/local public education agency; municipal, state, or federal entity; licensed health provider; or Vermont-registered non-profit organization.
- 2) Provide home visiting services that:
 - a) are flexible and designed to meet the needs of families;
 - b) enroll young children and their families according to specific program or model criteria; and
 - c) are inclusive of, and responsive to, the ethnic, cultural, racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity of families served.
- 3) Meet the requirements to provide home visiting services:
 - a) Meet the core quality elements of home visiting programs as defined by the Agency;
 - b) Establish written protocols that describe program participation, staff qualifications, and service plans, consistent with the design of its identified home visiting program or model;
 - c) Have experience in serving families during pregnancy and/or the early childhood years (birth to six);
 - d) Document that staff receive training appropriate to their qualifications and the identified home visiting program or model;
 - e) Document clinical and administrative supervision of staff; and

- f) Comply with reporting requirements, including program, performance, process, and outcome data submitted on an annual schedule determined by the Agency.

V. Home visiting system supports

- 1) The Agency shall:
 - a) Support home visitor and service provider training;
 - b) Provide a structure for coordinating services at the state and local level, including the Department of Health and Department for Children and Families; and
 - c) Enhance outreach efforts, family intake methods, referrals, and transitions, including use of Children's Integrated Services and Integrated Family Services resources.
- 2) Home visiting models and home visiting programs that are eligible for state or federal funding shall conform to provider qualifications and other sections of this rule. The Agency shall allow exceptions where federal law supersedes these rules.
- 3) The Agency shall provide for all programs in the Vermont home visiting system an administrative and operational structure for data collection, management, and use. This shall include but is not limited to:
 - a) A coordinated approach for collection, reporting, analysis, and use of home visiting program data, accommodating the required reporting of other federal, state, and models and including a unified schedule for data reporting;
 - b) Defined common, statewide home visiting program process, performance, and administrative measures;
 - c) Defined, common statewide home visiting program outcome measures related to maternal and child health; child injuries, abuse, or maltreatment; social and emotional health; school readiness; crime or domestic violence; economic self-sufficiency; or coordination and referrals among community resources and supports; and
 - d) Quality improvement processes among multiple home visiting programs and providers.
- 4) The Agency shall provide approved Medicaid financing and/or other available federal and state financing to qualified home visiting programs.

VI. Exemptions and Suspensions

1) Exemptions

- a. The Secretary, after making a finding that is in the best interest of those persons being provided services, may exempt a home visiting provider from any part of these rules. Such a finding shall be made in writing.
- b. Home visiting programs that use volunteer home visitors may choose to be exempt from these rules and forego public funding as described in Section V. 1. V. 4.? 4.

2) Suspensions

- a. If the Secretary finds that a home visiting provider has violated this rule, or any other applicable rule, statute, or standard of care, and incorporates a finding to that effect in an order, the provider's services will cease on the date determined by the Secretary.

Northern Lights Career Development Center: MATCH components Logic Model and evaluation 2.0

Page 1 of 4 9-20-13

GOALS:

1. *Enhance competency, professional growth, and satisfaction of the individual professional*
2. *Promote and enhance program quality*
3. *Improve outcomes for children/youth in care and education systems*
4. *VT early childhood and afterschool organizations and institutions endorse and contribute to MATCH system integration*

PURPOSES:

- a) *For individuals:*
 - *To improve practices*
 - *Advance career pathways and development*
- b) *For programs*
 - *To achieve program quality standards*
 - *To improve organizational practices*
 - *To support program coordination and collaboration with families and communities*

PROCESSES: MATCH will effect change by-

- *Providing formal structure to ensure quality MATCH professional services*
- *Promoting reflection of current practices and application of new practices*
- *Complimenting and enhancing other professional development activities including group instruction and experience in the field*
- *Decreasing isolation and increasing access to and use of resources*

RESULTS: (these are also the logic model long term outcomes)

As a result of implementing MATCH there will be –

1. *Increased retention of high quality staff*
2. *Increased number of professionals with credentials relevant to their positions*
3. *Increased and sustained number of programs at 4 STARS or higher*
4. *Increased measurable outcomes for children and families*
5. *Full integration of MATCH into professional development systems*

Northern Lights Career Development Center: MATCH components Logic Model and evaluation 2.0

Page 2 of 4 9-20-13

Inputs (across all outcomes)	Short term outcome Based on 5 components of the MATCH model	Intermediate outcome	Long term outcomes (for all outcomes)
<p><i>Match Committee and field consultant time and support by their employers</i></p> <p><i>Current mentor, coaches, advisors, consultant time and support by their employers</i></p> <p><i>Funding for</i> - MATCH registry aligned with Instructor Registry (proposed in 2013 budget by CDD to NL for technical consultant to create this)</p> <p><i>- evaluation of the model: tools, collection, analysis</i></p> <p><i>- training of MATCH professionals</i></p> <p><i>- ongoing support of MATCH professionals</i></p> <p><i>- public awareness</i></p> <p><i>- incentives</i></p>	<p>1. MATCH Professionals: Competencies, self-assessment, training and support</p> <p><i>MATCH competencies are created and finalized</i></p> <p><i># of hits on NL competencies website page</i></p> <p><i># of competencies documents distributed</i></p> <p><i># of MATCH professionals who complete a self-assessment based on the competencies</i></p> <p><i># of trainings/# MATCH participants attending training based on MATCH professionals that address Competencies</i></p> <p><i># of MATCH support activities and # of participants</i></p>	<p><i>There is a systemic process to assess and support the development and use of MATCH competencies</i></p> <p><i>All MATCH professionals meet basic MATCH competencies</i></p> <p><i>Training based on MATCH competencies are effective in increasing MATCH professional's skills and knowledge</i></p> <p><i>All MATCH professionals use action plans with the programs/professionals with whom they work</i></p>	<p><i>Increase retention of high quality staff in early childhood and afterschool programs</i></p> <p><i>Increase # of programs that meet and sustain 4 STARS or higher</i></p> <p><i>Increase # of professionals with credentials relevant to their positions</i></p> <p><i>Increase in measureable outcomes for children and families</i></p> <p><i>MATCH is fully integrated into professional development systems</i></p>
	<p>2. MATCH registry</p> <p><i>Creation of an accessible registry of MATCH supporters which is searchable by meaningful criteria.</i></p> <p><i># of MATCH professionals in the registry.</i></p> <p><i># of individuals receiving customized support</i></p> <p><i># of programs receiving individualized support</i></p>	<p><i>MATCH registry is multi-disciplinary, accessible and useful to home visitors, family child care, afterschool programs, licensed centers, MATCH professionals and the organizations that employ them</i></p> <p><i>Increase in the number of identified MATCH professionals</i></p> <p><i>Increased use of MATCH professionals by protégés/programs</i></p> <p><i>Program Directors using MATCH services for</i></p>	

**Northern Lights Career Development Center:
MATCH components Logic Model and evaluation 2.0**

Page 3 of 4 9-20-13

Inputs (across all outcomes)	Short term outcome Based on 5 components of the MATCH model	Intermediate outcome	Long term outcomes (for all outcomes)
		<i>individual staff or programmatic changes report MATCH as effective.</i>	
	<p>3. Systemic evaluation</p> <p><i>A system evaluation plan is created</i></p> <p><i>Data sources are identified to assess the identified goals</i></p> <p><i>% of Goals set by the practitioner/program with their MATCH professional, which are met</i></p> <p><i>Categories of goals set and goals met by the practitioner/program in the action plan are identified</i></p>	<p><i>Goals of the evaluation plan are addressed</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing evaluation is integrated into all of the components of the MATCH system</i></p> <p><i>Feedback from users of the MATCH system is incorporated into the evaluation process</i></p> <p><i>MATCH support results in multiple needs of a program or individual being met and documented in the action plan</i></p> <p><i>Individuals who receive MATCH services report that they get the information and assistance they want; identify that they have practiced reflection and application of new practices; and feel valued, respected in the relationship</i></p> <p><i>Professionals using MATCH support rate it as effective and indicate they would use it again</i></p> <p><i>MATCH Professionals value the MATCH network and see it as accessible, effective and supportive of their professional growth</i></p> <p><i>MATCH Professionals stay active in the network</i></p> <p><i>Improvements are made based on needs identified in the evaluation process</i></p>	

**Northern Lights Career Development Center:
MATCH components Logic Model and evaluation 2.0**

Page 4 of 4 9-20-13

Inputs (across all outcomes)	Short term outcome Based on 5 components of the MATCH model	Intermediate outcome	Long term outcomes (for all outcomes)
	<p>4. MATCH integration and implementation</p> <p><i># of briefings and dialogue with key partners, breadth of representation</i></p> <p><i># MATCH professionals in various identified services (home visiting, child care, early education, career advising, intervention services, etc.)</i></p> <p><i># of VT counties that have Identified MATCH professionals</i></p> <p><i>MATCH recognition and currency in regulations</i></p>	<p><i>MATCH is fully integrated and recognized in state-wide regulations (guidance), career pathways and professional organizations</i></p> <p><i>Funding is sustainable for ongoing MATCH implementation</i></p> <p><i>Reputation of MATCH network is positive and recommended</i></p> <p><i>One organization oversees MATCH and ensures its ongoing implementation</i></p> <p><i>MATCH continues to evolve to meet changing needs of the field and better practices</i></p>	
	<p>5. Public Awareness and Outreach</p> <p><i># of Community outreach events and # of attendees</i></p> <p><i># of websites with MATCH information and links (regional and statewide professional development websites such as RDS, VT-A, NL, CDD, AOE, VCCICC, VAEYC, VCCPA, VB3. CIS, STARS etc.)</i></p>		

CORE COMPETENCIES

for Afterschool Professionals

February 2007

A Component of Vermont's Unified Professional Development System



Sponsored by:

**Vermont Child Development Division
Department for Children and Families
Agency of Human Services**

With monies from
**Federal Child Care
Development Fund**

**Vermont Northern Lights
Career Development Center**

Of the Community College of Vermont and the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council.
Funded by the Child Development Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services.



Table of Contents

- 3 Introduction
- 4 How Do the Core Competencies Serve As A Professional Development Tool?
- 5 Using The Competencies For Self-Assessment
- 7 Frequently Asked Questions

Core Competency Areas for Afterschool Professionals

- 9 *Child & Youth Development*
- 12 *Families and Communities*
- 14 *Curriculum and Learning Environment*
- 17 *Healthy and Safe Environments*
- 20 *Professionalism and Program Organization*
- 23 Additional Acronyms and Resources Related to Afterschool Professional Development
- 25 Vermont's Common Language & Terminology for the Professional Development Framework for Afterschool Professionals
- 28 Comments and Evaluation



The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals are effective on February 1, 2007 and remain in effect until further notice. To ensure continued quality and relevance, this document will be reviewed before or during August 2008.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals

Background

The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals were created by a diverse group of Vermont professionals, a Committee that was brought together through the State of Vermont's Child Development Division in July, 2005 to work toward a common goal of developing a framework of professional development specifically targeted to meet the needs of afterschool professionals. The complete framework shall contain a set of core competencies that outline the desired skills and knowledge areas that are important for success as an afterschool professional, as well as resources for education, professional development opportunities, and further learning around the state.

The Committee starts from a place that understands afterschool services are based in and arise from community needs and is working to develop partnerships and learning consortiums that reach Vermont's many distinct communities. We seek to legitimize the importance and social pertinence of the work of afterschool professionals and to support their continued learning and professional growth through opportunities which offer many pathways for learning. The Committee was motivated by the work of Vermont's Northern Lights Career Development Center, and drew upon its *Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* when designing the *Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals*. Our intention is not to create multiple systems but rather, to expand and

build upon each other's work in hopes of improving the daily quality of education, care and services to Vermont's children and youth.

What is Afterschool?

Afterschool is now nationally recognized as a generic term used to reference the collective range of supervised settings for age appropriate activities and programs that school-age children, approximately ages 5-18, engage in during their out-of-school time. Examples include such settings as regulated school age child care, youth development organizations, recreation programs, school-sponsored activities and other special interest programs.

Who Are Afterschool Professionals?

Afterschool Professional refers to any individual working with school age children and/or youth in any context. An afterschool professional may be just entering the field, or may have years of experience working with children and youth. They may work with children and youth one day per week or full-time.

What Are the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals?

The Core Competencies are the foundation of a professional development system. Core competencies refer to the observable, concrete skills that underscore the development and delivery of high

Our intention is not to create multiple systems but rather, to expand and build upon each other's work in hopes of improving the daily quality of education, care and services to Vermont's children and youth.

The tool is intended to serve as a general guideline for individual reflection and assessment, rather than as a rigid and categorical way of evaluating professional performance.

quality services and programs; they establish standards of practice and strengthen the afterschool field. The Competencies reflect the diversity of the afterschool field itself and are flexible in nature. They are designed to serve individuals in determining their learning and professional needs. They are relevant to any position - teacher, assistant, program administrator, program coordinator, volunteer, provider, paraprofessional, and more. And they are relevant for any setting where afterschool services take place: schools, community-based organizations, homes, recreation centers, faith-based organizations, etc. They are also intended to support high quality programming and services regardless of whether a program is required to be licensed or not.

How Do the Core Competencies Serve As A Professional Development Tool?

Individualized competency-based learning can occur at all levels of the professional development continuum, and can be supported through a supervisory process, as well. This document acknowledges that individuals possess competencies at different levels among the core knowledge areas depending on their background, position and life experience. While the Core Competencies clearly set forth standards, it should be understood that professionals using the document have different needs. The tool is intended to serve as a general guideline for individual reflection and assessment, rather than as a rigid and categorical way of evaluating professional performance. *The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals* can be used to assess one's learning needs, develop education and training curriculum, and as a tool for supervision and mentoring support. Accordingly, the Core Competencies lend

themselves to being an active resource in the following ways:

Assessing individual learning

needs: Professionals may use the Competencies to self-assess their own skills and knowledge in the areas outlined in the Competencies. Administrators may use the Competencies to assess the learning needs of staff. The grid-like format of the document's layout is designed so that users can measure where they are in their learning within each particular competency area and related skill area.

Developing education and training curriculum:

Trainers, instructors, organizations, and other institutions of learning can use the Competencies to design and evaluate courses and other professional development opportunities.

Supporting supervision and mentoring:

On an individual level, the Core Competencies assist afterschool professionals in developing Individualized Professional Development Plans (IPDP) which in some instances, is also a component of their supervisory relationship. On an organizational level, the Competencies are a starting point from which organizations can design and deliver training and orientation programs to groups of staff with common learning needs.

How are the Core Competencies Organized?

The Core Competencies consist of five knowledge areas: (1) *Child and Youth Development*; (2) *Families and Communities*; (3) *Curriculum and Learning Environ-*

ment; (4) Health and Safety; and, (5) Professionalism and Program Organization. Inside each competency area, there are 3 Levels that measure progress and learning needs.

The Levels are:

- **Level 1** outlines the common set of knowledge and skills that are expected of all afterschool professionals. Level 1 is the “common denominator,” a baseline for ensuring quality services reach children and youth regardless of program setting.
- **Level 2** includes Level 1 requirements and expands upon the skills required of afterschool professionals in the areas of program planning, supervision and collaboration.
- **Level 3** includes Levels 1 and 2, and further explores the areas of leadership, administrative responsibility and community outreach, as related to a career in afterschool education.

Additionally, the document includes four Indicators that are a way to help further focus the competency-based assessment process – whether individualized or as a part of formal supervision. Indicators are descriptive words that correlate to stages of learning and depending on the individual, may or may not directly correlate to the Levels. For example, a professional may determine she/he is at Level 2 all-around, but that there are a few points where they are still developing awareness.

The 4 Indicators are:

- **Awareness** is the first stage in a process of learning during which a professional will be exposed to subjects integral to their jobs and professional growth. For example, indi-

viduals will be expected to identify theories of child development.

- **Development** is a learning phase where earlier learning is expanded and directly integrated into professional life. Pursuing specialty certification may also be a component of the Development phase. An example of the Development phase of learning is when a professional describes the ways that the social environment contributes to a child or youth’s development.

- **Achievement** is a phase of learning in which the afterschool professional consistently demonstrates application of the core competencies within his/her position. The ability to teach and demonstrate learning is a hallmark of the Achievement phase. An example is when a professional works with a colleague to develop activities that support an individual child/youth’s strengths and interests.

- **N/A (not applicable)** refers to items in the Core Competencies that given the diversity of the afterschool field, may not apply to some. For example, a volunteer art teacher may check N/A for the learning point: Conducts, documents, and interprets observations, as needed.

A SAMPLE: USING THE COMPETENCIES FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

The following is an example of how the Core Competencies can be used as both a self-assessment tool, and as part of a supervisory relationship. The sample below was filled out by an afterschool staff person who is completing his first 6-months of work as an Afterschool Services Program Assistant with the Vermont Network of Communities and Families,

Indicators are descriptive words that correlate to stages of learning and depending on the individual, may or may not directly correlate to the Levels.

COMPETENCY AREA: FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

COMPETENCIES/ REQUIREMENTS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Relationships		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Acknowledges the importance of building strong relationships with families.	1,2,3	✓			
2. Maintains professional boundaries with families.	1,2,3		✓		
3. Identifies assets and challenges of individuals and families.	2,3		✓		
4. Supports and values families as active decision-makers and educators.	2,3	✓			
5. Involves children/youth and families in planning and implementing learning experiences.	2,3	✓			
6. Facilitates opportunities to increase parents' knowledge about child/youth behavior and development.	3	✓			
7. Facilitates opportunities for families to interact with one another and the greater community.	3				✓

“Building strong relationships with families” by seeing how my workplace can bring parents and their children together.

an organization that provides afterschool services in communities around the state. As Program Assistant, he is responsible for designing and directly delivering programs for children and youth ages 8-13 years. He came to this current job after working for two years as a co-coordinator in a middle school's enrichment program. His previous experience provided him with a lot of direct involvement with children and youth, but not so much with families. His supervisor has asked him to complete a self-assessment as part of his 6-month evaluation using the Core Competencies as a framework for their discussion. Here are his ideas, as they pertain to the Families & Communities section of the Competencies.

Summary:

When I filled this out, I realized a few things about where I am now and where

developing my awareness of the first point listed above, *“building strong relationships with families”* by seeing how my workplace can bring parents and their children together. Maybe this will be a special event or a workshop or a series on topics proposed by families and their children- I'd like my supervisor's input on this. I also realized that I'm not satisfied with where I am in the area *“identifying assets and challenges of individuals and families.”* This is a goal I set in my IPDP when I began my job, and I really want to gain more competency in this area, and to learn about specific ways of determining strengths and challenges. I want to know what the families in our program need and how I can respectfully work with them to do this. I will talk to my supervisor about finding a course or workshop on this topic. That's a first step. I will also access the Bright Futures Information System to see if any workshops are

I want to focus. I am respectful of the families connected to our programs and I strive to understand the children I work with as individuals, as well as part of a distinct family. I've definitely seen this in terms of some cultural differences. And while I feel I am respectful of our families, I am not so sure about how to actually get them involved as co-educators in our programs. One idea I have is that I want to continue

coming up in my area or nearby. Because my job does not formally include community outreach with families, I checked N/A for *“facilitates opportunities for families to interact in the greater community.”* It is my understanding that my role is to focus on connecting families to our programs, and that community outreach is someone else’s responsibility. However, even though this point does not directly apply to my current position, I would like to know more about other positions in this organization that include community outreach because I enjoyed that aspect of work when I have done it in the past and it’s an area in which I’d like some further knowledge.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

1.Are the Core Competencies to be used only by Afterschool Professionals?

No. They are adaptable to any relevant environment and many audiences. Although the primary audience for their use is professionals working in all facets of the afterschool field, they contain useful information for others, as well. These Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals can benefit parents, policy makers, educators of many sorts, and communities. For instance, parents and guardians who are looking into options for afterschool programs for their children can refer to the Competencies to determine the kinds of skills and qualifications that are suggested as professional and program standards. Community organizations can refer to them during the hiring and screening process of potential employees. Policy makers can also refer to the document when considering systemic changes and the impact their decisions have on Vermont communities, and how to better the quality of life for the State’s children and youth. Essentially, the document is envisioned as educational and helpful to anyone work-

ing with children and youth and anyone working on their behalf in the public and/or private sector.

2.How do the Competencies relate to an Afterschool credential for professionals?

At the time of writing (September 2007), there is not a national credential for afterschool professionals and no credential or formal professional acknowledgement exists for afterschool professionals living and working in the State of Vermont. However, the Competencies are intended to serve as the foundation for the development of courses and trainings that are, or will be, available throughout the State and all of this learning will eventually be connected to obtaining a credential of some type. At this time, the Committee is exploring several options with respect to a credential and how it can best be implemented in Vermont. For instance, like other states, we are working to create linkages between the fields of afterschool and youth development and looking into how a credential could satisfy professionals in each field. The role of Vermont’s higher education institutions is an integral part of how multiple options for learners can be delivered throughout the state, and we are working with them to create a palette of options that will reach learners in their communities through on-line and on-site classroom and community modalities.

3.How are the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals different from the Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals?

The main difference between the two sets of Competencies is that the *Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals* articulate standards for individuals working with children and youth ages 5-18 whereas the *Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* focus on defining standards



for professionals working with infants, toddlers, and young children up to the age of 6 years. Indeed, there are many standards that apply to each field, but it is also important to acknowledge that often, afterschool work focuses on meeting the needs of pre-adolescents and adolescents with different developmental needs.

4. How do I find out about career and learning options as an Afterschool Professional?

Information about current trainings in Vermont can be found on the Bright Futures Information System (www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us). It can also be accessed through the Northern Lights Career De-

velopment Center's web-site (www.northernlights.vsc.edu) and then clicking on the Resources option. Through these two sites, searches can be done for specific courses and the entire course calendar for Vermont is also available for viewing. Courses are coded according to competency areas so that professionals can easily see what areas and specifications they are meeting. Sometimes, courses will be specific to afterschool professionals, and sometimes an overlap exists between afterschool professionals early childhood professionals. The list of on-line and print Resources at the end of this document also contains reference information that is helpful for afterschool professionals.



If you have any questions about the Vermont Northern Lights Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals, please write or call us:

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center

P.O. Box 120

CCV: Wasson Hall

Waterbury, VT 05676-0120

Phone: 802.241.4661

Fax: 802.241.3526

nancy.sugarman@ccv.edu

<http://northernlightscdc.org>

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROFESSIONALS

Competency Area: Child & Youth Development

Afterschool professionals have an understanding of how children and youth develop physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally, as well as how children improve and use language skills and other forms of communication. In addition, professionals need to know about various factors that influence child development, and how individual children's development varies.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
A. How Children & Youth Develop			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Describes principles of growth and development.		1,2,3				
2. Identifies and defines developmental domains: physical, cognitive, social, emotional.		1,2,3				
3. Identifies developmental milestones of children, kindergarten through adolescence.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes how children are different from adults in learning, behavior, abilities, and needs.		1,2,3				
5. Recognizes the impact of biological and environmental influences on a child's development.		1,2,3				
6. Recognizes the importance of observing and documenting children and youth development, begins to keep anecdotal records, and communicates with others about the observations.		1,2,3				
7. Identifies major theories and theorists of child and youth development.		2,3				
8. Recognizes the crucial role of asset building in child/youth development.		2,3				
9. Recognizes when to seek the help of others in understanding and addressing children/youth's individual special needs.		2,3				
10. Identifies resources for acquiring information about identified special needs.		2,3				
11. Conducts, documents, and interprets observations, as needed.		3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
B. Influences on Child & Youth Development			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Describes the importance of transitions in child/youth development		1,2,3				
2. Describes the importance of seeing the child/youth in the context of his/her family and culture, including the community.		1,2,3				
3. Describes the importance of youths' interactions and relationships with peers and adults.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes physical or behavior changes that may indicate the presence of stress in children's/youth's lives.		2,3				
5. Identifies the impact of youth and child/youth health on their behavior and ability to interact and learn.		2,3				
6. Describes factors influencing resiliency in children and youth.		2,3				
7. Uses preventative strategies that influence and optimize healthy development..		3				
8. Understands how society influences development (for example, poverty, trauma, homelessness, violence, and social biases) and affects the needs of individual children.		3				
9. Analyzes the role of media in child and youth development and behavior.		3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
C. Individual Variance			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Recognizes that children and youth have different temperaments, needs, rates of development, and learning styles.		1,2,3				
2. Recognizes that stress resulting from trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty, and other factors such as current events impacts children's development and behavior in individual ways.		1,2,3				
3. Recognizes the special needs of children and youth.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes physical or behavior changes that may indicate the presence of stress.		2,3				
5. Identifies temperament and individual differences in children/youth and their impact on development and behavior.		2,3				
6. Identifies and discusses issues in child development arising from individual differences.		2,3				
7. Employs a variety of strategies to help youth cope with stress, conflict, and other developmental challenges.		3				
8. Develops strategies to support each youth's individual assets, needs, and interests.		3				

Competency Area: Families and Communities

Afterschool professionals understand that children and youth are members of a family and a community. Afterschool professionals also work respectfully in partnership with families and communities. They value the diversity of and their unique relationships with children and youth, families, and communities. They also share information and resources with children and youth and their families that support their well-being.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Relationships		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Acknowledges the importance of building strong relationships with families.	1,2,3				
2. Maintains professional boundaries with families.	1,2,3				
3. Identifies assets and challenges of individuals and families.	2,3				
4. Supports and values families as active decision-makers and educators.	2,3				
5. Involves children/youth and families in planning and implementing learning experiences.	2,3				
6. Facilitates opportunities to increase parents' knowledge about child/youth behavior and development.	3				
7. Facilitates opportunities for families to interact with one another and the greater community.	3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Communication		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Identifies different types of communication (verbal, non-verbal).	1,2,3				
2. Uses "release of information" protocol appropriately.	1,2,3				
3. Utilizes a variety of strategies with families that encourage feedback and evaluation.	2,3				
4. Understands a variety of communication techniques, including conflict resolution and active listening and selects appropriate methods to support and build trusting relationships with families and youth.	2,3				
5. Integrates children's home cultures and languages into the program.	3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Community Involvement and Resources			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Identifies resources that support children and families.		1,2,3				
2. Identifies state and national resources that support children and families.		1,2,3				
3. Assists families to make their own referrals and requests for services.		2,3				
4. Collaborates with community service providers to ensure access to services for children and families.		2,3				

Competency Area: Curriculum and Learning Environment

Afterschool professionals understand that learning occurs through the combination of interactions, structures and experiences in children's and youth's daily lives. A balanced program that promotes life skills and enhances cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. A variety of strategies are needed to match children's and youth's interests and unique approaches to learning.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Interactions			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Builds positive, respectful, and trusting interactions with children and youth.		1,2,3				
2. Supervises children and youth using positive and age appropriate guidance strategies.		1,2,3				
3. Encourages and supports children and youth to actively participate in a variety of activities.		1,2,3				
4. Acknowledges feelings and emotional expression.		1,2,3				
5. Responds to children and youth in ways that demonstrate understanding of their individual needs, abilities and interests.		2,3				
6. Promotes positive relationships among children and youth and helps all children and youth feel accepted in the group.		2,3				
7. Models empathy and mutual respect toward others.		2,3				
8. Guides children and youth to resolve conflicts and solve problems.		2,3				
9. Provides individual, large and small group activities.		2,3				
10. Provides child/youth directed and staff directed activities.		2,3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Environment			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Recognizes the elements of a supportive, healthy and enriching learning environment.		1,2,3				
2. Maintains a predictable schedule that can be flexible.		1,2,3				
3. Offers children and youth program choices based on their interests.		1,2,3				
4. Uses technology (television, videos, computers, video games) and adaptive technologies in appropriate and meaningful ways.		1,2,3				
5. Uses participant input to create the learning environment.		2,3				
6. Provides materials and activities that reflect diversity.		2,3				
7. Develops strategies for facilitating smooth transitions.		2,3				
8. Plans indoor and outdoor program choices that are safe and engaging.		2,3				
9. Designs the learning environment and curriculum in ways that will promote positive behaviors and cooperative interactions.		2,3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Curriculum and Enrichment			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Demonstrates awareness of best and promising practices for state and nationally recognized standards.		1,2,3				
2. Chooses activities that are appropriate for the cognitive, social, emotional and physical developmental level of the children and youth.		1,2,3				
3. Observes and integrates children's and youth's interests when planning learning opportunities.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes the opportunities for learning in all program choices.		1,2,3				
5. Recognizes the importance for children and youth to develop new skills		1,2,3				
6. Selects activities that promote literacy.		1,2,3				
7. Encourages the development of children's and youth's creative expression by offering programs in the arts.		1,2,3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Assessment			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Provides written feedback about children and youth's participation and progress.		2,3				
2. Develops a plan for tracking children's and youth's participation and progress and communicates conclusions with families and staff, as needed.		2,3				
3. Responds to the individual special needs of children and youth.		3				
4. Identifies and documents eligibility guidelines and referral processes for identified special needs and services.		3				

Competency Area: Healthy and Safe Environments

After-school professionals use practices that protect children's and youth's health, safety, and development. This includes having knowledge of good nutrition, the importance of regular physical activity, personal decision-making, and relationship-building.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Healthy Environments and Health Needs			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Summarizes and follows applicable health and safety licensing regulations.		1,2,3				
2. Identifies and follows procedures to avoid the spread of infectious illnesses.		1,2,3				
3. Responds to injuries and other health issues using appropriate documentation, communication, and treatment protocols.		1,2,3				
4. Identifies and implements sanitation procedures.		1,2,3				
5. Identifies, documents, and reports suspected emotional and physical abuse or neglect immediately.		1,2,3				
6. Identifies and encourages self-care activities, such as good hygiene and stress management to foster healthy development.		1,2,3				
7. Observes the overall health status of children or youth, and notes changes, concerns, or problems.		2,3				
8. Identifies local health care professionals, health services, and health resources available to children, youth, and their families.		2,3				
9. Develops and implements policies regarding exclusion and readmission of sick children and youth.		3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Safe Environments			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Adapts the indoor and outdoor environments to maximize the safety and independence of all children/youth.		1,2,3				
2. Selects and maintains indoor and outdoor equipment and materials.		1,2,3				
3. Identifies potential safety hazards and acts to prevent and/or remove them.		1,2,3				
4. Teaches simple safety precautions and rules to children/youth and enforces them consistently.		1,2,3				
5. Conducts periodic safety assessments of the program environment and makes recommendations for appropriate modifications.		2,3				
6. Follows emergency evacuation policies and procedures.		1,2,3				
7. Considers safety and preparedness issues when planning all on and off-site programs.		1,2,3				
8. Develops protocols and emergency evacuation policies for on and off site programs.						

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Nutrition & Physical Activity			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Follows applicable regulations to ensure proper nutrition, food preparation and service.		1,2,3				
2. Recognizes and avoids health hazards in meals and snacks (choking, allergens, burns).		1,2,3				
3. Provides meals and snacks for children or youth with special dietary needs as instructed.		1,2,3				
4. Provides meals and snacks that are appropriately portioned.		1,2,3				
5. Teaches children and youth about healthy food choices.		1,2,3				
6. Involves children and youth in menu planning and snack preparation.		1,2,3				
7. Models good health, nutrition and hygiene habits for children and youth.		1,2,3				
8. Provides time and space for active play and/or regular aerobic activity.		1,2,3				
9. Informs families about appropriate clothing for program activities.		1,2,3				
10. Recognizes the long-term health risks of extended periods of screen media and other passive activities.		1,2,3				
11. Communicates with children/youth and families about good nutrition and hygiene habits.		2,3				
12. Plans and evaluates menus to ensure nutrition and cultural dietary preferences.		3				

Competency Area: Professionalism and Program Organization

Afterschool professionals ensure that children, youth, and their families receive high quality, developmentally appropriate services. They maintain a code of ethical conduct; articulate a vision of afterschool care and professional development; work collaboratively with colleagues, families, and organizations; maintain a solid work ethic; and implement sound administrative practices such as budgeting and evaluation as applicable.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Recognizes ethical versus unethical conduct.	1,2,3				
2. Defines self-reflection and begins to practice it with support from supervisors and mentors.	1,2,3				
3. Maintains confidentiality of children and families.	1,2,3				
4. Understands the role of a mandated reporter.	1,2,3				
5. Participates in learning opportunities for professional growth.	1,2,3				
6. Begins to develop an Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP).	1,2,3				
7. Maintains personal and professional boundaries.	1,2,3				
8. Discusses and adheres to the organization's mission and goals.	1,2,3				
9. Understands and follows the organization's personnel and/or staff policies.	1,2,3				
10. Maintains an IPDP by pursuing professional development opportunities to meet outlined goals.	2,3				
11. Describes and implements policies that foster respect and inclusion of all children and families.	2,3				
12. Is aware of current trends and research in afterschool care.	3				
13. Uses consultations, mentoring, and technical assistance to improve program.	3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Working with Staff and Colleagues			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Identifies positive communication strategies for use with colleagues.		1,2,3				
2. Defines role and participates as a member of a team.		1,2,3				
3. Participates or initiates conflict resolution, when needed.		1,2,3				
4. Demonstrates respect when communicating with colleagues.		1,2,3				
5. Uses feedback from supervision as an opportunity for professional growth.		1,2,3				
6. Practices effective supervision of others according to program structure.		2,3				
7. Shares resources for professional development for oneself and colleagues.		2,3				
8. Identifies qualities of a good afterschool professional for hiring purposes.		3				
9. Provides learning opportunities for staff and colleagues that enhance their professional growth.		3				
10. Assesses the performance of staff.		3				
11. Conducts effective job interviews.		3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Program Organization and Administration			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Follows applicable business and financial regulations and completes required documentation.		1,2,3				
2. Complies with local, state, and federal regulations.		1,2,3				
3. Demonstrates awareness of the purpose of contracts and policies.		1,2,3				
4. Shows awareness of program accreditation and other systems of quality standards.		1,2,3				
5. Follows required procedures for the protection of children and youth when applicable.		1,2,3				
6 . Maintains an inventory of supplies and equipment.		1,2,3				
7 . Plans and operates within a budget.		2,3				
8. Assists in marketing the program and recruiting children and families.		2,3				
9. Assists in evaluating program goals.		2,3				
10 Describes and discusses the concept of reasonable accommodations for individual needs of children.		2,3				
11. Manages contracts and policies as needed.		2,3				
12. Conducts annual program evaluation and assessment.		3				
13. Creates program policies and tools (e.g. handbooks, contracts, form).		3				
14. Addresses facility needs.		3				
15. Develops and manages an annual budget.		3				
16. Creates and implements a sustainability plan.		3				
17. Understands the laws and regulations pertaining to program.		3				
18. Initiates program quality assessment (e.g. STARS or NAA)		3				
19. Leads strategic planning for the program.		3				
20. Communicates effectively with advisory or governance boards.		3				

Additional Acronyms and Resources Related to Afterschool Professional Development

State of Vermont:

21st CCLC – 21st Century Community Learning Centers

www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_federal/21st_CCLC.html

AHS – Agency of Human Services www.ahs.state.vt.us

BFIS – Bright Futures Information System www.bfis.org

CCV -- Community College of Vermont www.ccv.edu

CDD – Child Development Division/State of Vermont www.dcf.state.vt.us/cdd

NCEA – National Community Education Association www.ncea.com

DCF – Department for Children and Families www.dcf.state.vt.us

NLCDC – Northern Lights Career Development Center www.northernlights.vsc.edu

VAEYC – Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children www.vaeyc.org

VCCICC – Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council www.vtchildcareindustry.org

VOOST – Vermont Out of School Time Network www.voost.org

VSACN – Vermont School Age Care Network www.voost.org/vsacn

VTDOE – Vermont Department of Education www.state.vt.us/educ

YD – Youth Development www.theconsultationcenter.org/ydtrc/home.htm

National:

Afterschool Alliance www.afterschoolalliance.org

And to view activities of networks by state, click:

www.afterschoolalliance.org/states/statepages

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation www.mott.org

NAA - National AfterSchool Association www.naaweb.org

NAEYC - National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org

NYDIC - National Youth Development Information Center www.nydic.org

Nextgen - Next Generation Youth Work Coalition www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/workforce/nextgen.htm

NIOST - National Institute of Out-of-School-Time (NIOST)
Wellesley Center for Women at Wellesley College www.niost.org

Search Institute www.search-institute.org

The Finance Project www.financeproject.org

For a Sampling of Professional Development Standards from Other State Afterschool Networks:

Colorado Afterschool Network
www.coloradoafterschoolnetwork.org

Connecticut Afterschool Network
www.csaca.org

Maine Afterschool Network
www.maine.edu

Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
www.massafterschool.org

Plustime New Hampshire
www.plustime.org

New Mexico out-of-School Time Network
www.nmforumforyouth.org

New York State Afterschool Network
www.tascorp.org

North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs
www.ncforum.org

Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network
www.csc.csiu.org

Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance
www.afterschoolri.org

Washington Afterschool Network
www.schoolsoutwashington.org

Youth Community Connections: Minnesota Partners for Healthy Youth Development
www.youthcommunityconnections.org

Vermont's Common Language & Terminology for the Professional Development Framework for Afterschool Professionals

Note: The following terms form a basic Glossary meant to serve as a companion to the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals and it is intended to be used within that frame of reference.

Achievement: A phase in professional development in which the individual can teach and demonstrate learning, as well as apply it in their chosen profession. (For example, a professional works with colleagues to develop activities that support the strengths and interests of the youth in their program).

Afterschool: The collective range of supervised settings for age appropriate activities and programs that school-age children, approximately ages 5-18, engage in during their out-of-school-time.

Awareness: The first stage in a process of learning in which a professional is exposed to the areas of knowledge that are integral to her/his job and professional growth. (For example, a beginning professional begins to learn about theories of child and youth development).

Best Practices: Applying what works best in a given situation, and working in a manner that is recognized by peers and by objective evidence to be exemplary in guiding children and youth development.

Collaboration: Working together to achieve mutually agreed-upon outcomes in response to the needs and concerns of families and children.

Community Education: The process of building learning communities by responding to individual and community-based needs and making opportunities available that support the lifelong learning needs of all residents. From the National Community Education Association.

Core Competencies: A set of standards that outline a path for professional development.

Credential: "A certification that recognizes an individual's performance based on a set of defined skills and knowledge. A way to provide recognition of competence to professionals". From: National Institute on Out-of-School-Time, Wellesley Center for Women, 2006.

Development: The process of physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual growth that happens throughout one's lifetime.

Developmentally Appropriate (Learning): Learning that takes place for children and youth of one age or skill level, as distinct from the learning that takes place for another child or youth of another age and/or skill level.

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP): A personalized plan for increasing one's knowledge and improving skills by assessing current knowledge and skills, identifying specific areas for improvement, developing strategies and resources to address those areas and providing opportunities to reflect on and demonstrate personal growth.

Indicators: A way of measuring the scope of a professional's competence within each of the core competency areas.

Knowledge: Comprehension acquired by experience, training, or study that can be applied. (For example, a professional will apply knowledge of youth development to designing and implementing curricula that meets youths' needs and interests).

Nutrition (good or proper): A diet that provides an adequate amount of carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, proteins, minerals and water, but does not exceed the number of calories required for the body's energy needs. This must take into account individual age and ethnic/cultural dietary differences.

Professional Development: Experiences which over a sustained period of time, enable practitioners to acquire and apply knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities to achieve personal, professional and organizational goals. Types of professional development include: training, education (on-the-job and off-the-job), internships, symposia, research projects, volunteering, mentoring, experiential learning opportunities, cultural studies, and formal classroom studies.

Resilience: The ability to spring back and successfully adapt to adversity. From Resilience in Action, www.resilience.com

Special Needs (identified): A term that may refer to any number of individual situations, including but not limited to: learning disabilities, mental retardation, allergies, developmental delays, psychiatric disorders; a designation used to get children and youth any needed services which can help in goal setting and building understanding. From About: Parenting Special Needs www.specialchildren.about.com

Standards: Measures that guide and define quality programming, organizational development, and individual professional growth.

Strengths: Factors found in individuals and communities that reduce at-risk behaviors. Some examples of strengths for children and youth include: participation in structured activities, internal motivation, spiritual and/or religious ideas, and experiences of early and current caring by family and community. From the Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN

Youth Development: A process by which youth develop the personal, social, academic, and citizenship competencies necessary for adolescence and adult life, as based on their capacities, strengths, and formative needs. From the Advancing Youth Development Curriculum, Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research.

Also, from the **Building Blocks for Life: 8 Types of Assets All Kids Need!**
www.search-institute.org

Boundaries and Expectations: "Understanding the limits and possibilities."

Commitment to Learning: "Believing that education is important and engaging."

Constructive Use of Time: "Being involved in enriching and structured activities."

Empowerment: "Knowing they (children and youth) are valued and valuable."

Positive Identify: "Believing in their personal power, purpose, and potential."

Positive Values: "Caring for others and holding high standards for self."

Social Competencies: "Developing Skills and relationships for life."

Support: "Experiencing people and places that are accepting and loving."

This document was developed in partnership between the Afterschool Professional Development Framework Committee, the Vermont Out Of School Time Network and the Northern Lights Career Development Center for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals. Specifically, we would like to thank each of the following persons for their assistance, ideas, and support in developing this document:

Emanuel Betz, Vermont Department of Education, Independent and Federal Programs
Laurie Colgan, Vermont Department of Education, Child and Adults Care Food Program
Adam Deyo, Northern Lights Career Development Center/CCV Consultant
Shannon Dixon, Boys and Girls Club of Burlington
Hope Emerson, Vermont School Age Care Network
Anne Gleason, Mary Johnson Children's Center, Middlebury
Ruth Matthews, State of Vermont Child Development Division
Tricia Pawlik, Greater Burlington YMCA
Julie Peterson, Greater Burlington YMCA
Ken Remsen, Vermont Department of Education
Tami Stagner, LEAP and DAZE Afterschool Programs, Springfield
Kerrie Workman, State of Vermont Child Development Division



Comments and Evaluation

Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals

Your feedback will help the Afterschool Professional Development Committee refine the Core Competencies and the development of additional components of the larger professional development framework. We anticipate making changes to this document based on the feedback we receive. At this time, we are interested in knowing whether the Competencies serve your best interests and appreciate your taking the time to answer the following:

The Competencies provide clear objectives that are relevant to my work. Yes ☐ No ☐

How are you using this document? _____

I am using the document as a (check all that apply):

- ☐ Personal Professional Development Resource
- ☐ Reflective Learning Resource
- ☐ Mentoring Tool
- ☐ Supervision Tool
- ☐ Part of a course
- ☐ Informational Document to share w/Colleagues
- ☐ Other _____

The five Core Competencies areas are sufficient. Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, please explain: _____

For each Core Competency area listed below, please share what is helpful for your professional development. *(For example, in the area of Curriculum and the Environment, you may have learned that it is important to assess program environments to make sure they reflect diversity.)*

Child and Youth Development _____

Families and Communities _____

Curriculum and the Environment _____

Health and Safety _____

Professionalism and Program Organization _____

Do you think any of the Competency areas should take precedence over the others for our future course planning? If so, which one(s) _____

One way I immediately used this document was _____

One way I see myself using this document in the future is _____

Please list two strengths of the Core Competencies

1) _____

2) _____

Please list two shortcomings of the Core Competencies:

1) _____

2) _____

Are there other topics not included in the document that you believe need to be?

Are you aware of the Northern Lights Professional Development System for Early Educators and After-school Professionals (www.northernlightscdc.org)? Yes ☐ No ☐

Other _____

Please detach this page and return to:

Kerrie Workman

Afterschool Professional Development Consultant

Child Development Division

State of Vermont

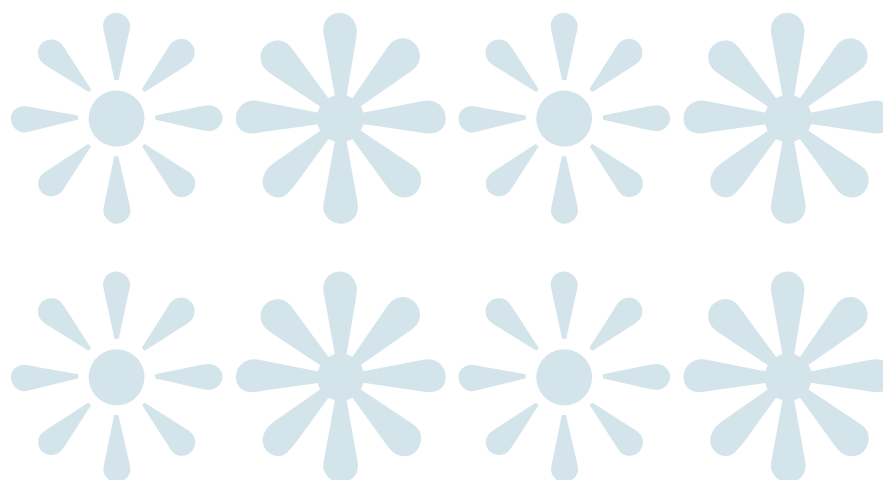
103 South Main Street – 2 North

Waterbury, VT 05671-2901

Thank you

Evaluation of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System

FINAL REPORT



PREPARED BY:

JSI JSI RESEARCH & TRAINING INSTITUTE, INC.

December 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
II. INTRODUCTION	6
III. METHODS	8
IV. OVERVIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS	12
National Perspective	12
Other State Examples	14
• Connecticut	14
• Minnesota	14
Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System	15
• Profile	15
• Data Inventory	16
V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	17
Focus Groups	17
Key Informant Interviews	23
• Vermont	23
• Connecticut	26
• Nevada	27
Gap Analysis	29
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS	33
VII. SYSTEM MONITORING & EVALUATION	38
Overview	38
Monitoring & Evaluation Plan	40
Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Dashboard	48
Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Assessment Tool	54
VIII. APPENDICES	56
Appendix I: Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System- System Model	57
Appendix II: Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System- Profile	58
Appendix III: Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System- Data Inventory	66
Appendix IV: Focus Group Guide	74
Appendix V: Key Informant Interview Guides	76

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BBF	Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council
BFIS	Bright Futures Information System
CCAC	Connecticut Charts-A-Course
CDA	Child Development Associate Credential
CDD	Child Development Division
DOE	Vermont Department of Education
DSS	Connecticut Department of Social Services
EC	Early childhood
ECPDS	Early Childhood Professional Development System
Higher Ed	Higher Education
JSI	JSI Research and Training Institute, Inc.
MNCPD	Minnesota Center for Professional Development
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NCCIC	National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center
NLCDC	Northern Lights Career Development Center
PD	Professional Development
PPD	Professional Preparation and Development Sub-committee
RDS	Regional Resource Development Specialist
STARS	STep Ahead Recognition System
VCCICC	Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Qualified and well-compensated early childhood (EC) providers are linked to high-quality early care and education programs. Therefore, the need for building and maintaining a well-qualified workforce of EC caregivers and educators is essential to developing and sustaining high quality programs. Professional development provides the pathway for doing this. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines professional development as a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work, that lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of EC professionals. Early childhood professional development systems (ECPDS) are intended to provide the infrastructure and supports to offer a continuum of learning opportunities to the EC workforce within a state. An ECPDS is intended to be a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach to providing professional development, offering a continuum of professional growth opportunities that serves the needs of a diverse EC workforce across all EC sectors, including professionals working in direct and non-direct service roles.

Vermont's ECPDS is defined as an organized and planned design to support the development and growth of individuals and the field of early childhood and afterschool. In an effort to improve and enhance Vermont's ECPDS, the Professional Preparation and Development (PPD) sub-committee of Vermont's

Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (BBF) sought an initial evaluation of the system and its offerings. Specifically, the initial evaluation was intended to inform future decision-making to develop a well-coordinated, integrated and aligned system of professional development for the EC workforce in Vermont. In July 2011, the BBF contracted with JSI Research and Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) to conduct an initial evaluation of Vermont's ECPDS, which included recommendations about on-going data collection and the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan and tools specifically tailored for Vermont's ECPDS.

JSI evaluated Vermont's ECPDS and its offerings with a utilization-focused approach that addressed the Guiding Principles of the system and involved close collaboration with members of the PPD, members of Vermont's Department for Children and Families Child Development Division (CDD), and other early childhood administrators and managers by way of an Advisory Workgroup. The Advisory Workgroup was established to work collaboratively with JSI and to provide insight and decision-making throughout the evaluation process. Additionally, JSI conducted a comprehensive review, focus groups, key informant interviews, and a Gap analysis. A framework was developed for the Gap analysis to systematically assess and identify strengths and challenges of Vermont's ECPDS. This framework outlines and defines seven elements of an ECPDS. The elements and a summary of the key recommendations within each element include:

* GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADVISORY

System Goal: ECPDS has the governance, leadership, and advisory capacity to plan, implement, manage and sustain an integrated and aligned system. System advisory is broadly representative of all early childhood sectors and stakeholders.

Key Recommendations:

- Define the governance and advisory for the ECPDS.
- Ensure system governance and advisory has adequate resources and capacity (e.g., staffing) to operate and conduct business efficiently and effectively.
- Build collaborative relationships with the Department of Education and Higher Education; include representatives in the system's advisory membership.
- Identify advisory members to act as ambassadors of the ECPDS.

* POLICIES, STANDARDS AND INITIATIVES

System Goal: System policies and standards for professional development integrate and align licensing, credentials, qualification requirements, and other related standards across all early childhood sectors--Head Start, child care programs, pre-kindergarten, and others. Policies and initiatives are supportive of professional growth, and are supported by articulation policies that connect institutions of Higher Education to each other and to community-based training.

Key Recommendations:

- Identify an advisory member to participate in the CDD licensing update process to ensure alignment with ECPDS professional standards and coherency.
- Work with Vermont State Colleges to 1) develop a Common Course Numbering System for EC coursework and 2) define standard articulation for a CDA credential.

* FUNDING

System Goal: System funding is sufficient to support the ECPDS infrastructure, administration, operations and offerings. System funding is sufficient to provide financial supports and incentives to assist early childhood providers with the costs associated with professional development offerings.

Key Recommendations:

- Prioritize resources to better support BFIS.
- Prioritize and expand funds to support a sufficient number of professional development offerings for free or at low cost.
- Prioritize and expand funds for additional financial supports and incentives offered through the ECPDS.

* OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

System Goal: The ECPDS and the system resources and offerings are well communicated, clear and known.

Key Recommendations:

- Increase awareness of the system and build consumer buy-in by designing and implementing a marketing campaign to promote the ECPDS.
- Engage Regional RDS, Head Start Directors, Public School Administrators, etc. to promote and communicate the ECPDS, NLCDC and system offerings to early childhood practitioners.
- Develop effective strategies for communication and information dissemination between the system and consumers (e.g. social media and listservs).

* ACCESS

System Goal: The ECPDS and its offerings are affordable and available to early childhood practitioners across all early childhood sectors, providing: low cost professional development trainings, financial supports and incentives;

I. Executive Summary

variety and convenience in the delivery of professional development trainings; and offerings and pathways for a diverse workforce at various skill levels.

Key Recommendations:

- Explore the creation of a virtual training center offered through the ECPDS for online delivery of professional development.
- Develop or identify an advanced level training to offer free or at low cost at least one time per year in all regions of the state.
- Monitor the offerings in BFIS to determine the distribution and frequency of offerings throughout the state and by region.
- Enhance searchability of the BFIS Course Calendar by including additional fields.
- Include all Head Start and relevant Department of Education professional development offerings into the BFIS Course Calendar.

★ DATA

System Goal: The ECPDS has a data system in place for cross-sector early childhood workforce and professional development data. Data is systematically collected, analyzed and reported on to inform professional development systems-building and policies; to understand the early childhood workforce in Vermont; to gauge system impacts and change; and to help inform planning, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability of the system.

Key Recommendations:

- Conduct strategic planning for professional development and workforce data in BFIS.
- Support staff positions for a database programmer for BFIS.
- Merge existing NLCDC databases with BFIS.
- Develop data management, sharing and reporting policies for BFIS.

- Develop a data field in the BFIS Credential Account to track when the account was last accessed by the account holder.
- Expand workforce and education data elements collected referring to the National Registry Alliance Core Data Elements; include wage and salary data and highest degree attained.
- Develop a process to consistently tag all offerings entered into the BFIS Course Calendar by level, type/area of knowledge, and cost.
- Develop a mechanism for querying attendance of BFIS Course Calendar trainings for each episode of training.
- Design a more user-friendly BFIS public interface to encourage consumers to use the system for tracking their professional development.

★ QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE

System Goal: The ECPDS has mechanisms and processes in place to ensure quality and accountability of the system and its offerings.

Key Recommendations:

- Develop a process for evaluating instructors in the Instructor Registry.
- Consider developing Instructor Competencies for the Instructor Registry.
- Develop a training approval mechanism within the ECPDS.
- Consider developing an ECPDS Help Desk to assist consumers in navigating the system.

This Report is an overview of JSI's work, including system findings and recommendations stemming from the initial evaluation, and a monitoring and evaluation plan and tools developed for use by the PPD to conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the system.

INTRODUCTION

Early care and education programs have a significant impact on the development of cognitive, academic and social skills of young children, with high quality providers and programs improving school readiness and later outcomes for young children.^{1,2} Most young children under the age of six in the United States and here in Vermont spend a substantial portion of their years in early care and education settings. Thus, providing high quality early care and education programs is fundamental to fostering, nourishing, and ensuring the healthy development of our children. Research also shows that qualified and well-compensated early childhood (EC) providers are linked to high-quality early care and education programs.³ Therefore, the need for building and maintaining a well-qualified workforce of EC caregivers and educators is essential to developing and sustaining high quality programs. Professional development provides the pathway for doing this.⁴

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines professional development as a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work, that lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of EC professionals.⁵ Early childhood professional development systems (ECPDS) are intended to provide the infrastructure and supports to offer a continuum of learning opportunities to the EC workforce within a state. An ECPDS is intended to be a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach to providing professional development, offering a continuum of professional growth opportunities that serves the needs of a diverse EC workforce across all EC sectors, including professionals working in direct and non-direct service roles.

¹ Phillips, D., and Lowenstein, A. Early care, education and child development. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 2011; 62:483-500.

² Burchinal, P., Kainz, K., Cai, K., Tout, K., Zaslow, M., Martinez-Beck, I., and Rathgeb, C. Early Care and Education Quality and Child Outcomes. *Child Trends: Research-to-Policy Research-to-Practice Brief*. 2009. http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_5_21_RB_earlycare.pdf

³ Zaslow, M. and Tout, K. The Role of Professional Development in Creating High Quality Preschool Education. Child Trends. Brookings Institution, Washington D.C. 2005.

⁴ Sheridan, M., Pope Edwards, C., Marvin, C., Knoche, L. *Professional Development in Early Childhood Programs: Process Issues and Research Needs*. *Early Education and Development*. 2009; 20(3): 377-401.

⁵ National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA). Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary. 2011. http://www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf

II. Introduction

Vermont's ECPDS is defined as an organized and planned design to support the development and growth of individuals and the field of early childhood and afterschool. Vermont's ECPDS is based upon the following Guiding Principles that were adopted to serve as a framework for developing as well as evaluating the system: 1) Clear and Known; 2) Supportive of Professional Growth; 3) Research-based and Relevant; 4) Integrated and Aligned; 5) Accessible; 6) Financially Supported; and 7) Evaluated on these criteria. In an effort to improve and enhance Vermont's ECPDS, the Professional Preparation and Development (PPD) sub-committee of Vermont's Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (BBF) sought an initial evaluation of the system and its offerings. Specifically, the initial evaluation was intended to inform future decision-making to develop a well-coordinated, integrated and aligned system of professional development for the EC workforce in Vermont. In July 2011, the BBF contracted with JSI Research and Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) to conduct an initial evaluation of Vermont's ECPDS, which included recommendations about on-going data collection and the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan and tools specifically tailored for Vermont's ECPDS. Defined outcomes of this initial evaluation per the PPD included:

- A report on the current professional development system based on the Vermont Guiding Principles and including information about its offerings' accessibility, affordability, quality and pathways to credentials.
- Identification of needed data points that are not currently being collected and recommendations for methodologies for that on-going collection.
- Recommendations for streamlining the current data being collected on the early childhood professional development system.
- An evaluation plan and tool(s) to be used by the PPD/BBF for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Vermont's early childhood professional development system.

This report is an overview of JSI's work, including system findings and recommendations stemming from the initial evaluation, and a monitoring and evaluation plan and tools developed for use by the PPD to conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the system.

METHODS

JSI evaluated Vermont's ECPDS and its offerings with a utilization-focused approach that addressed the Guiding Principles of the system and involved close collaboration with members of the PPD, members of Vermont's Department of Children and Families Child Development Division (CDD), and other early childhood administrators and managers by way of an Advisory Workgroup. The Advisory Workgroup was established to work collaboratively with JSI and to provide insight and decision-making throughout the evaluation process. Additionally, JSI conducted a comprehensive review, focus groups, key informant interviews, and a Gap analysis, all culminating in two main outputs and presented here in the Final Report:

- 1) A report on Vermont's ECPDS, the current offerings of the system and the data currently collected; and
- 2) An evaluation plan, including recommended data points, data collection mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation of the system going forward, and evaluation tools for the PPD/BBF to continue with future monitoring and evaluation of Vermont's ECPDS.

Advisory Workgroup

The PPD Facilitator identified and invited potential individuals to be members of the Advisory Workgroup. The Advisory Workgroup members are listed in Table 1. JSI convened the Advisory Workgroup four times during the six month evaluation process with three in-person meetings and one teleconference call. During the evaluation process the Workgroup imparted valuable institutional knowledge and an understanding of the landscape, sub-systems, and policies feeding into Vermont's ECPDS. JSI and the Workgroup established goals, priorities, and deliverables of the evaluation and came to consensus on a final evaluation plan for the initial evaluation of the system. Furthermore, the Advisory Workgroup weighed in on identifying useful performance indicators for the system and, in general, provided guidance and decision-support throughout the evaluation process.

TABLE 1: Evaluation of Vermont's ECPDS: Advisory Workgroup Members

MEMBER	ORGANIZATION
Betsy Rathbun-Gunn	Director of Early Childhood Services United Counseling Service of Bennington County
Caprice Hover	Executive Director Rutland County Parent Child Center
Jan Walker	Director Workforce Development and Quality Enhancement Child Development Division Vermont Department for Children and Families
Kim Keiser	Interim Executive Director Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council
Mark Sustic	Consultant Vermont Community Preschool Collaborative
Melissa Riegel-Garrett	Professional Preparation and Development Committee Facilitator; Executive Director Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
Michelle Trayah	Resource Development Specialist Northwestern Counseling Support Services
Nancy Sugarman	Director Northern Lights Career Development Center
Reeva Murphy	Deputy Commissioner Child Development Division Vermont Department for Children and Families
Sue Ryan	Coordinator Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council

Comprehensive Review

JSI conducted a comprehensive review to provide an informed and thorough report on Vermont's ECPDS and its offerings. The comprehensive review included two components: 1) a secondary source review to understand the thinking, best practices, and recommendations on early childhood professional development systems nationally and to look

at other state systems; and 2) an environmental scan of Vermont's ECPDS to provide a profile of the system and its offerings as well as to develop a data inventory of the system.

The secondary source review included a search and review of resources (including reports, briefs, websites, toolkits, and plans) to understand current initiatives, frameworks, strategies and policies

for developing a well-coordinated, integrated and aligned ECPDS. Additionally, the secondary source review was intended to enable JSI to identify federal and state guidelines and recommendations surrounding early childhood professional development systems as well as best practices, lessons learned and effective initiatives, systems or system components implemented in other states. A sample of other state ECPDS were reviewed to provide a comparative analysis on system elements, governance, infrastructure, funding, functionality, accessibility, usability and integration with other early childhood programs and systems. Specifically, an overview of recommendations from the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC) and NAEYC were developed and the EC professional development systems in Connecticut and Minnesota were reviewed.

The environmental scan of Vermont's ECPDS was conducted in order to map and profile the system, and to develop a data inventory of the system. The environmental scan included researching components of the system and system offerings based on information available from relevant websites, such as the Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) website and the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) website. Additionally, JSI conversed with Kathleen Patterson, Assistant Director and Interim Director of CDD's Head Start Collaboration Office; Carol Pomeroy, BFIS Operations Manager in CDD; Nancy Sugarman, Director of NLCDC, and Sylvia Kennedy-Godin, Records Specialist of NLCDC.

Qualitative Data and Analyses

Evaluating the ECPDS based on feedback from system consumers (the EC workforce working directly with or on behalf of young children) was a central component to this evaluation to assess the accessibility, usability, reach and quality of the system from the

consumer vantage. Two focus groups, each with 8-10 direct providers of EC care and education programs, and 11 key informant interviews with EC administrators and managers working on behalf of young children in Vermont were conducted. Furthermore, in order to glean insight and lessons learned from other states experiences in developing an ECPDS, key informant interviews were conducted with the Director of the Connecticut Charts-A-Course and the Director of the Nevada Registry. The focus groups and interviews were facilitated by JSI using a semi-structured approach. A focus group guide and key informant interview guides (for Vermont interviewees and for other state interviewees) were developed by JSI with inputs from the comprehensive review and the Advisory Workgroup. All guides are included in Appendices IV and V. Data collected from the focus groups and key informant interviews were analyzed using an iterative process to identify themes, relationships and patterns emerging from the data.

System Performance Measures

One strategy for measuring the performance of an ECPDS is to identify and report on a set of indicators that are linked to the outputs and outcomes targeted by the system. The system indicators are intended to describe how well the system is achieving its objectives. Based on inputs from the comprehensive review (indicators used by other states and the Vermont ECPDS data inventory), JSI identified a limited set of system indicators for which data are accessible and that reflect some of the goals of Vermont's ECPDS. Benchmarks or system goals were also identified. JSI convened the Advisory Workgroup by teleconference to review and revise the system indicators put forth. Subsequently, JSI developed the *Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Dashboard* for the purposes of ongoing system monitoring and quality improvement. JSI also

developed the *Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Assessment Tool* to track recommended system goals (or benchmarks). These tools can be found in section VII of this report: System Monitoring & Evaluation.

Gap Analysis

Building on knowledge and data from the comprehensive review and qualitative data findings, JSI conducted a Gap analysis of Vermont's ECPDS. A gap is sometimes spoken of as "the space between where we are and where we want to be." A Gap analysis is a systematic process for reviewing the

strengths and challenges of a program or system. Findings from the comprehensive review and qualitative findings (from the focus groups and key informant interviews) informed the analysis in regard to "where" the system is at and "where" we want it to be. A Gap analysis checklist was developed to organize the recommended elements of an ECPDS and systematize the process for identifying strengths and challenges of Vermont's ECPDS. Recommendations were drafted to address the system challenges identified and to enhance system monitoring of outputs and outcomes to inform future decision-making around the system. The draft recommendations were presented to and vetted by the Advisory Workgroup.

Overview of Early Childhood Professional Development Systems

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Nearly all states are in the process of developing or improving their early childhood professional development systems in an effort to build and sustain a well-qualified EC workforce and enhance the quality of care and learning experiences of the young children in their state. Two national organizations have taken the lead to assist states in developing, enhancing, and implementing comprehensive and integrated ECPDS for all EC professionals working with and on behalf of young children—1) the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and 2) the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC).

In an effort to assist states in developing integrated systems of professional development that cross the early childhood sectors, NAEYC is leading system building efforts by identifying policies that connect professional development activities and align professional development system offerings. NAEYC has identified six essential policy areas intended to promote the development of coordinated, aligned, cross-sector ECPDS:⁶

- **Professional Standards** – State policies should specify the content of professional preparation and ongoing development required for all EC professionals.
- **Career Pathways** – State policies should institutionalize routes of continuous progress for EC professionals (direct service and non-direct service) in all sectors, leading towards increased qualifications, professional possibilities and appropriate compensation.
- **Articulation** – State policies should be developed to assist in the meaningful transfer of professional development credentials, courses, credits, degrees etc. from one program or institution to another.
- **Advisory Structure** – State policy should require an ECPDS have an advisory structure with some authority or link to direct authority serving as the coordination mechanism to an integrated system.
- **Data** – State policies should require the collection and sharing of cross-sector data to gauge impacts and systems change, and to inform planning, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability.
- **Financing** – State policies should support the financing needed for a professional development system to operate, including the financing of: specific areas of needs-based support for EC professionals to obtain professional development; rewards and compensation parity for attainment of professional development; and the professional development system infrastructure.

⁶ LeMoine, S. Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems. National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2008. http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/policy/ecwsi/Workforce_Designs.pdf

IV. Overview of Early Childhood Professional Development Systems

The National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC), based out of the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF), is a national clearinghouse and technical assistance (TA) center that provides comprehensive child care information, resources and TA services. The NCCIC describes a comprehensive ECPDS as: accessible and based on a clearly articulated framework; inclusive of a continuum of training and ongoing supports;

defines pathways that are tied to licensure, leading to qualifications and credentials; and address the needs of individual, adult learners. The NCCIC outlines five key elements of an ECPDS: (1) **core knowledge**; (2) **access and outreach**; (3) **qualifications, credentials, and pathways**; (4) **funding**; and (5) **quality assurance**. The matrix below (Table 2) describes the five elements:

TABLE 2: National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC) Early Childhood Professional Development System: Key System Elements

ELEMENT	DEFINITION	SYSTEM EXAMPLES
CORE KNOWLEDGE	<i>Core knowledge:</i> The range of knowledge adults working with young children need to facilitate child learning and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Competencies • Licensing Standards
ACCESS AND OUTREACH	The system is known, coherent, user-friendly; offerings are available and affordable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Training Calendar • Public Engagement Initiatives • Multiple Training Delivery Methods
QUALIFICATIONS, CREDENTIALS AND PATHWAYS	The system specifies qualifications required for the EC workforce based on their role; offers credentials and certificates for professional growth; and routes to obtain qualifications, credentials and professional growth are outlined in the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development Registry • Career Ladder • Articulation of Community-Based Training for Credit in Higher Education.
FUNDING	Funding is available to support the operation and administration of the system as well as to support the offerings of the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants and Scholarships for PD • Career Ladder Level Bonuses • Program Quality Awards
QUALITY ASSURANCE	QA activities and mechanisms are in place to monitor, approve, and evaluate the system and its offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Approval • Trainer Approval • System Monitoring & Evaluation

OTHER STATE EXAMPLES

Other state ECPDS were reviewed as part of a comparative analysis and to identify potential models for Vermont to look to when further developing their ECPDS. Connecticut and Minnesota were identified as having ECPDS with well-coordinated and aligned system elements and innovative features promoting access and use of the systems. In this section of the report a brief overview of these state ECPDS are provided along with a review of the exemplary elements and/or features of the systems.

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC) is the statewide professional development, program improvement and registry system for early care and education in the state of Connecticut. CCAC was initiated 20 years ago and serves as a model for other states in the process of developing a comprehensive and aligned ECPDS. CCAC is primarily funded by the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) and housed within the Connecticut Community College system. CCAC operates with an Executive Director and advisement from a cross-sector steering committee. CCAC is notable for the alignment achieved within the system and its offerings.

CCAC is based on defined Core Areas of Knowledge and related Competencies for EC providers working with and on behalf of young children. The Core Areas of Knowledge were developed or revised to meet the standards put forth by several organizations and agencies including NAEYC, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The Core Areas of Knowledge include research-based knowledge and complement the Connecticut Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning as well as the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework. The Core Areas of Knowledge serve as a foundation to the system and

also to aligning the system offerings across EC sectors. All CCAC approved curriculum is reviewed and approved by the CCAC Training Approval Board.

Further enhancing the alignment and thereby lending to good articulation within the CCAC system and its offerings is the Common State Standard. The Common State Standard states that courses that include the study of the education or development of children less than five years of age will be credited toward the requirement of twelve education credits in early childhood or child development. The Common State Standard defines, in part, the requirements for EC classroom teachers in publicly funded programs and has been adopted by CCAC, and the Connecticut Departments of Education, Public Health, Social Services and Higher Education. These initiatives have lead CCAC to be a coherent and coordinated ECPDS that fosters seamless articulation of professional development activities and ongoing professional growth for the EC workforce. For example, the core professional development trainings offered by CCAC articulate into a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA); the CDA can be articulated in Higher Education for 6-12 course credits towards an Associates degree.

The CCAC Career Ladder highlights the alignment of the system and is designed to reflect current state and national qualifications and standards for teaching young children. It is an easy to use display of the steps in a person's professional development advancement from entry level training through the various degree programs.

MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Center for Professional Development (MNCPD) was initiated in 2007 when the Minnesota State Legislature placed into statute a policy requiring the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop and phase in the implementation of a professional

IV. Overview of Early Childhood Professional Development Systems

development system for practitioners serving children in early childhood and school-age programs. The MNCPD is funded by DHS and advised by the Minnesota Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC). PDAC provides system level consultation to guide and inform the Child Development Services team at DHS to effectively develop, coordinate and implement the Minnesota ECPDS. The MNCPD was designed based on the NCCIC five key elements of an ECPDS: Core Knowledge; Access and Outreach; Qualifications, Credentials and Career Pathways; Funding; and Quality Assurance. The MNCPD provides a comprehensive virtual gateway to the ECPDS in Minnesota, and career planning resources, including the MNCPD Registry, Career Lattice, Trainer and Training Approval, and learning and career guidance services.

Considering the NCCIC key elements of an ECPDS, the Minnesota ECPDS is remarkable for activities and initiatives related to the system's Access and Outreach element, and the system's Qualifications, Credentials and Pathways element. Specifically, the Minnesota ECPDS is well communicated with the MNCPD website and the many brochures and other resources developed to clearly communicate and market the system and system offerings (e.g., MNCPD Flyer and MNCPD Registry Brochure). The Minnesota ECPDS has also developed a Professional Development System Communications Strategic Plan. The first implementation step in the plan is to raise awareness about the value of professional development within the early childhood and school-age fields. This plan will serve the ECPDS well by reaching out to and further building buy-in among system consumers.

The MNCPD Registry is a highlight of the system's achievement in implementing resources and tools to assist the EC workforce in navigating career pathways and professional growth in the EC field. The MNCPD Registry is a voluntary web-based database for tracking training, education and

employment in the field of early childhood and school-age care. The Registry provides professional development planning tools including a learning record, placement on the Minnesota Career Lattice, the Individual Training Needs Assessment and a function to search for trainers and training events. The trainer and training events search capabilities are notable in that they are easy to use and understand, and allow consumers to search the Registry by many fields, such as city, county, level, date, etc. Consumers can also search events and trainers by county using an interactive map of the state of Minnesota that displays each county in the state. Furthermore, data from the Registry is used to inform decision-makers about the early childhood and school-age care workforce in Minnesota.

VERMONT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Profile

In an effort to develop a comprehensive understanding of Vermont's ECPDS, inclusive of professional development resources and offerings across early childhood sectors in the state of Vermont, a profile of the system was developed. This profile is organized by broad system categories and describes the identified structures and resources feeding into the ECPDS (Appendix II). An overview of the profile follows.

Vermont's ECPDS was initiated to support development and growth of individuals in the field of early childhood and afterschool. The system is primarily funded by the CDD. The system is advised by the PPD. While the system, in concept, consists of early childhood entities across sectors, the face of the system is the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC). The NLCDC is housed within the Community College of Vermont and works to unify and enhance the professional development system in Vermont by serving as a central hub of the system with a virtual gateway for communicating system information and resources. The ECPDS

IV. Overview of Early Childhood Professional Development Systems

includes 12 regional centers throughout the state (in the 12 BBF regions) known as Regional Community Child Care Support Agencies. These 12 agencies serve as a regional or local interface to the ECPDS, providing guidance, resources and professional development offerings to EC providers within their respective catchment areas. Additionally, the ECPDS spans out to incorporate many other resources, entities and organizations related to early childhood. In an effort to better define the ECPDS in Vermont, JSI drafted a working model to conceptually depict the system. This working model was reviewed by the Advisory Workgroup and revised based on their feedback. The working model currently outlines core elements of Vermont's ECPDS, with consumers of the system being the central point of the system and its offering (Appendix I). The system elements and offerings are guided and supported by the infrastructure of the system: governance, policy and funding. As the system evolves and becomes more defined, the model can be adapted to reflect changes.

The PPD and NLCDC have been working to build a coordinated, aligned and comprehensive ECDPS. In doing so, foundational components have been established, including:

- A set of Guiding Principles that were designed to serve as a framework for developing and evaluating the system. The Guiding Principles for the system are: 1) Clear and Known; 2) Supportive of Professional Growth; 3) Research-based and Relevant; 4) Integrated and Aligned; 5) Accessible; 6) Financially Supported; and 7) Evaluated on these criteria.
- Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies were developed to serve as a foundation for the system and the basis for EC professional standards.
- EC certificates and credentials have been developed based on the system Core Knowledge

Areas and Competencies to support professional growth of the EC workforce.

- The system has a professional development registry and training calendar in place via the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS).
- The system has a Career Ladder in place that was developed based on the system's Core Competencies and the Vermont Department of Education Professional Standards topic areas for early childhood endorsement. A certificate is awarded for achievement of each level and is intended to serve as a tool for the EC workforce to track and plan professional growth.
- Quality assurance mechanisms are in place with the NLCDC Instructor Qualification System and Registry.

Data Inventory

Data plays a fundamental role in ECPDS to help characterize the EC workforce, and to help inform EC systems-building and policies, to monitor ECPDS outputs and system impacts, and to help inform planning, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability of the system. A data inventory was developed for Vermont's ECPDS in which three main data sources were identified: 1) the BFIS Provider/Credential Accounts and BFIS Course Calendar; 2) the NLCDC Instructor Registry; and 3) several MS Excel spreadsheets developed and used by NLCDC. The Data Inventory (Appendix III) provides a comprehensive overview of these three data sources, including a description of their purpose, a list of their data elements with descriptions of the data elements, and notes on the data elements as relevant.

Recommendations on additional data elements and data collection and management policies are included in the Recommendations section of this report.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

FOCUS GROUPS

Two focus groups were conducted with direct service providers of early childhood to understand the perspectives and experiences of the primary consumers of the ECPDS. Specifically, the focus group discussions were guided around how direct service providers of EC are utilizing the system; how well known, accessible and usable the system is; and whether the system is helpful and supportive to users in achieving professional development and career goals. The two focus groups were conducted in different geographic regions of the state to obtain insight on the ECPDS consumer perspective from a sample of EC providers in Chittenden County and in Rutland County. JSI worked with the Building Bright Futures Coordinator of the Rutland Region to facilitate targeted recruitment of direct service providers of EC to participate in the focus group held in Rutland, Vermont. JSI worked with the Professional Development Coordinator of Child Care Resource to facilitate targeted recruitment of direct service providers of EC to participate in the focus group held in Williston, Vermont. At each focus group a meal was provided. Participants were given an overview of the ECPDS evaluation, objectives of the focus group and the general structure of the one and a half hour period of discussion.

Although targeted recruitment efforts were intentional in trying to convene a diverse group of EC providers representing a variety of work settings and EC sectors, such as Head Start, Parent Child Centers, public pre-school, childcare centers and home providers, by and large the focus group participants were home providers. While all participants of both focus groups reported several years of experience in their profession and demonstrated a strong interest in professional development opportunities and professional growth in their field, it is notable that the participants of the two focus groups differed in age and years of experience in EC. The participants of the Rutland group were predominately over 55 years of age with a mean number of 24.5 years in the EC field. Comparatively, the participants of the Williston focus group were generally younger in age, with most between ages 26 and 45, and had a mean number of 12.3 years of experience in the EC field. The majority of participants from both groups had achieved degrees in Higher Education, ranging from an associate degree (3), bachelor's degree (8), and master's degree (2). Characteristics of the focus group participants are provided in Table 3.

The focus group guide was organized by broad topic areas related to consumer use of the ECPDS. Focus group findings are organized by themes that emerged within these broad topics.

TABLE 3: Focus Group Participant Data

PARTICIPANT DATA	WILLISTON	RUTLAND	COMBINED
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	8	10	18
NUMBER RESPONDENTS	8	9	17
AGE			
18-25	–	–	–
26-35	3	1	4
36-45	2	1	3
46-55	1	2	3
56-65	1	5	6
>65	1	–	1
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED			
High School or GED	–	–	–
Some Post High School	–	1	1
Child Development Associate (CDA)	–	3	3
Associate Degree	1	2	3
Bachelor Degree	6	2	8
Masters Degree	1	1	2
WORK SETTING/PROGRAM			
Registered Home	4	6	10
Licensed Home	1	–	1
Licensed Center	3	–	3
Parent Child Center	–	1	1
Head Start	–	1	1
Other	–	1	1
ROLE			
Director	–	1	1
Child Care Provider	2	5	7
Teacher	1	–	1
Director and Provider	1	–	1
Director, Provider and Teacher	4	1	5
Other	–	2	2

V. Summary of Findings

PARTICIPANT DATA	WILLISTON	RUTLAND	COMBINED
NUMBER OF YEARS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD			
Mean (Range)	12.3 (5 – 20)	24.5 (10 – 37)	18.8 (5 – 37)
0-4	-	-	-
5-9	2	-	2
10-14	4	1	5
15-19	1	1	2
20-24	1	1	2
25+	-	6	6
Aware of NLCDC			
Yes- Number (%)	8 (100%)	9 (100%)	17 (100%)
Access NLCDC			
Yes- Number (%)	2 (25%)	8 (88.9%)	10 (58.8%)
Aware of Career Ladder			
Yes- Number (%)	6 (75%)	9 (100%)	15 (88.2%)
Aware of BFIS			
Yes- Number (%)	8 (100%)	9 (100%)	17 (100%)
Use BFIS Course Calendar			
Yes- Number (%)	0 (0%)	6 (66.7%)	7 (41.2%)
Aware of BFIS Credential Account			
Yes- Number (%)	8 (100%)	8 (88.9%)	15 (88.2%)
Use BFIS Credential Account			
Yes- Number (%)	3 (37.5%)	8 (88.9%)	10 (58.8%)

Knowledge and Awareness of Vermont's ECPDS

Participants indicated they do not perceive Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System as a system. The reference by the JSI facilitator to "early childhood professional development system" and "system" did not resonate with the groups. Participants were aware of some of the components and resources of the system, such as the Northern Lights Career Development Center, the Bright

Futures Information System, Head Start, the Child Development Division and Licensing, but clearly did not consider these components part of a cohesive and coordinated system. Rather, the terms scattered and fragmented were used to describe the components and resources that make up the ECPDS. The participants spoke positively of the many professional development offerings that are available in the state, yet searching for the offerings seems to be burdensome as the offerings are advertised in a variety

V. Summary of Findings

of settings, platforms, mechanisms, etc. Following on to this sentiment, participants voiced a desire for a linked and coordinated system, rather than what they consider to be a variety of components and resources that provides professional development resources and offerings. Further, participants voiced a desire for a more streamlined approach to information dissemination and communication regarding professional development and the ECPDS.

When asked specifically about the NLCDC website and whether participants have used the website, all participants indicated they are aware of the website and many indicated they have used the website. The participants of the Rutland group use it more than those in Williston, with the most common reasons for use being to access applications, such as for the Career Ladder level certificates. The general consensus from all is that the website is difficult to navigate and find what one is looking for. Participants from the Williston group also indicated they don't understand the purpose and value intended by the website.

Finding Professional Development Offerings

Most participants indicate a strong reliance (and credibility) on utilizing their respective local professional development resource(s) to learn about professional development offerings. The Rutland group all rely on their Regional Resource Development Specialist (RDS) and the Building Bright Futures Council of the Rutland Region to learn about professional development offerings in their area; email and newsletters are used by these local resources to disseminate information on local professional development offerings. The Williston group all rely mostly on Child Care Resource and their quarterly catalog of professional development offerings. Some participants note they seek out professional development offerings by a specific instructor they like and search extensively online to find additional offerings.

All participants favor email as a preferred mechanism for learning about professional development offerings. Participants of the Williston group note they like the print catalog published by Child Care Resource as well. All participants indicate that having one online resource to house professional development offerings from all sectors in the state, including national conferences, that is current and searchable by a variety of fields such as date, time, level, location, topic, etc., would be a great help. In fact, a common frustration voiced by participants is not being able to search for offerings efficiently or find what they are looking for. However, not many use the BFIS Course Calendar to search for professional development offerings even though all indicate they are aware of it. Many voice that the BFIS Course Calendar is not user-friendly and is clunky, not current and not searchable in an efficient way.

Obtaining Professional Development

Participants were queried on factors important to them in determining which professional development offerings to participate in. Cost and topic were the most salient and consistently important factors among all participants. When (day and time) professional development trainings are offered was also indicated as very important among all participants. Location of offerings was indicated to be very important among the Rutland group, but not the Williston group. The instructor of the offering was rated as important for most participants of the Williston group, but instructor was not an important factor among the Rutland group.

Cost

Cost was rated as an important factor among all participants for a variety of reasons, but the general consensus is that most feel that professional development offerings are expensive with relatively little or no financial supports available. *"I spend between \$35 and \$50 per training for introductory level trainings to meet my licensing requirements and that is a lot out*

V. Summary of Findings

of my budget several times a year.” In an effort to meet annual professional development requirements for re-licensure in a cost-efficient manner, several participants indicated they try to target or seek out free or low cost offerings through their local professional development resource calendars. In fact, many participants voiced they feel they often attend the same trainings over and over each year because they need to meet their licensing requirements in a way that is affordable. Some participants felt strongly that professional development required for provider licensing should be offered free and/or providers should be compensated for attending considering the need to sometimes take leave from their job (unpaid leave for many) to attend professional development trainings: *“If professional development is required for us then we should get compensation to be there”*. Conclusively, participants expressed a need for financial supports to ally the costs associated with required professional development.

Topic

Building on the issue of cost, participants indicated topic to be a determining factor in their selection of professional development. Topic was indicated to be important based on personal areas of interest or where one feels they might need further education and training. The issue of repetition arose again during the conversation on topic. Participants indicated they consider the topic relative to what offerings they have already taken as well as the associated cost, but underlying these factors is their interest in seeking out variety, diversity, new topics, and advanced level offerings. In fact, a desire for more advanced offerings, beyond the basics often offered, was voiced by most all participants.

“I look for something I haven’t had before, or if I have a particular issue that I haven’t been educated on and I want to learn more about it, I attend those trainings.”

When and Where

When trainings are offered was indicated as very important to all participants. The groups noted that generally most early childhood providers work full-time Monday through Friday and so can only attend professional development offerings in the evening or on weekends. Trainings during the weekdays during business hours are not an option for almost all unless a substitute is hired. A few participants noted they had in fact used a substitute in the past to attend professional development, but there are cost, availability and acceptability issues associated with doing so. Further, the groups indicated that in addition to the cost of paying a substitute, there is also a cost to taking the day off (and not getting paid) as well as a preference to use days off for personal leave as needed.

The Rutland group noted that the location of an offering is critically important in determining participation in professional development, expressing that if it is outside of the greater Rutland area, it is not feasible for providers in the Rutland area to attend during the evening due to the travel time. For example, if a provider in Rutland is interested in attending a training in Burlington at 6:00 p.m. on a Monday, he/she likely could not attend due to the travel time being a limiting factor. Conversely, location was not noted as an important factor by the Williston group. This difference by group likely speaks to the geographical barriers and level of saturation of professional development offerings within various regions throughout the state. The greater Burlington area has many, if not the most, professional development offerings to select from in the state, while other regions, such as Rutland, are limited in the number of offerings available.

Instructor

The Williston group, but not the Rutland group, noted instructor to be an important factor when choosing to participate in professional development

⁷ Quotes from focus group participants are paraphrased to ensure clarity out of context of the original discussion.

V. Summary of Findings

trainings. Participants indicated they are well aware of which instructors offer high quality and interesting trainings versus those that do not. Participants indicated they select to attend trainings accordingly. Selecting offerings based on the instructor may be an option for the Williston participants considering they have many more professional development offerings to choose from than do the Rutland group. The Rutland group noted this just doesn't weigh in, likely relative to the other factors taking precedent, such as when, where and cost.

Using the System and Supporting Professional Needs

Discussions generated during the focus groups carried a general tone of frustration from participants around the system not addressing their needs or even being aware of their needs as early childhood professionals obtaining professional development. Participant comments regarding using the system resources and whether the system is supportive of their professional development needs indicated several concerns ranging from a lack of relevancy and meaning to a general lack of professional recognition. Thus, there is a lack of buy-in for the system and its offerings. For example, while most participants indicated they are aware of the Career Ladder, with some finding it easy to understand and others finding it difficult to understand, most do not see value, meaning or incentive to use the Career Ladder. Participants voiced that considering where they are at in their career (most have been in the field of early childhood for 10+ years) and their career goals, the Career Ladder is not meaningful or relevant to them. Although the participants indicated interest in continuing to obtain high quality professional development to enhance their knowledge and skill sets within early childhood, continuing to achieve additional certificates, credentials and qualifications is not always of interest. Participants indicated this lack of relevancy especially considering there is not necessarily professional recognition or consistent financial compensation (i.e., increase in wages) associated with achieving

additional qualifications and credentials. Several participants noted they've been in the field for some time and don't feel the need to obtain additional credentials and degrees, and therefore the Career Ladder doesn't really speak to them. *"Why is the Career Ladder there? What is the purpose and why is it relevant?"* Participants also noted that they are being asked to do more and more by way of professional development, but there is no incentive for greater professional recognition and better wages/salary.

Similarly, the participants seemed frustrated and perplexed with the BFIS Credential Accounts. All were aware of their accounts. Some participants indicated they find it useful to access their accounts and track their professional development activities, but many don't use it, indicating it is not current, not user-friendly (both the BFIS data system and the BFIS Help Desk) and ultimately don't understand the purpose as many find themselves having to track and submit their professional development in paper format regardless of what they enter in their Credential Accounts. Furthermore, participants expressed dismay and frustration that providers' violations are listed on the public interface of the system indefinitely, yet professional development activities and credentials are not listed on the public interface of the system.

In summary, the participants expressed a lack of buy-in for the system as it seems to be designed for an introductory level workforce in regard to the professional development offerings and resources, and in regard to financial incentives. The system does not speak to the needs of professionals who have been in the field for some time and who are not necessarily interested in advancing in their credentials and degrees. Furthermore, a lack of buy-in for the system stems from a feeling that home providers don't have a voice at the table to consider their perspective and insight when designing, developing and making decisions about the system and its offerings.

V. Summary of Findings

Participant Recommendations for the System

At the conclusion of the focus group discussions participants were offered the opportunity to put forth recommendations for improving the ECPDS to better meet their needs. Many participants reiterated the need for the system to improve communication and information dissemination, possibly by streamlining all information, resources and offerings into one place. It was suggested and followed with consensus that it would be helpful to have information available and searchable from a statewide perspective as well as from a regional perspective.

Several participants indicated that in concept a strength of the system is the potential of the BFIS Credential Account to house and track individual's professional development activity. Making the system more user-friendly, efficient and responsive (i.e., the BFIS Help Desk) would be beneficial to realizing the potential of the Credential Account.

Provision of more financial incentives to support the cost of participating in professional development opportunities was among general consensus for improving the system.

Lastly, participants indicated that they have found tremendous value from the input, guidance and recommendations from their early childhood professional networks in navigating the system and professional development resources. These networks have been valuable resources and therefore participants indicated interest in the system developing and supporting opportunities for professional networking (e.g., sponsoring and hosting a speed dating event).

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Key informant interviews were conducted with 11 stakeholders of early childhood in Vermont and with two Directors of ECPDS from other states. The Vermont key informants were identified by the

Advisory Workgroup and invited to participate in a semi-structured interview with JSI by phone. The other state interviewees were selected per recommendations from the Advisory Workgroup and their responsiveness to the request to be interviewed.

The key informant interviews captured the perspectives of and experiences with the ECPDS from administrators, policymakers, directors and managers from various early childhood sectors, including, but not limited to, interviewees representing Head Start, Northern Lights Career Development Center, the Vermont Department for Children and Families Child Development Division, Higher Education, and the Vermont Department of Education. Additionally, key informant interviews were conducted with the Director of the Connecticut Charts-A-Course ECPDS and the Director of the Nevada Registry ECPDS. Interviewees were questioned and prompted to speak to the strengths and challenges of their respective early childhood professional development systems, as well as on the advisory, funding, policies, coordination and articulation of their systems. Recurring themes generated from the interview process are outlined and described.

VERMONT

Framework versus System

Understanding the interviewees' general perception of the ECPDS relative to the coordination, integration and alignment within the system was one objective of the in-depth interviews. The majority of the interviewees indicated there is a framework, a system, system elements, or "*something*" in place, but that it is fragmented, consisting of several disparate and unlinked sub-systems and components. Positively, many interviewees indicated the system is in the process of evolving, emerging, and on the right track with many good elements such as Northern Lights Career Development Center, the Instructor Registry, Jan Walker, and the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS). Furthermore, interviewees expressed strong commit-

V. Summary of Findings

ment and engagement by stakeholders working to develop and improve the system, resulting in a strong foundation that is well thought out and intentional. *“The fact that there is an effort to have a coherent system is a huge leap. Change takes time.”*

System Governance and Advisory

One of the objectives of the key informant interviews was to understand the roles, responsibilities, and authority of those influencing the direction and development of the system. While it was generally known among the key informant interviewees that the Building Bright Futures Council Professional Preparation and Development subcommittee serves in an advisory capacity to the ECPDS and to the Northern Lights Career Development Center, some indicated advisement and direction from other parties as well, such as BBF, CDD and/or NL. Roles, responsibilities and authority in decision-making were not clear among several key informants: *“It’s still kind of fuzzy for me”; “There is no overarching authority for the system”. “Jan Walker is a great visionary, but to get her ideas down to the program level is challenging.”*

Engagement and Representation of Early Childhood Stakeholders

Key informant interviewees indicated a lack of strong partnerships and involvement among some key early childhood sectors, including the Vermont Department of Education and Higher Education. The lack of engagement and involvement with Higher Education was voiced as a major shortfall and challenge of the system. Interviewees indicated a disconnect between Higher Education and the ECPDS. Some interviewees expressed Higher Education to be non-receptive to their efforts to reach out and engage representatives of Higher Education in the system’s initiatives. Other interviewees noted a need for the ECPDS system leaders to pro-actively and strategically tap representatives of Higher Education to be at the table to weigh in on discussions and advise on how to better integrate the system with

Higher Education, and to achieve alignment and articulation of offerings between the ECPDS and Higher Education.

Funding

Most interviewees agreed that the ECPDS could always use more funding: “Nobody will say we have enough money, but CDD has made it a priority to not cut budget of the Northern Lights Career Development Center and the ECPDS”. Interviewees offered several recommendations for prioritizing funds or directing additional funds if available:

- Provide funds to support access to college coursework.
- Provide additional funds to support more trainings and/or needed trainings (such as in areas where there are gaps—infant toddler care) in all regions of the state. Provide additional funds to RDS to support the delivery of more local offerings.
- Offer initial or introductory level trainings free to keep the workforce engaged and inspired to move up the career ladder.
- Use funds to define and market early childhood as more than childcare.
- Provide financial bonuses to the workforce to incentivize or reward long-term retention.
- Develop a substitute system to enable the workforce to take leave from work to attend professional development offerings.

Alignment, Articulation and Connectedness

Many interviewees expressed a challenge of the system regarding alignment and articulation. Some indicated the system policies, resources and offerings are aligned in concept, but are misunderstood or misinterpreted in their use resulting in a lack of system alignment. For example, it was indicated the Core Knowledge Areas are in fact aligned with the CDD

V. Summary of Findings

licensing regulations, but are not interpreted consistently. Key informants stated that consumers of the system are often not clear on how the offerings of the system are aligned; how achieving credentials or obtaining professional development can translate for additional qualifications. Others noted the CDD licensing regulations to be outdated and unaligned with the system's Core Competencies and Career Ladder: *"To the trained eye, I think there is alignment. To the untrained eye, folks wonder which thing they're supposed to follow when."*

Misalignment between professional development requirements by sector and/or role in the EC workforce was also voiced. Specifically in regard to EC teachers licensed by the Vermont Department of Education relative to EC providers registered or licensed with the CDD; it was stated that requirements are not congruent.

Interviewees indicated that moving along the Career Ladder is not entirely seamless. They agreed that some translation and articulation is in place, with kudos given to the Springfield College program offering college credits to those with a CDA, but noted that additional articulation is needed, especially with Higher Education. It was indicated that there is a need for better articulation of non-credit bearing qualifications and experience to translate into college credits and a need for better articulation within the state college system (credits from one state college should transfer equally to another) and with the University of Vermont and Champlain College.

Offerings

The many offerings of the system were noted as a strength of the ECPDS, including the many trainings and courses, and the certificates and credentials available. Interviewees indicated there to be many offerings and resources available especially to those at the introductory level or initial Career Ladder levels. A gap in the offerings and

resources available to those further along on the Career Ladder was voiced by most interviewees. In fact, it was indicated that a primary challenge of the system is the limited number of advanced level professional development offerings as well as a lack of infant toddler offerings. Interviewees noted that those in the EC field with advanced degrees or those who have been in the field for many years have limited options for advanced professional development trainings. Furthermore, the advanced level options that are available in the state can be burdened by barriers such as travel and cost. *"My staff has been with me for a while—many for 15+ years—and have taken a lot of professional development trainings. So, they often don't find what is offered through the system to be helpful because they have already taken the training or it is a beginner's level."*

System Communication and Marketing

A major challenge of the system indicated by the interviewees is the consumer awareness and understanding of the system resulting from communication and information dissemination about the system. Interviewees indicated a great need for: streamlining and simplifying the system; making the ECPDS more user-friendly; increasing awareness of the system; and marketing the system. Interviewees noted that the early childhood workforce—the primary consumers of the ECPDS—are not aware of how the system works and that the system is difficult to navigate, dense and *"too processy"*. Thus, consumers don't see the value or meaning of the system. *"It requires a lot of work to achieve certificates and bonuses, and it doesn't have meaningful incentive because it doesn't mean one will get an increase in salary... it's hard to encourage people to do all that work because they say 'why'?"*

Interviewees also expressed the challenge that many in the early childhood workforce perceive the ECPDS to be relevant only to childcare and not all of early childhood.

V. Summary of Findings

System Data: Bright Futures Information System

Conceptually, it is felt that BFIS is on the right track. That is, having one database in place was noted as a strength as well as the policy to have all of regulated childcare providers in the state included in the system by coordinating with the CDD childcare licensing process. However, many concerns, challenges and frustrations were expressed about BFIS; essentially it has great capacity and potential, but it is not user-friendly and not used as intended, therefore the potential is not realized. Interviewees voiced that a lot has gone into it conceptually and foundationally, but it is designed and presented in a way that makes it inaccessible. *“It has great capacity, but it is not just unfriendly, it is hostile.”* Several interviewees feel that the system is not well understood and could use funding to support marketing and outreach for the system. *“If people found value in it they would use it more.”*

Interviewees noted there are gaps in the type of data that is collected as well as within the data that is collected. For example, workforce data such as wage and status are not included, and the system is not fully populated. Also, the entire early childhood workforce is not in the system. It primarily includes only childcare providers, but not necessarily Head Start and Department of Education early childhood practitioners, as they have their individual siloed databases. Key informants indicated the data information system is not capturing the data it is intended to or the data needed by the professional development system, such as workforce data and the credential and certificate data of the NLCDC.

CONNECTICUT

System

The Director of the Connecticut Charts-A-Course ECPDS and Registry described it as well established, as it was launched 20 years ago, and as a comprehensive system combining both the elements of early childhood professional development and early

childhood program improvement. The Director noted the system includes a professional development registry system, a training system, a scholarship system, and offers career counseling to the early childhood workforce. The Director indicated that the longevity and stability of the program has promoted stable funding that in turn has fostered a coordinated and comprehensive system. She stated that the Connecticut system has had the same leadership over its 20 years and has had very little staff turnover. She feels the program stability and longevity has enabled the system to build a continuum of funding and this continued funding has been a major strength in growing and improving the system.

In addition to the longevity, stability and continuum of funding being identified as key to building the Connecticut Charts-A-Course ECPDS into what it is today, the Director noted that having the system housed within Higher Education has been essential to integrating the system with Higher Education and developing an aligned ECPDS. Furthermore, the Director stated she came from Higher Education and so understands the culture, the Higher Education system and who to reach out to accomplish ECPDS goals. She stated that all of this has resulted in good alignment and articulation within the Connecticut Charts-A-Course system. *“I understand the culture and I am a Higher Ed employee, so I can bring together people and I know the issues related to articulation and I know the players....allows me to maneuver the waters easier than if I lived in the Department of Social Services, for example.”*

The Director explained that Connecticut Charts-A-Course is designed so once one has their CDA it can be articulated into 6-12 college credits towards an associate's degree within any state institution in Connecticut. All professional development trainings offered through the system beyond those relevant to obtaining a CDA are credit-based, so any regionally accredited college of Higher Education will accept

V. Summary of Findings

these as transfer credits. The Director noted that Connecticut Charts-A-Course is basically a system developed within the Higher Education system, allowing for a streamlined approach to offerings and generally seamless articulation.

System Governance and Advisory

The Director indicated that the Connecticut ECPDS is advised by a steering committee of early childhood stakeholders. The steering committee is chaired by the Director, who feels this approach to advising the Connecticut system works well. The Director indicated close relationships are established with the system funders and that while the Connecticut DSS holds the decision-making authority for Connecticut Charts-A-Course, they work together collaboratively during decision-making.

Professional Development Registry

The Director of the Connecticut ECPDS feels that having data on the early childhood workforce and their professional development, and using that data to show the system's success is essential to building and developing the system. The Director described the system's registry, indicating it is entirely online, that the data elements are standardized to match the National Registry Alliance (TNRA) core data elements, and that all data collection and management follow TNRA best practices. Registry participation is mandatory for all publicly funded early childhood programs. A series of incentives have been used to get the private sector into the registry.

The Director indicated strong benefits and value to having a well-designed and managed registry in place, stating *"The Registry is now becoming the hub of all of our activities."* The Director indicated the availability of the data allows for them to be accountable and report out on their system annually. Further, the Director stated one of the biggest lessons learned was that *"...you can't be afraid to look at your system and be accountable. If something isn't working you need to find a way to change it."* An example of this

approach was the implementation of the online registry. The Director noted that she knew a paper-based registry would not meet their need and that a registry was needed in order to grow the system to be more effective and streamlined.

NEVADA

System

The Director of Nevada's ECPDS, the Nevada Registry, described the system as a no-cost, multi-faceted system of career development and recognition that supports the EC workforce by validating the professional and educational achievements of those working in the field. The Director also indicated the system is one of the statewide efforts geared toward reducing staff turnover, increasing wages, heightening professionalism and increasing advancement opportunities for EC practitioners.

The Director indicated that the system includes a career ladder, a comprehensive website that serves as a clearinghouse of information for the early childhood workforce, a statewide online training calendar, a statewide job board and professional development planning directly linked to the system's core competencies and a professional development plan.

The Director indicated the main strengths of the system to include:

- Streamlined approach to the training approval process; Nevada Registry is the sole entity responsible for the review and approval of community-based, non-college credit training in the state. All trainings taken by providers to meet licensing requirements are approved by the Nevada Registry.
- Strong relationships, partnerships and advisement from other state agencies, including child care licensing.
- Policy in place for mandatory participation in the Registry by December 2012.

V. Summary of Findings

Notably, the Director also described the system's searchable online training calendar, which includes many in-person Registry approved trainings throughout the state as well as distance education trainings. *"At any given time, our searchable online training calendar lists over 200 Registry-approved community-based (in-person) trainings occurring throughout the state, as well as almost 300 distance education trainings (modules, correspondence courses and internet courses) that remove some of the barriers previously experienced by providers living in rural areas."* Furthermore, the calendar is searchable by city, county, date, Core Knowledge Area and includes a way to narrow down the search to the initial health and safety courses required by child care licensing.

Primary challenges faced by the system include:

- **Funding:** As the system continues to grow, resources and funds remain limited. *"Despite the system being in a constant state of change in response to member needs, national trends, research and system/policy changes, we don't always have sufficient resources to make necessary changes."*
- **Articulation:** Need for more linkages between community-based training and college coursework and alignment between college coursework and system core competencies.
- **Need for creating additional pathways** for acknowledging professionals who are not on the formal degree career track and a need for more advanced level trainings to meet the professional development needs of advanced level directors, administrators, individuals as well as those who have been in the field for some time.

System Governance and Advisory

The Nevada Registry has an advisory committee with broad representation that provides guidance, advisement and recommendations to the Registry, but the Registry has final decision-making authority. Clearly defined roles, responsibilities and expecta-

tions of advisory committee members are outlined, including membership of the committee. The advisory committee includes a community member representing frontline EC providers. The Director of the Registry indicated that in addition to obtaining feedback and guidance from their advisory committee, the committee members act as advocates for the Registry with the EC community and workforce both within their own work settings and programs, and by representing the Registry at other relevant meetings they might attend. The Director notes that while it has been challenging to keep the advisory committee members well informed of the Registry mission, vision, and initiatives, and engaged with the work of the Registry, the Registry staff continually considers ways to better connect with and communicate with the advisory committee.

Alignment and Articulation

The Director explained that alignment to Core Knowledge Areas of the Nevada Registry is ensured by serving as the foundation of the career ladder, training approval system, pre-k standards, and college coursework. For example, college coursework is currently aligned with Core Knowledge Areas and is consistent with course numbering and content. The Director noted that the common course numbering for all early childhood courses assists in articulation: *"Nevada is somewhat unique in that we have common course numbering for all of the early childhood courses offered at our state Universities and Community Colleges. This makes it possible for any course taken at one college to seamlessly transfer between schools, regardless of which school an individual attends. It also allows students to look to other colleges when a course is not available at the school they are attending and results in less interruption in their coursework."*

The Director also indicated that the Registry has articulation agreements in place with Nevada's two-year early care and education degrees offered at the community college and four-year degree programs offered at the University of Nevada – Las Vegas.

V. Summary of Findings

Professional Development Registry

The Director noted that Nevada's ECPDS professional development registry collects demographic data including workforce and credential data (hourly wage, degrees, number of trainings attended and approved, average cost of training). Data is entered by Registry staff and is verified. The data system has detailed internal policies to manage the data and resources/programmers are available to modify the data system as needed. Further, the Director recommended to *"Make sure you have a database programmer either on staff or within reach; development is ongoing and it's imperative that someone with a technical skill set is available."*

In conclusion, the Director recommended a few important lessons learned, including to build buy -in from the EC field early on in the development stages

of your system as well as to remain flexible and willing to modify processes as needed.

GAP ANALYSIS

This section of the report provides a summary and analysis of the sum of the information and data collected for this evaluation, including findings from the comprehensive review, data inventory, focus groups and key informant interviews. Considering the information and data, the system was analyzed to understand the strengths and challenges. In an effort to cross-walk the NCCIC core system elements and NAEYC policy areas while also considering the Guiding Principles of Vermont's ECPDS, the following system elements were used as a checklist to think about Vermont's ECPDS and when analyzing the data and information:

SYSTEM ELEMENTS

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADVISORY

ECPDS has the governance, leadership, and advisory capacity to plan, implement, manage and sustain an integrated and aligned system. System advisory is broadly representative of all early childhood sectors and stakeholders.

POLICIES, STANDARDS AND INITIATIVES

System policies and standards for professional development integrate and align licensing, credentials, qualification requirements, and other related standards across all early childhood sectors—Head Start, child care programs, pre-kindergarten, and others. Policies and initiatives are supportive of professional growth, and are supported by articulation policies that connect institutions of Higher Education to each other and to community-based training.

FUNDING

System funding is sufficient to support the ECPDS infrastructure, administration, operations and offerings. System funding is sufficient to provide financial supports and incentives to assist early childhood providers with the costs associated with professional development offerings.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

The ECPDS and the system resources and offerings are well communicated, clear and known.

ACCESS

The ECPDS and its offerings are affordable and available to EC practitioners across all early childhood sectors, providing: low cost professional development trainings, financial supports and incentives; variety and convenience in the delivery of professional development trainings; and offerings and pathways for a diverse workforce at various skill levels.

DATA

The ECPDS has a data system in place for cross-sector early childhood workforce and professional development data. Data is systematically collected, analyzed and reported on to inform professional development systems-building and policies; to understand the early childhood workforce in Vermont; to gauge system impacts and change; and to help inform planning, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability of the system.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE

The ECPDS has mechanisms and processes in place to ensure quality and accountability of the system and its offerings.

V. Summary of Findings

System Strengths

Governance, Leadership and Advisory

- A committed group of stakeholders have developed a strong conceptual foundation to support the development of the professional development system. Much effort has been invested in developing an ECPDS system intended to be thoughtful, coordinated, aligned, and intentional.

Policies, Standards and Initiatives

- Vermont's ECPDS is guided by defined principles (i.e., the Guiding Principles).
- Vermont's ECPDS includes defined Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies that certificates and credentials offered through the system are based on.
- Certificates and credentials are available to support professional growth of the EC workforce.
- Some articulation policies have been implemented, including the Springfield College policy to award college credits for those enrolling in the college with a CDA credential.

Funding

- The ECPDS currently provides some financial supports and incentives:
 - ▶ CDD offers some financial supports for professional development.
 - ▶ CDD funds bonuses provided by NLCDC upon awarding Career Ladder level certificates.
 - ▶ CDD funds recognition bonuses provided by the Quality Rating and Improvement System STARS.
- VCCICC offers enrollment in select college-level early childhood courses through their Apprenticeship Program.

Outreach and Communication

- The system includes a technical assistance and resource center, the Northern Lights Career Development Center, intended to unify the ECPDS, provide professional development information and resources to the EC workforce, and enhance the coordination and alignment of the system and its offerings. The website serves as a centralized clearinghouse of information for the ECPDS. NLCDC newsletters provide updates and information relevant to the early childhood field. These newsletters are distributed via the website and by email to EC professionals and organizations throughout the state.
- The system includes well established regional “hubs” that, in general, appear to be heavily relied on and have notable credibility with consumers of the system.
- A Career Ladder is available to assist the early childhood workforce in navigating and tracking professional development and growth.

Access

- Many early childhood professional development resources and offerings are currently available throughout the state.
- BFIS includes a Course Calendar of community-based professional development offerings throughout the state.
- Free and low-cost community-based professional development offerings are funded by CDD and made available through the 12 Regional Community Child Care Support Agencies. Additional free and low-cost offerings are available through Head Start, VCCICC, DOE, etc.

V. Summary of Findings

Data

- A centralized information system, BFIS, exists for data collection, management and reporting on the ECPDS and policy is in place to include the entire regulated childcare workforce in the information system.

Quality Improvement and Assurance

- Quality Assurance Efforts: 1) The system includes an Instructor Registry to ensure the quality of the instructors providing professional development offerings listed in BFIS. 2) An initial evaluation of the ECPDS intended to assist with improving and expanding the system.

System Challenges

Governance, Leadership and Advisory

- The ECPDS has good advisory from the PPD, but it is not clear who the overarching authority of the system is and whether their decision-making authority is clearly outlined. Many people and entities are identified as weighing in on the decision-making (BBF, CDD, NLCDC, PPD), but not necessarily to a single authority working to unify and develop the system.
- Need for engagement, representation and partnership with the Vermont Department of Education and Higher Education.

Policies, Standards and Initiatives

- Child care licensing regulations are outdated and not aligned with ECPDS standards.
- System policies and resources are not interpreted as being aligned or not aligned in practice.
- A general lack of articulation exists between much of the community-based professional development offerings in the system.

Funding

- Limited funding supports for costs associated with professional development trainings and a lack of financial supports for the early childhood workforce to obtain professional development. Consumers demand for more free and low cost trainings.
- Funding and resources to support BFIS are inadequate.

Outreach and Communication

- The system is not perceived of as a system by the primary consumers of the system—i.e., the early childhood workforce. It is described as scattered and fragmented. It is not “clear and known” and consists of several unconnected individual professional development resources.
- Consumers of the system do not understand or perceive the purpose and value of the system.
- Consumers of the system are not using, understanding, or realizing the value of the NLCDC website, which serves as an effort to unify and streamline the ECPDS. The website is described as not user-friendly and not easy to find what one is looking for.
- The early childhood workforce has a limited view of early childhood, generally thought of only as childcare and not inclusive of early learning. Many early childhood educators perceive the ECPDS as relevant to childcare only.

Access

- The diversity in content and level of professional development offerings is limited, especially for advanced level offerings and infant toddler offerings.
- Location, time and day of professional development offerings are barriers for many early childhood providers.

VI. Summary of Findings

- Distance learning options for professional development trainings are of interest to consumers of the system, but inadequately offered through the system.
- Consumers would like a streamlined approach to finding professional development offerings; ideally a single online resource. This is the intent of the BFIS Course Calendar, but consumers have many issues with using the Course Calendar. It is described as: not current, not easy to search, not comprehensive.
- Cost of obtaining professional development offerings in general, and especially for advanced level trainings, is a concern and barrier for the early childhood workforce.
- The system is not relevant to all consumers, such as those who have been in the EC field for some time and/or are not interested in obtaining additional qualifications and credentials. Also, for those at more advanced levels, the system is not providing relevant offerings.
- The BFIS data collected is not reliable (not current, not always correct, incomplete)
- The BFIS data is not easily accessible for analysis and reporting.
- No dedicated staff for BFIS database programming.
- BFIS is lacking some relevant data elements (e.g., workforce data elements such as wage and highest degree obtained).
- The BFIS consumer interfaces for the Provider/Credential Accounts and Course Calendar are not user-friendly.
- ECPDS databases are not integrated or linked; need for merging NLCDC databases with BFIS.

Data

- BFIS is not used to capacity, not fully populated, lacking resources to support it and lacking data collection, entry and management policies.

Quality Improvement and Assurance

- Lack of quality assurance mechanisms or processes in place to hold instructors and professional development system offerings accountable. No assessment of instructors' effectiveness and quality of trainings; limited professional development training approval in place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Governance, Leadership and Advisory

Goal: ECPDS has the governance, leadership, and advisory capacity to plan, implement, manage and sustain an integrated and aligned system. System advisory is broadly representative of all early childhood sectors and stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- Define and document the governance and advisory for the ECPDS:
 - ▮ Define who has decision-making authority for the system.
 - ▮ Define the composition of advisory membership, including roles and responsibilities.
 - ▮ Establish guidelines and processes for coordinated and collaborative decision-making.
 - ▮ Define process for implementing and operationalizing system decision, policies and initiatives.
- Ensure system governance and advisory has adequate resources and capacity (e.g., staffing) to operate and conduct business efficiently and effectively.
- Include a direct service provider of EC (e.g., home provider) on the advisory membership; define the term (e.g., 1 year, 2 year) to ensure broad representation throughout the state and a variety of perspectives on a rotating basis. See The Nevada Registry for an example.
- Build collaborative relationships with the Department of Education and Higher Education by strategically identifying representatives of each sector to be included in the advisory membership.
- Identify advisory members to act as ambassadors of the ECPDS; attend relevant meetings, work-groups, committees, etc. of the Department of Education and Higher Education in an effort to better understand their agendas, culture, goals, and ultimately establish relations to collaborate and align efforts.

Policies, Standards and Initiatives

Goal: System policies and standards for professional development integrate and align licensing, credentials, qualification requirements, and other related standards across all early childhood sectors--Head Start, child care programs, pre-kindergarten, and others. Policies and initiatives are supportive of professional growth, and are supported by articulation policies that connect institutions of Higher Education to each other and to community-based training.

Recommendations:

- Identify an advisory member to participate in the CDD licensing update process to ensure licensing regulations regarding professional development reflect and are congruent with the early childhood professional standards and competencies outlined in the ECPDS. Ensure language in the licensing regulations is coherent and clearly outlines acceptable professional development.

VI. Recommendations

- Work with Vermont State Colleges to develop a Common Course Numbering System for EC coursework at Vermont state colleges and universities offering EC degree programs. Early childhood and EC-related courses with common content across colleges and universities should carry the same prefix, number, title, credits, description, competencies and outline to facilitate transfer and articulation arrangements between the colleges and universities.
- Work with the Vermont State Colleges to define standard articulation for a CDA credential; identify and standardize the number of college credits that are obtained by EC providers with a CDA credential enrolling into a Vermont state college or university degree program.
- Monitor the number of Career Ladder level achievements awarded by NLCDC to the EC workforce each year to gauge movement of the workforce towards increased qualifications and professional growth.
- Incorporate collection of the EC workforce/provider role as part of the data collected when NLCDC awards Career Ladder level certificates.
- Prioritize and expand funds to support a sufficient number of professional development offerings for free or at low cost (including advanced level offerings).
- Prioritize and expand funds for additional financial supports and incentives to assist the EC workforce in obtaining professional development and reward ongoing professional growth.
- Develop a tracking mechanism to understand how public and private funds are expended/invested throughout the ECPDS. Track the dollars that are directed at supporting users of the system for obtaining professional development. Data can be used to make informed decisions on targeting or earmarking funds to address gaps, priorities, and needs within the ECPDS.
- Develop a tracking mechanism to monitor funds expended on offerings that support each Career Ladder level. This information will inform the amount of funds directed to support providers in achieving Career Ladder levels and allow for informed decision-making for the future allocation of funding supports and offerings.

Funding

Goal: System funding is sufficient to support the ECPDS infrastructure, administration, operations and offerings. System funding is sufficient to provide financial supports and incentives to assist early childhood providers with the costs associated with professional development offerings.

Recommendations:

- Prioritize resources to better support BFIS:
 - Support a staff position for a database programmer.
 - Support a staff position for data management and reporting.

Outreach and Communication

Goal: The ECPDS, the system resources, and the system offerings are well communicated, clear and known.

Recommendations:

- Increase awareness of the system and build consumer buy-in by designing and implementing a marketing campaign to promote the ECPDS.
 - Define and know the ECPDS audience to determine how to design and market the system to engage and meet all audience needs.
 - Brand the system.
 - Develop a consistent and clear message about the ECPDS (note purpose and consumer benefits).

VI. Recommendations

- ▶ Reach out to all of EC to develop consumer understanding of EC being more inclusive than childcare only.
- Engage Regional RDS, Head Start Directors, Public School Administrators, etc. to promote and communicate the ECPDS, NLCDC and system offerings to EC practitioners; conduct trainings on using the system and resources to support professional development activities.
- Develop effective strategies for communication and information dissemination between the system and consumers (e.g. social media, listservs). Use social media to communicate with consumers about the system, system offerings, EC related events, policies, initiatives, etc.

Access

Goal: The ECPDS and its offerings are affordable and available to early childhood practitioners across early childhood sectors, providing: low cost professional development trainings, financial supports and incentives; variety and convenience in the delivery of professional development trainings; and offerings and pathways for a diverse workforce at various skill levels.

Recommendations:

- Explore the creation of a virtual training center offered through the ECPDS for online delivery of professional development that is recognized and articulated to meet professional development licensing requirements. Consider developing select existing community-based trainings into online distance learning opportunities offered through the virtual training center. Additionally, inventory other EC related trainings currently available via online distance learning (e.g., Higher Education courses available via distance learning) and provide a list with links within the virtual training center. See the Nevada Registry for an example.

- Develop or identify an advanced level training to offer free or at low cost at least one time per year in all regions of the state. Offer a different advanced level training annually, considering demand or interests of ECPDS consumers, or new and important topics in the early childhood field.
- Monitor the offerings in BFIS to determine the distribution and frequency of offerings throughout the state and by region. Track system offerings by region to determine whether the system is meeting the need for trainings throughout all regions of the state.
- Enhance searchability of the BFIS Course Calendar by including additional fields (level, cost, region). See the MNCPD Registry and the Nevada Registry for examples of user-friendly early childhood professional development training registries and calendars.
- Develop a process to include all Head Start and relevant Department of Education professional development offerings into the BFIS Course Calendar.

Data

Goal: The ECPDS has a data system in place for cross-sector early childhood workforce and professional development data. Data is systematically collected, analyzed and reported on to inform professional development systems-building and policies; to understand the early childhood workforce in Vermont; to gauge system impacts and change; and to help inform planning, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability of the system.

General Recommendations for BFIS:

Conduct a strategic planning process for professional development and workforce data within the BFIS (i.e., Provider Accounts and Credential Accounts) to develop the goals, objectives and activities for the ECPDS data system.

VI. Recommendations

- Support staff positions for a database programmer and data manager to enhance the usability of BFIS, streamline and ensure quality data entry and management, and to report on the EC workforce and ECPDS.
- Streamline data collection of the ECPDS by merging existing NLCDC databases with BFIS.
- Develop data management, sharing and reporting policies; refer to the National Registry Alliance's best practices on data management, data sharing, and reporting as a starting point for developing policies for BFIS and the ECPDS.
- Review and revise drop down select list data fields in BFIS Credential Accounts to be comprehensive, correct, and current.
- Collaborate with the Vermont Early Childhood Comprehensive Data Reporting Infrastructure Project workgroup to ensure BFIS is included in the planning of this project.
- BFIS Course Calendar entry description submitted to NLCDC.
- Develop a process to *consistently* tag all offerings in the BFIS Course Calendar by type/area of knowledge (e.g., Families and Communities; Infants and Toddlers). RDS and sponsors of trainings could potentially support this by indicating the type of the offering in the BFIS Course Calendar entry description submitted to NLCDC.
- Develop a mechanism to *consistently* tag all offerings in BFIS Course Calendar with the cost of attending. Work with RDS, sponsors and others submitting trainings to the Course Calendar to include cost information. Develop a field for entering the data into BFIS and querying BFIS.
- Develop a mechanism for querying attendance of BFIS Course Calendar trainings for each episode a training is offered to have data on the uptake of offerings. This will help inform the demand and provision of future offerings.

Recommendations for Additional Data Collection:

BFIS Credential Account

- Develop a data field in the BFIS Credential Account to track when the account was last accessed by the account holder (have it auto-populate upon login to the Credential Account page). This will allow for tracking use of the Credential Account.
- Expand workforce and education data elements collected referring to the National Registry Alliance Core Data Elements, especially include wage and salary data; highest degree attained.

BFIS Course Calendar

- Develop a process to *consistently* tag all offerings entered into the BFIS Course Calendar by level (e.g., Level I, II, III). RDS and sponsors of trainings could potentially support this by indicating the level of the offering in the

NLCDC Data (Recommend integrating (linking or merging) with BFIS)

- Monitor the number of Career Ladder level achievements awarded by NLCDC to the early childhood workforce each year to gauge movement of the workforce towards increased qualifications and professional growth.
- Incorporate the collection of the early childhood workforce/provider role (e.g., Program Director, Teacher, Home Provider) as part of the data collected when NLCDC awards Career Ladder level certificates.

Recommendations for Improving Usability of BFIS Provider and Credential Accounts:

- Design a more user-friendly BFIS public interface to encourage consumers to use the system for tracking their professional development.

VI. Recommendations

- ▶ Work with database programmer to redesign the public interface of the system.
 - ▶ Support staff position(s) for responsive Help Desk support.
- Increase use and accuracy of the BFIS Credential Accounts:
 - ▶ Consider moving the licensing process to be entirely online.
 - ▶ Work with CDD Licensing to develop a process that requires the early childhood workforce to access and update their Credential Account with professional development activities and qualifications regularly (e.g., once a year with licensing renewal).

Quality Improvement and Assurance

Goal: The ECPDS has mechanisms and processes in place to ensure quality and accountability of the system and its offerings.

Recommendations:

- Monitor the number of instructors available by level and knowledge area in the Instructor Registry to understand distribution and gaps.
- Develop a process for evaluating instructors in the Instructor Registry to ensure accountability and quality in their instruction (e.g., upon instructor application renewal every 3 years).
- Consider developing Instructor Competencies for instructors included in the Instructor Registry.
- Develop a training approval mechanism within the ECPDS: 1) to ensure the offerings listed in BFIS are aligned with the core knowledge and competencies; 2) incorporates principles of adult learning; 3) ensures that learning outcomes meet the needs of the EC workforce; and 4) establishes a process for evaluating trainings. State examples to look to include: 1) The Minnesota Registry's training approval process and guide; and 2) The Connecticut Charts-A-Course Training Approval Board.
- Consider developing an ECPDS Help Desk to assist consumers in navigating and using the system.

SYSTEM MONITORING & EVALUATION

OVERVIEW

Ongoing monitoring and regular evaluation of Vermont's ECPDS are essential quality assurance mechanisms for the system and play an important role in tracking system activities, outputs and outcomes; assessing the quality and impact of the system offerings; and informing planning to improve and expand the system.

System monitoring should be ongoing using defined indicators to track data related to system inputs, outputs, and outcomes for comparison with baseline data or targets. Monitoring data will help to identify strengths and weaknesses, from which lessons may be drawn and corrective action taken to improve overall system performance and decision-making. Evaluation of the ECPDS should be conducted periodically (e.g., every 3-5 years) to assess the overall performance of the system. Evaluation complements and builds on monitoring to provide an overarching analysis of the system performance and impact, as well as an offering of practical recommendations. Ultimately, monitoring and evaluation findings aim to purposefully inform decision-makers to improve system performance.

JSI has developed a monitoring and evaluation plan for Vermont's ECPDS. The monitoring and evaluation plan was developed to be implemented by the PPD or their designee. The plan uses a mixed-methods approach with quantitative and qualitative data

for system monitoring and evaluation. The plan is intended to be a self-guided tool to assess the ECPDS based on the following elements: 1) Governance, Leadership and Advisory; 2) Policies, Standards and Initiatives; 3) Funding; 4) Outreach and Communications; 5) Access; 6) Data; and 7) Quality Improvement and Assurance. The plan is organized by system element. Each system element includes defined indicators to assess the characteristics of interest for each element, such as accessibility, usability, effectiveness, alignment, etc. For each indicator, a definition is included along with an initial set of related evaluation questions (additional evaluation questions can be added going forward to expand on monitoring and evaluation of the system). Following each evaluation question, a data collection process is outlined to describe what data will be collected and how. The data collection process identifies the data source and the method of data collection, and specifies a recommended timeframe for collecting the data.

Data collection outlined in the monitoring and evaluation plan includes quantitative data and qualitative data. The quantitative data to be collected are the system indicators identified by JSI and the Advisory Workgroup based on the data currently available in the system and related to system outputs and outcomes. The qualitative data collection methods include: key informant interviews, focus groups, surveys, secondary source reviews, and monitoring the status of system benchmarks using a qualitative assessment tool.

Indicators are intended to measure system inputs, outputs and outcomes against a static goal, such as baseline conditions. A dashboard of indicators is intended to give an at-a-glance overview of system outputs and outcomes. JSI has developed the Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Dashboard (referred to as Dashboard in the monitoring and evaluation plan) to serve as a tool to assist with monitoring the defined system indicators. The Dashboard includes a face page of five system indicators to provide an at-a-glance overview of the system outputs and outcomes per characteristics of the system (e.g., access, awareness). The pages following the face page provide additional levels and categories of the five system indicators included on the face page. The Dashboard is intended to serve as a tool to assist with implementation of the monitoring and evaluation plan; indicators tracked on the Dashboard are part of the system monitoring and evaluation plan.

A second tool developed to assist with implementation of the monitoring and evaluation plan is the Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Assessment Tool (Referred to as Assessment Tool in the monitoring and evaluation plan). The Assessment Tool was developed in part by cross-walking and adapting tools previously created by the

National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality and the NCCIC.⁸ Several recommendations were put forth by JSI and the Advisory Workgroup per system element. The Assessment Tool incorporates the recommendations that serve as system benchmarks and provides a mechanism for tracking the status of these recommendations or benchmarks from planning through implementation through sustainability or completion.

Benchmarks are a reference point or standard against which system performance or achievements can be assessed. Benchmarks can serve as targets or goals identified for the system based on other state systems, best practices or recommendations. Thus, the Assessment Tool essentially lists system benchmarks by system element and provides a simple mechanism for monitoring the status of these system benchmarks. The benchmarks defined in the Assessment Tool are interconnected with the monitoring and evaluation plan, as the evaluation questions in the plan for which the Assessment Tool is listed as the method of data collection are linked to recommendations made in the Final Report and therefore the system benchmarks. The status of the benchmarks can be monitored via the Assessment Tool to gauge progress in meeting a benchmark and to inform system planning and priorities.

⁸1.) National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality (NICHQ) Title V Program Index published in the NICHQ's *Spread of Quality Improvement for Children and Youth With Special Healthcare Needs: An Integrated Systems Strategy for Building the Title V Infrastructure. Learning Collaborative A Interim Report. December 2010.*

2.) The National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center's *A Tool to Assess the Alignment of State PD Systems and QRIS.*

VERMONT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

Governance, Leadership & Advisory

ECPDS has the governance, leadership, and advisory capacity to plan, implement, manage and sustain an integrated and aligned system. System advisory is broadly representative of all early childhood sectors and stakeholders.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
Identified and Defined	Governance, leadership and/or advisory structures are clearly defined.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the governance/leadership role(s) and decision-making authority(ies) for the ECPDS clearly defined and documented? Is the advisory body of the ECPDS clearly defined and documented? 	Data Source: PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
Representation	Governance, leadership and/or advisory structures are broadly representative of early childhood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the composition of advisory body membership clearly defined and inclusive of stakeholders from all key sectors of early childhood? Are representatives of DOE and Higher Education included in the advisory body? 		
Roles and Responsibilities	Governance, leadership and/or advisory structures are guided by defined expectations, standard procedures and protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What roles and responsibilities do the governance, leadership and advisory members have? Are guidelines and processes established for coordinated and collaborative decision-making among governance, leadership and advisory? Are guidelines established for implementing and operationalizing system decisions, policies and initiatives (e.g., project management)? Do members actively participate in meetings, and in planning and implementation of system initiatives? 		
Effectiveness	The governance, leadership, and/or advisory are successful in accomplishing system goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do the governance, leadership and advisory of the ECPDS make progress towards system goals and objectives? Are system initiatives implemented as intended and in a timely fashion? To what extent do the governance, leadership, and advisory effectively guide, implement, and operationalize plans and policies of the system? To what extent do the governance, leadership, and advisory effectively communicate goals, plans, and policies to consumers and stakeholders of the system? 	Data Source: Advisory members, Director of NLCDC; Representatives of CDD; HS, DOE, Higher Ed, etc. Method: Key informant interviews; (consider focus groups as well)	Every 2-3 years.

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Policies, Standards & Initiatives

System policies and standards for professional development integrate and align licensing, credentials, qualification requirements, and other related standards across all early childhood sectors—Head Start, child care programs, pre-kindergarten, and others. Policies and initiatives that support professional growth, support alignment, and support articulation that connects institutions of Higher Education to each other and to community-based training.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
Aligned	The system and system policies, professional standards and initiatives are coherent, easily navigable and consistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the CDD licensing regulations and early childhood professional standards outlined in the ECPDS congruent and coherent? Are ECPDS offerings developed to be aligned with VT licensing regulations and early childhood professional standards? 	Data Source: PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the VT ECPDS policies and standards aligned with national recommendations? 	Data Source: NCCIC; NAEYC Method: Secondary Source Review (review of national standards, practices, etc.)	Annually
Supportive of professional growth	Learning opportunities build on knowledge and skills in systematic and meaningful ways; achievements are professionally recognized.	Is the system supportive of professional growth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many people received Career Ladder level certificates? How many people received multiple Career Ladder level certificates? 	Data Source: NLCDC Staff Method: Dashboard	Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who in the EC workforce are receiving Career Ladder level certificates? 	Data Source: NLCDC Staff Note: Number of people achieving Career Ladder levels by level and by role (e.g., program director).	Annually once data on level awards by role are available
Articulated	Professional development offerings are transferable to be recognized and meaningful across different sectors and systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does VSC have a Common Course Numbering System for early childhood coursework in place? 	Data Source: PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the ECPDS have formal articulation policy in place to translate a CDA into a standard number of college credits within the Vermont State College system? 	Data Source: PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Funding

System funding is sufficient to support the ECPDS infrastructure, administration, operations and offerings. System funding is sufficient to provide financial supports and incentives to assist early childhood providers with the costs associated with professional development offerings.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
Supportive of the ECPDS	Sufficient and dependable funding is available to support the ECPDS core infrastructure, administration and operations of the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are resources prioritized and dedicated to support a BFIS database programmer? Are resources prioritized and dedicated to support a BFIS data manager? 	Data Source: PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are adequate and stable funding streams supporting the system and directed appropriately throughout the system? 	Data Source: PPD; Monitor system funds and expenditures Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
Supportive of ECPDS Offerings	Sufficient and dependable funding is available to support 1) the provision of financial supports to the early childhood workforce to obtain professional development and 2) the provision of financial incentives to reward to the early childhood workforce for ongoing professional growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many people are receiving a form of financial support through the ECPDS for professional development? 	Data Source: NLCDC, CDD, VCCIC, HS Method: Dashboard; Sum of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of people receiving a NLCDC scholarship # of people enrolled in VCCICC courses # of people receiving funding support from Head Start for PD # of people receiving CDD tuition assistance grants 	Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many people are receiving a financial incentive through the ECPDS? 	Data Source: NLCDC and CDD Method: Dashboard; Sum of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of people receiving a CDD recognition bonus for STARS # of people receiving a bonus from NLCDC for Career Ladder level certificates. 	Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are system funds expended to support professional development offered at each Career Ladder level? 	Data Source: PPD Note: Monitor funds expended to support offerings available for each career ladder level.	Annually

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Outreach and Communication

The ECPDS, the system resources, and the system offerings are well communicated, clear and known.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
Clear and Known	Early childhood professionals are aware of the ECPDS and its offerings; and understand the purpose and value of the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are consumers of the ECPDS accessing and using the NLCDC website? 	Data Source: NLCDC Staff & Website analytics Method: Dashboard	Quarterly
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the early childhood workforce indicate they are aware of the NLCDC? 	Data Source: Consumers of ECPDS Method: Dashboard; Vermont Early Care and Afterschool Professional Development Survey	Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do early childhood practitioners understand the purpose and value of the system? 	Data Source: Direct providers of EC; RDS Method: Focus groups; questionnaires	Every 2-3 Years
Effective outreach & communication	A variety of outreach and communication strategies are used to reach the various consumers of the ECPDS, communicate offerings, and disseminate information on EC and the ECPDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the ECPDS use a variety of mechanisms to communicate the offerings of the system to consumers? Do RDS effectively communicate and promote the ECPDS on a regional level to providers? Does the ECPDS use messaging and marketing strategies to promote the purpose and benefits of the ECPDS? 	Data Source: NLCDC staff; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Access

The ECPDS and its offerings are affordable and available to early childhood practitioners across early childhood sectors, providing: low cost professional development trainings, financial supports and incentives; variety and convenience in the delivery of professional development trainings; and offerings and pathways for a diverse workforce at various skill levels.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
PD Offerings are Available	The ECPDS provides a variety of PD offerings throughout the state using a variety of delivery options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are adequate PD offerings available through the ECPDS by distance learning options? 	Data Source: NLCDC Staff; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many professional development trainings are offered statewide and by BBF region each year? 	Data Source: BFIS Course Calendar Method: Dashboard	Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the ECPDS provide adequate professional development offerings by level throughout the state (statewide and by BBF region) each year? Does the ECPDS provide adequate professional development offerings by type (by content/core knowledge area, infant toddler, etc) throughout the state each year? 	Data Source: BFIS Course Calendar Note: Tag offerings in BFIS by level and by type to monitor frequency and distribution of offerings by level and type.	Annually once data by level and type are available
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many individuals are attending the professional development offerings listed in BFIS (and by region and by level) each year? 	Data Source: BFIS Course Calendar Note: Tag offerings in BFIS with attendance.	Annually once data are available.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the ECPDS provide adequate PD offerings throughout the state to meet the needs of a diverse EC workforce? 	Data Source: Direct service providers of early childhood; RDS Method: Focus groups; questionnaires	Every 2-3 Years

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
PD Offerings are Easy to Find	Early childhood practitioners can easily navigate and find professional development offerings of various levels, content, sponsors, costs, etc. throughout the state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the ECPDS' PD training calendar, the BFIS Course Calendar, comprehensive, user-friendly and searchable by many fields, including level, cost and region? 	Data Source: CDD staff; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are PD offerings easy to find for EC providers throughout the state? 	Data Source: Direct providers of EC; RDS Method: Focus groups; questionnaires	Every 2-3 Years
PD Offerings are Affordable	The ECPDS provides a variety of professional development offerings that are free or low cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the average cost of the professional development offerings listed in BFIS by level? How many free and low cost level I, level II and level III professional development trainings are listed in the BFIS Course Calendar each year? 	Data Source: BFIS Course Calendar Note: Tag offerings in Course Calendar by cost to monitor the cost of PD offerings by level.	Annually once cost data are available.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the offerings of the ECPDS affordable to EC providers at various skill levels throughout the state? 	Data Source: Direct providers of EC; RDS Method: Focus groups; questionnaires	Every 2-3 Years

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Data

The ECPDS has a data system in place for cross-sector early childhood workforce and professional development data. Data is systematically collected, analyzed and reported on to inform professional development systems-building and policies; to understand the early childhood workforce in Vermont; to gauge system impacts and change; and to help inform planning, evaluation, quality assurance and accountability of the system.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
Effectiveness and Usefulness	The BFIS data system is comprehensive and streamlined, including cross-sector early childhood workforce and professional development data; achieves its intended results and is used to assess and report on ECPDS objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the development and enhancement of BFIS guided by a strategic plan? Are all ECPDS databases integrated or linked with BFIS (NLCDC databases are integrated into BFIS)? Does BFIS collect recommended early childhood demographic, workforce and professional development data points? 	Data Source: CDD staff; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is BFIS user-friendly for consumers of the system, including administrators reporting on the ECPDS, data managers entering and managing data in BFIS; and EC providers accessing and using BFIS? 	Data Source: BFIS administrators and data managers; NLCDC staff; RDS; EC providers. Method: Key informant interviews with administrators, data managers and RDS. Focus groups with RDS and EC providers.	Every 2-3 years
Data Quality	The data in BFIS is complete, valid and reliable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the data system have protocols in place to define data management processes and policies for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and reporting on the BFIS data as well as to ensure complete, current, and accurate data? 	Data Source: CDD staff; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
Support and Stability of BFIS	BFIS is a priority with adequate funds to support its management and operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is BFIS adequately supported with essential staff, such as a database programmer and data manager? 	Data Source: CDD staff ; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Quality Improvement & Assurance

The ECPDS has mechanisms and processes in place to ensure quality and accountability of the system and its offerings.

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION	TIMING
Quality Assurance & Accountability	The ECPDS has qualified instructors for delivery of PD offerings and has quality assurance mechanisms in place to hold instructors accountable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a process in place for regularly assessing instructors in the Instructor Registry? Is there a process in place for assessing the quality and alignment of PD offerings in BFIS? 	Data Source: NLCDC Staff; PPD Method: Assessment Tool	Semi-Annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the Instructor Registry have an adequate number of instructors at each level? Does the Instructor Registry have an adequate number of instructors for each knowledge area? 	Data Source: NLCDC Staff; Instructor Registry Method: Dashboard	Annually
Consumer Satisfaction	Consumers of the ECPDS are satisfied with the system and its offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How satisfied are consumers of the ECPDS with the quality of the system and its offerings? 	Data Source: Direct providers of EC Method: Focus groups; questionnaires	Every 2-3 years

Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System Dashboard

Indicators	2011 Baseline	2012 Target	2012 Actual									
System Access: Availability Indicator												
1. # of PD offerings in BFIS statewide per year	1,466											
System Access: Financial Supports Indicator												
2. # of people receiving a form of financial support to assist with obtaining PD through the ECPDS per year												
System Access: Awareness & Use of NL Indicator												
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3. # of total Northern Lights website hits per quarter												
Early Childhood Workforce Qualifications and Career Pathways Indicator												
4. # of people receiving a Career Ladder Level certificate/ year												
System Quality Assurance Indicators												
5. # of instructors in the Instructor Registry (total) per year	297											

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Indicators	2011 Baseline	2012 Target	2012 Actual
System Access: Availability Indicators			
# of PD offerings in BFIS statewide per year	1466		
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Barre District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Bennington District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Brattleboro District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Burlington District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Hartford District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Middlebury District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Morrisville District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Newport District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Rutland District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF Springfield District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF St. Albans District per year			
# of PD offerings in BFIS in BBF St. Johnsbury District per year			
System Access: Financial Supports & Incentive Indicators			
# of people receiving a form of financial support to assist with obtaining PD through the ECPDS per year			
# of people receiving financial incentives for achieving Career Ladder Level certificates and/or a STARS recognition bonus.			

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

System Access: Awareness & Use of Northern Lights Indicators												
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
# of total Northern Lights website hits per quarter												
# of total hits from Home page to Early Childhood Career Pathways (Career Ladder)page per quarter												
# of total hits from Home page to the Applications page per quarter												
# of total hits from Home page to the BFIS Training and Coursework page per quarter												
# of respondents of the Vermont Early Care and Afterschool Professional Development Survey indicating they have heard of NLCDC	246 / 499 respondents = 49.3%											
Early Childhood Workforce Qualifications and Career Pathways Indicators												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level certificate per year												
# of people receiving multiple Career Ladder level certificates per year												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level I certificate/ year												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level II certificate/ year												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level III certificate/ year												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level IV certificate/ year												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level V certificate/ year												
# of people receiving a Career Ladder Level VI certificate/ year												
System Quality Assurance Indicators												
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (total) per year	297											
# of Affiliate I instructors in the Instructor Registry per year	42											
# of Affiliate II instructors in Instructor Registry per year	6											

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

# of Certified instructors in the Instructor Registry per year	75		
# of Master instructors in the Instructor Registry per year	119		
# of Specialist I instructors in the Instructor Registry per year	8		
# of Specialist II instructors in the Instructor Registry per year	47		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Child Development (EC) , in Instructor Registry per year	225		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Families & Communities (EC) , in the Instructor Registry per year	208		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Teaching & Learning (EC) , in Instructor Registry per year	217		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Healthy & Safe Environments (EC) , in the Instructor Registry per year	169		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Professionalism & Program Organization (EC) , in the Instructor Registry per year	159		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Child & Youth Development , in the Instructor Registry per year	41		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Curriculum & Learning Environment , in the Instructor Registry per year	47		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area:	47		

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

Families & Communities (After school) , in the Instructor Registry per year			
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Healthy & Safe Environments (Afterschool) , in the Instructor Registry per year	39		
# of instructors, Knowledge Area: Professionalism & Program Organization (Afterschool) , in the Instructor Registry per year	38		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Addison County	68		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Bennington County	58		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Caledonia County	67		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Chittenden County	120		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Essex County	60		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Franklin County	85		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Grand Isle County	64		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Lamoille County	87		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Orange County	68		

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Orleans County	67		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Rutland County	63		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Washington County	88		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Windham County	70		
# of instructors in the Instructor Registry (per year) willing to train in Windsor County	66		

Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Assessment Tool

Aim Statement: To develop an ECPDS that is capable of creating and sustaining integrated and aligned sub-systems of early childhood professional development as indicated by the system elements.

System Elements	Planning & Preparation	Preliminary Activities	Implementation	Revising	Sustainability or Completion
Governance, Leadership & Advisory					
Governance and advisory of the ECPDS are defined and provide leadership and strategic planning for systems building; have defined responsibility and authority to recommend and implement policies and initiatives					
A diverse advisory body representing all key EC sector guides the system in working towards a mission, defined goals, and objectives to build a coordinated and aligned system; Membership, roles and responsibilities of the advisory are clearly defined					
Advisory includes representation and active participation from the Department of Education					
Advisory includes representation and active participation from Higher Education					
Governance/leadership and advisory have an established process for coordinated and collaborative decision-making					
Governance/leadership and advisory have an established process for implementing and operationalizing decisions to ensure time-bound action					
Policies, Standards & Initiatives					
CDD Licensing regulations and ECPDS professional standards are aligned					
System offerings are developed in alignment with licensing regulations and professional standards.					
Identify and standardize the number of college-credits that a CDA credential articulates into within the VSC system.					
VSC have a Common Course Numbering System for early childhood coursework at VSC colleges and universities offering early childhood education degree programs					
Funding					
Resources adequately support database programming for BFIS and the ECPDS					
Resources adequately support data management and reporting for BFIS and ECPDS					
Adequate and stable funding streams support the system and are directed appropriately					
Outreach and Communication					
Marketing strategies are used to promote awareness of and buy-in to the system					

VIII. System Monitoring & Evaluation

System Elements	Planning & Preparation	Preliminary Activities	Implementation	Revising	Sustainability or Completion
Outreach and Communication					
Regional RDS and Directors and Managers from other EC sectors are fluent in the ECPDS and its offerings and promote the system on a regional level to early childhood providers.					
The ECPDS has a variety of mechanisms in place for communicating the offerings of the system to various consumers and audiences.					
Access					
Adequate distance learning options are available through the ECPDS.					
BFIS Course Calendar is comprehensive, user-friendly and searchable by many fields.					
Data					
The ECPDS data system is guided by a strategic plan to develop a cross-sector data system and professional development registry to collect and report on the system.					
Data collection is streamlined with NL databases integrated into BFIS.					
Additional recommended data points are included in BFIS.					
Protocols are in place defining data management processes and policies for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and reporting on data.					
Policy is in place requiring regular and complete updates to BFIS Credential Account.					
Staff positions for a database programmer and for a data manager support BFIS.					
Quality Improvement & Assurance					
The ECPDS has a process for evaluating instructors in the Instructor Registry to ensure accountability and quality in their instruction.					
The ECPDS has a process for assessing professional development trainings to ensure quality and alignment of offerings listed in BFIS.					

The Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development Assessment Tool was developed in part by cross-walking and adapting:

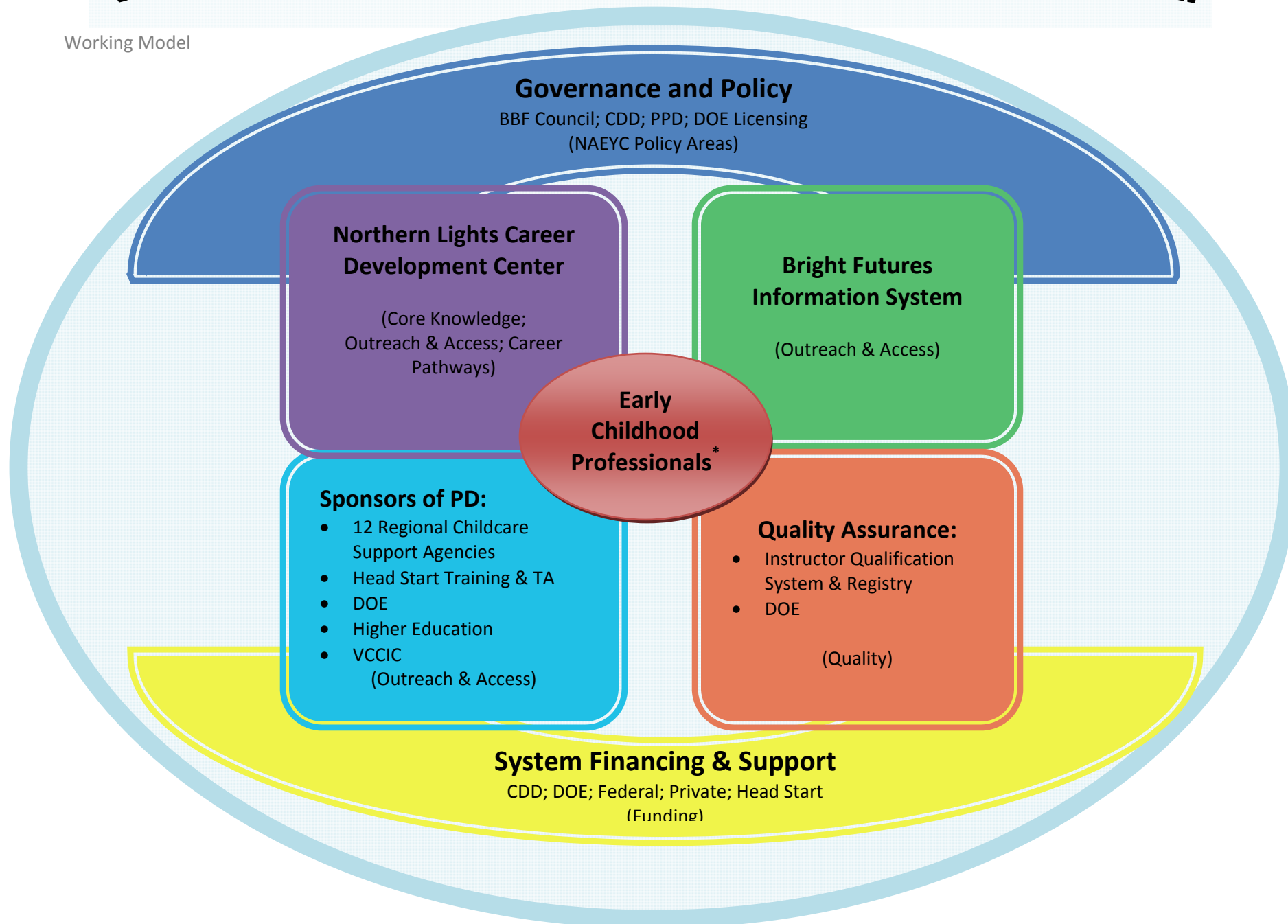
1. National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality (NICHQ) Title V Program Index published in the NICHQ's *Spread of Quality Improvement for Children and Youth With Special Healthcare Needs: An Integrated Systems Strategy for Building the Title V Infrastructure. Learning Collaborative A Interim Report. December 2010.*
2. The National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center's *A Tool to Assess the Alignment of State PD Systems and QRIS.*

Appendices

- Appendix I: Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System- System Model**
- Appendix II: Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System- Profile**
- Appendix III: Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System- Data Inventory**
- Appendix IV: Focus Group Guide**
- Appendix V: Key Informant Interview Guides**

Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System

Working Model



*Additional consumers of the Early Childhood Professional Development System include: afterschool professionals; parents; students, etc.

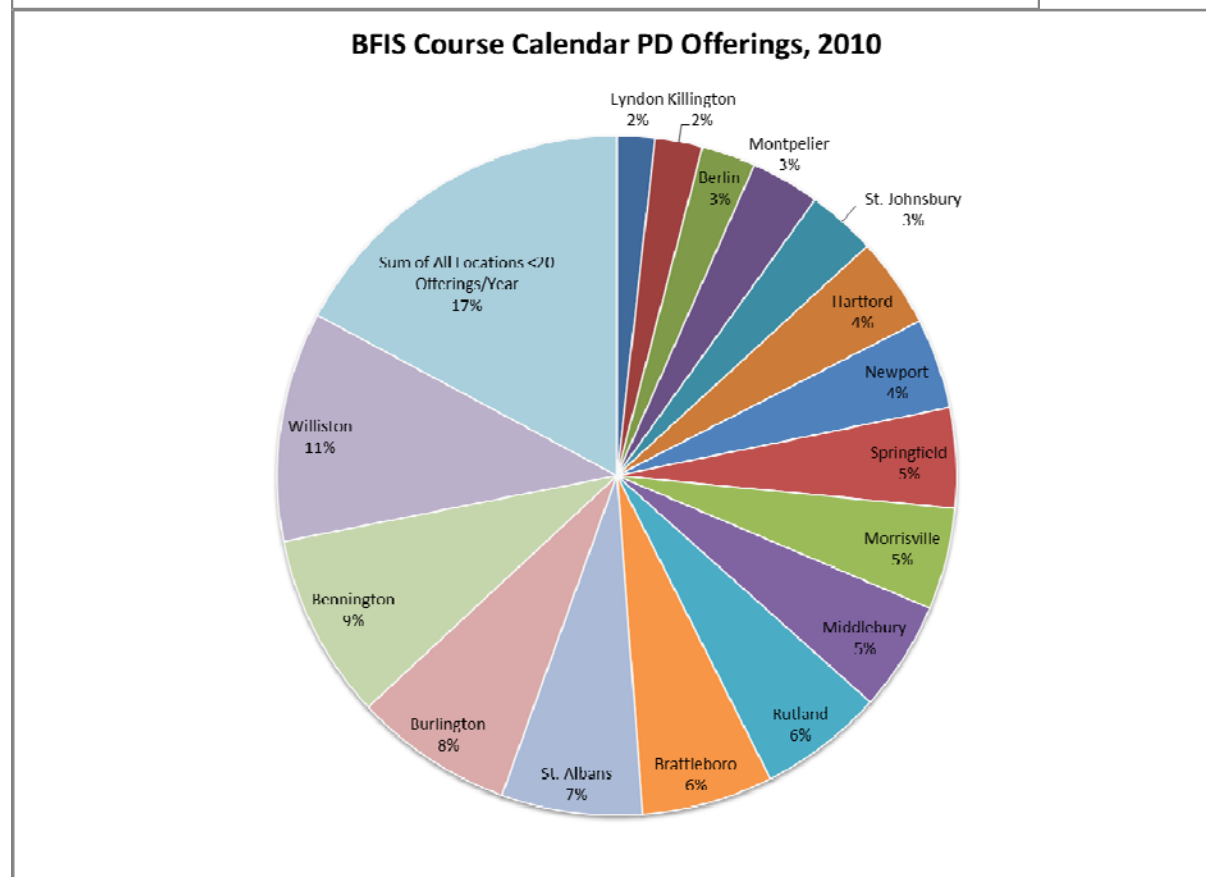
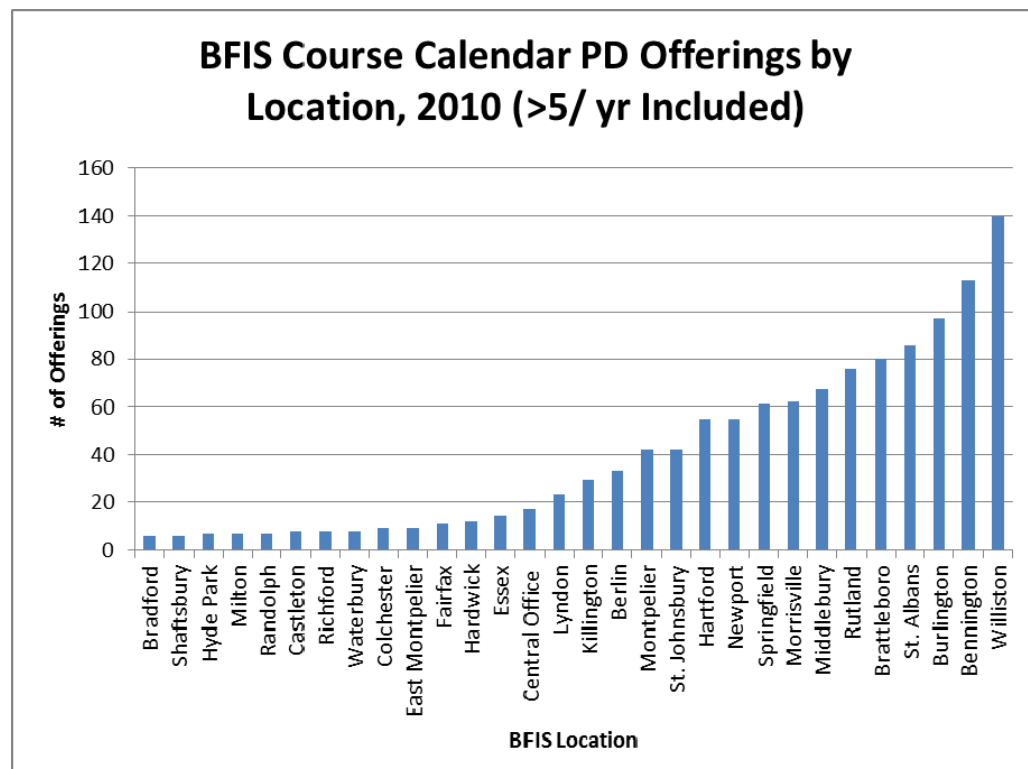
Profile of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System

Governance, Advisory and Infrastructure	
<i>Structure</i>	<i>Description</i>
Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council	The Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (BBF) is linked to 12 Regional councils and other state-wide committees, including the Professional Preparation and Development Committee. Together they work to create an integrated system of quality services for young children and their families in Vermont.
Professional Preparation and Development Sub-Committee	The PPD is a sub-committee of BBF. The mission of the PPD is to ensure a comprehensive, coordinated system of quality learning opportunities that gives current and prospective professionals the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to provide quality care and education.
Child Development Division	<p>The CDD is a division of the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families. The CDD is the state agency charged with improving the well-being of Vermont's children by ensuring safe, accessible and quality services are available for every child. The CDD is responsible for several aspects of child care in Vermont - from licensing for providers and tuition assistance for families to the STARS program. CDD brings together funds and services that are designed to establish and support statewide, regional, and local partnerships which assist children and their families. Funds and services include, Parent Child Centers, Head Start Collaborative, Healthy Child Care Vermont funds and the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant. CDD also assists partnerships through policy direction, licensing regulation, research, technical assistance, and information services.</p> <p>The CDD provides funding to the VT ECPDS and BFIS. CDD also provides professional development (PD) funding supports to EC professionals and has a committee, the Quality Think Tank, that connects with the PPD to focus on effective strategies that lead to program quality through PD.</p>
Northern Lights Career Development Center	<p>NLCDC provides information and support about PD for early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont. The goal of NLCDC is to strengthen and align curriculum and instruction, providing individuals and agencies easy access to training and education at all levels, develop highly qualified instructors, and career advising for professionals and organizations. The goal is an articulated system of PD, instructor qualifications, and resources for those engaged in early childhood and afterschool education programs.</p> <p>NLCDC is funded by CDD and administered within CCV. NLCDC provides a virtual gateway to Vermont's ECPDS, serving as a clearinghouse of PD resources for EC professionals in VT. NLCDC provides career advising, issues certificates and credentials, verifies PD activities, hosts and maintains the Instructor Qualification System and Registry.</p>
Regional Community Child Care Support Agencies	12 regional centers across Vermont are available, along with their respective Resource Development Specialists (RDS) to guide and support PD of EC professionals. Each creates calendars listing PD offerings in their area.
Head Start Training & Technical Assistance	There are 7 Head Start programs and 3 Early Head Start programs serving children and families in Vermont. Each program has centers and sites located throughout the state. Professional development trainings are offered by the Head Start Programs throughout the state.
Higher Education	Colleges offer credit and non-credit courses, and award academic degrees, credentials and certificates. Almost all of them offer some courses online in addition to traditional face to face classes. Vermont has 22 public and private colleges and 2 universities. The Community College of Vermont (CCV) is the only community college system in the state. CCV has 12 academic centers across Vermont, and awards an Associate of Arts Degree in Early Childhood, Education, Human Services and other areas relevant to early childhood and afterschool professionals. It also awards a CCV child care certificate.
Vermont Department of Education (DOE)	Vermont's DOE sets professional development standards for licensed educators in Vermont, which spans into educators of early childhood education. Professional development opportunities are also offered through the DOE.

Policies, Standards, and Initiatives	
<i>Professional Standards</i>	<i>Description</i>
Child Development Division Licensing Regulations	CDD is the Vermont state division that regulates all types of child care programs, including registered homes, early childhood centers, licensed homes, afterschool programs, non-recurring care programs, and public preschool programs.
Vermont ECPDS Core Knowledge & Competencies	<p>-Core Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and Communities • Child Development • Healthy and Safe Environments • Teaching and Learning • Professionalism and Program Organization <p>Core Knowledge Areas are broken down by sub-area. Core Competencies are defined for each sub-area and organized into six levels.</p>
Vermont Department of Education	<p>-Vermont Department of Education (5 Professional Standards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning • Professional Knowledge • Collegueship • Advocacy • Accountability
<i>Quality Assurance Initiatives</i>	<i>Description</i>
Bright Futures Information System	<p>BFIS is an online data management and information system operated by CDD. BFIS has several components including Licensing, Program Profiles and Reporting, Subsidy, and Professional Development. Professional development activities are advertised, verified and tracked for providers within BFIS. A credential account houses specific demographic information, individual training, education and degree, PD, IPDP data, etc. and is intended for tracking one's PD.</p> <p>A statewide BFIS Course Calendar (or registry of PD trainings) is available to help EC professionals find trainings PD opportunities. Sponsors of PD can utilize BFIS to advertise their trainings. Sponsors can send required course training information to NLCDC to be posted on the BFIS course calendar.</p>
STep Ahead Recognition System	STARS is Vermont's quality recognition system for child care, preschool, and afterschool programs. The primary incentive for participating in STARS is local and statewide recognition of your program's achievements. Other incentives include community awards and financial rewards (e.g., higher reimbursement on the child care financial assistance fee scale). STARS is aligned with Career Ladder levels.
NLCDC Instructor Qualification System & Registry	The Instructor Registry is intended to help sponsors of PD find qualified instructors of adults who support the early childhood and afterschool fields. It also recognizes qualified instructors to help develop and promote instructors of adults. The Instructor Registry is a web-based, searchable database of approved instructors teaching adults about the early childhood and afterschool fields. Instructors apply online and once approved, can choose to be listed in the public Registry.
Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)	An Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is a written plan designed by EC professionals that follows a four-step process for continuing one's professional growth (four steps include: self-assessment, goals, strategies, timeline). IPDP's are required by Child Care Licensing, for Level Certificates, and are part of Vermont's STARS.
JSI Evaluation of VT ECPDS	This initial evaluation of the VT ECPDS will provide a report on the system and its offerings and assist with data-informed decision-making to improve and expand the system going forward as well as provide recommendations and tools for continued monitoring and evaluation of the system.

Outreach & Access	
<i>Resource</i>	<i>Description</i>
Northern Lights Career Development Center	-Website provides a virtual gateway to the system and its resources. -NLCDC staff do outreach to organizations or groups and different state-wide meetings (presentations, displays, etc.). -Directory/list of links to Higher Ed/degree programs -Newsletters -Social Media
12 Regional Child Care Resource Centers	-Provide a regional/community hub for early childhood PD; announce local PD opportunities via website calendars and/or newsletters.
Head Start Training & Technical Assistance	-Generally, these PD activities are offered at no cost and open to early childhood providers working within and outside of Head Start.
Higher Education	- Colleges and Universities throughout Vermont offer courses, certificates, qualifications for licensure, degrees, etc. to support the EC workforce and PD.
Vermont Department of Education	-DOE Calendar of Events; The calendar lists department-sponsored events, that, unless noted otherwise, are intended to benefit service providers, educators and administrators. -Links to Educational Services Agencies (ESAs) ESAs are regional partnerships between school districts or supervisory unions, institutions of Higher Education and service providers. ESAs provide high quality PD regionally to meet the needs of individuals, schools and/or supervisory unions to enable educators to improve schools and increase student learning.
BFIS	-Course Calendar to help EC professionals find PD opportunities statewide.
Profile of BFIS Course Calendar Offerings for 2010	
Baseline overview of offerings: 1/1/2010 – 12/31/2010; 1286 items listed	
<u>Delivery/Format of Offerings</u> Online = 3 Conferences = 136 Multiple Sessions = 226 Single Session = 861	<i>Health & Safe Environment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safe Environments = 292 Nutrition = 49 <i>Professionalism & Program Organization</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Management = 246 Professionalism = 412
<u>Topic of Offerings</u> Advanced Specialized Care = 239 Basic Specialized Care = 38 Introduction to Licensing = 3 Observation and Assessment = 62 First Aid = 18 CPR = 29	<u>Focus area of offerings</u> Focus: Infants and Toddlers = 77 Focus: Preschool = 144 Focus: School-age = 86 Focus: Program Directors/Managers = 58 Focus: Adult Instructors = 25 Focus: Multiple Audiences = 183
<u>Offerings in Core Knowledge Areas</u> <i>Child Development</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of Child/Youth Development = 38 Physical and Intellectual Development = 227 Social/ Emotional Development = 292 <i>Families & Communities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families and Communities = 308 <i>Teaching & Learning</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation and Assessment = 62 Curriculum and Learning = 497 	<u>Content Level of Offerings</u> Introductory (NL Level I) = 98 Intermediate (NL Level I) = 144 Advanced (NL Level III-VI) = 42 Multilevel = 181 Fundamentals Level I = 128 Level II Curriculum = 80 Special Education/Intervention = 13
	<u>Credit/Hours of Offerings</u> Clock Hours = 1243 College Credit = 43

Location of Professional Development Offerings throughout Vermont



Town/Location	# courses offered in 2010	Time of day offered	Weekday/Weekend Offerings
Alburg	4	evening	Weekdays
Arlington	3	morning	Weekdays
Barre City	2	Evening	Weekdays
Barre Town	2	Morning/Evening	Weekdays
Barton	4	Morning	Weekdays/Weekends
Bennington	113	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekends
Berlin	33	Morning /Evening	Almost all weekday
Bradford	6	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekends
Brandon	2	Evening	Weekdays
Brattleboro	80	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekends
Brighton	1	Evening	Weekday
Bristol	1	Evening	Weekday
Burlington	97	Morning/Afternoon/Evening	Weekdays/Weekends
Cambridge	4	Evening	Weekdays
Castleton	8	Evening	Weekdays
Charlotte	1	Evening	Weekdays
Chelsea	1	Evening	Weekdays
Chester	1	Morning	Weekend
Colchester	9	Morning/Evening	Weekday/Weekend
Derby	3	Evening	Weekdays
Dummerston	1	Evening	Weekdays
East Montpelier	9	Evening	Weekdays
Essex	14	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Fairfax	11	Morning/Evening	Weekdays
Fairlee	1	Afternoon	Weekdays
Greensboro	1	Evening	Weekdays
Hardwick	12	Evening	Weekdays
Hartford	55	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Huntington	4	Morning	Weekdays
Hyde Park	7	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Jericho	5	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Johnson	1	Evening	Weekday
Killington	29	Day-long conference	Weekday
Lyndon	23	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Manchester	2	Morning/Afternoon	Weekdays/Weekend
Marlboro	1	Morning	Weekday
Middlebury	67	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Milton	7	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Montpelier	42	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Morrisville	62	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Newport	55	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
North Hero	1	Morning	Weekend
Norwich	1	Evening	Weekday
Poultney	1	Evening	Weekday
Pownal	5	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Proctor	1	Evening	Weekday
Randolph	7	Morning/Evening	Weekday
Richford	8	Morning/Evening	Weekday
Richmond	2	Morning/Evening	Weekday
Rockingham	2	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend

Town/Location	# courses offered in 2010	Time of day offered	Weekday/Weekend Offerings
Rutland	76	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Shaftsbury	6	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Shelburne	1	Morning	Weekend
South Burlington	2	Afternoon/Evening	Weekday
South Hero	4	Morning/Evening	Weekdays
Springfield	61	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
St. Albans	86	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
St. Johnsbury	42	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Stowe	1	Morning	Weekday
Swanton	3	Evening	Weekday
Vergennes	1	Evening	Weekday
Wallingford	1	Evening	Weekday
Waterbury	8	Morning/Evening	Weekdays
Weathersfield	1	Evening	Weekday
Wells	2	Evening	Weekday
Westminster	1	Morning	Weekday
Weston	1	Morning	Weekday
Williston	140	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Wilmington	3	Morning/Afternoon	Weekend
Windsor	2	Morning	Weekday
Winooski	5	Morning/Evening	Weekdays/Weekend
Out of State	5	Morning	Weekday
Central Office	17		Most at CCV
	Total = 1281		

Career Pathways	
Resource/Mechanism	Description
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vermont Childcare licensing regulations -Vermont Department of Education public school certification/licensure requirements for teaching, administrative, and support staff positions.
Credentials, Certificates & Degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CDA (Child Development Associate) -VT Program Director Credential -VT Professional Afterschool Credential - VT Afterschool Foundations Certificate - Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program - Community College of Vermont (CCV) Child Care Certificate -Associate degree in Early Childhood Education or related field -Bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education or related field -Graduate degree in field related to Early Childhood Education or related field -Doctoral degree in field related to Early Childhood Education or related field -VT Department of Education Teaching License
Career Pathway Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Career Ladder The Career Ladder is a tool for tracking and planning professional growth. Each of the six levels requires: education, a current IPDP and professional experience with children and families. Achieving a level on the Career Ladder provides a financial recognition bonus from CDD; a higher score in the STARS staff qualifications arena; and a child care licensing requirement or a Department of Education teacher licensing requirement. -Career Lattice The Career Lattice shows how the Career Ladder connects with different work settings, serving as a frame of reference that gives general examples of jobs at each level of the Ladder. -NL Career Advising and Career Advising Guide

	-BFIS Credential Account/Resume
Articulation	<p>Articulation Agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermont State Colleges (VSC) assessment of prior learning and/or Course Challenge • CLEP exam • Most VSC have articulation agreements with one another for transferring of credits. • Springfield College will accept a CDA for 12 college credits

Data	
See the Data Inventory for a comprehensive review of ECPDS data sources.	
<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Description</i>
BFIS	<p>BFIS is an online data management and information system developed for and operated by CDD. BFIS has several components including Licensing, Program Profiles and Reporting, Subsidy, and Professional Development. PD activities are advertised, verified and tracked for providers within BFIS. A credential account houses specific demographic information, individual training, education and degree, PD, IPDP data, etc. and is intended for tracking one's PD.</p> <p>A statewide Course Calendar (or registry of PD trainings) is available to help EC professionals find trainings and PD opportunities.</p>
NLCDC Instructor Registry	The Instructor Registry is a web-based, searchable database of approved instructors teaching adults about the early childhood and afterschool fields. Instructors apply online and once approved, can choose to be listed in the public Registry.
NLCDC Excel spreadsheets	<p>NLCDC has created data repositories using Excel spreadsheets to track and monitor NLCDC related activities for internal use. NLCDC staff collects data and updates with new data on a monthly basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NLCDC tracks data on all credentials and certificates issued through NLCDC -NLCDC Website analytics -NLCDC Outreach activities -NLCDC PD offerings and attendance -# of BFIS Course Calendar Entries -# Course attendance entries -# BFIS Q and C cards mailed
Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) Data	<p>The Office of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) provides comprehensive data on the services, staff, children, and families served by Head Start and Early Head Start programs nationwide. All grantees/programs are required to submit Program Information Reports for Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The PIR is an important source of descriptive and service data for the Head Start community, their partners, Congress, and for the general public. The PIR data is compiled for use at the federal, regional, state, and local levels.</p> <p>PIR were originally constructed to capture what the different status is for the children enrolled (e.g. Family demographics, individual demographics-income, race, language) and parameters of children enrolled in Head Start. PIR data captures descriptive data on individual children and Head Start staff and aggregates it (nationally, state or region, program/grantee). Individual information cannot be accessed, but individual program data can be accessed.</p> <p>The PIR contains data on staff qualifications, including degree and credential levels. Qualifications are included for various staff, including directors, supervisors, teachers, teacher assistants, home visitors. Basic demographic, workforce and salary data) are collected.</p> <p>Data is entered by Head Start program directors on a continual basis and is due for updating on an annual basis every August. Directors enter data as a way to verify their program meets federal policies and standards.</p>
DOE - Educator Database	This database was implemented to meet <i>No Child Left Behind</i> requirements and collects data on individuals who are licensed. Data elements included are not extensive, but include basic tracking of workforce data and PD activities to indicate whether one is current or not. That is, in order to

	<p>relicense, individuals who are licensed and work in the public school system are required to complete x number of college credits or their equivalent depending on which level they are at.</p> <p>Data is included only on licensed providers working in the public school system, so if one is licensed and not in the public school system, they are not in the database. Data elements include whether one's PD status is current, credits, licensure status and basic workforce data. The type of PD is not specified, however. DOE is interested in building the data system for EC providers and linking to BFIS if additional funds were to become available.</p>
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Funding	
<i>Resource</i>	<i>Description</i>
CDD Professional Development Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDA Assessment Fee Grant Assists registered providers and licensed center staff with the assessment fee to attain the CDA • CCP Fees Grant Assists registered providers and licensed center staff with the fees to attain the Child Care Professional (CCP) Credential • College Tuition: Individual Assists registered providers and licensed center staff with the cost of college courses related to working with children & families • Individual In-service Grant Assists consultants to regulated child care programs with the costs of training • Peer Review Assessment Fee Assists registered providers and licensed center staff with the peer review assessment fee for VT Department of Education licensure • Regional Collaborative Grant Application For regional agencies that are offering training opportunities to early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont • Statewide Collaborative Grant Application For statewide agencies that are offering training opportunities to early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont
Recognition Bonuses	CDD provides funding to support recognitions bonuses for providers/programs achieving a star in STARS and to NLCDC for administering bonuses to individuals achieving Career Ladder levels.
VCCICC	Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) contracts six undergraduate courses from the Community College of Vermont. These six courses are tuition- free to staff working in regulated child care, and are offered in different regions of Vermont.
Regional Community Child Care Support Agencies	The 12 regional Community Child Care Support agencies provide free or low cost PD for early childhood and afterschool professionals in their region.
NLCDC Scholarships	Program Director Scholarships for the Human Resources Management course
DOE	PD offerings are available through DOE at no cost.
Head Start Training & TA	PD offerings are available through Head Start at no cost.
Federal	The Administration for Children and Families provides a Child Care Block grant to states; in Vermont this funding is administered by the CDD
Private Funding	Foundation and individual donation supports are provided to the ECPDS.

Vermont Early Childhood Professional Development System Data Inventory

Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) Child Development Division, Vermont Agency for Children and Families Contact: Carole Pomeroy-Emond Job Title: Operations Manager Phone: 802-241-2102 Email: carole.pomeroy@ahs.state.vt.us	
Purpose or mandate for database	BFIS is a comprehensive information system intended for parents and child care providers to get answers to questions about child care, preschool, afterschool care, and the services available to help ensure that high quality child care is available. BFIS assists providers with and stores data on licensing, professional development (includes a course calendar of statewide PD offerings), and qualifications, credentials and PD activities.
Overview of the database as it relates to EC Professional Development.	<p>BFIS is an online data management and information system developed for and operated by CDD. Carole Pomeroy-Emond, Operations Manager at CDD, oversees BFIS. BFIS has several components including Licensing, Program Profiles and Reporting, Subsidy, and Professional Development. Professional development activities are advertised, verified and tracked for providers within BFIS. A credential account houses specific demographic information, individual training, education and degree, PD, IPDP data, etc. and is intended for tracking one's PD.</p> <p>A statewide course calendar (or registry of professional development trainings) is available to help EC professionals find trainings and professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Sponsors of professional development can utilize BFIS to advertise their trainings. Sponsors can send required course training information to Northern Lights Career Development Center to be posted on the BFIS course calendar.</p>
Definition of a case or record in the database	Information is linked throughout the system with the use of unique identifiers – Party ID and Case ID. All programs and individual child care workers that are part of the regulated system (registered or licensed) are included as “parties” in BFIS. The Party ID is the primary key or unique identifier for all programs and child care workers entered into the system. Note that in BFIS, a “provider” refers to a licensed child care program and a “quality and credential” refers to an individual child care worker. Parties are associated with cases within BFIS. Cases can include one's credential account; subsidies received; QRIS/STARS; etc. Note that all cases have IDs as well.
Population included in the database	<p>All child care programs and child care workers in Vermont's regulated system.</p> <p>BFIS includes a course calendar of all PD opportunities offered statewide that go through the NLCDC.</p>
When and how are data collected	<p>Basic demographic data and qualifications and credential data (as required by licensing regulations) are entered by licensing technicians when new licensing applications are received. Licensing technicians update some data elements annually upon receiving annual re-licensure applications. Some data elements are also self-reported and entered by “credential users” (i.e., child care programs or workers) to provide information on work experience, education, credentials, and PD. Some of these data elements are verified by NLCDC upon receipt of necessary documentation. NLCDC enters data on PD activities when able to verify the data. Note that although it is not mandated by a standard policy or procedure that all programs and providers entered into BFIS have a credential account within BFIS, it has become standard practice that all child care workers entered into BFIS are set up with a credential account. No policy exists on the use of one's credential account and keeping it current.</p> <p>NLCDC enters all course calendar data on PD opportunities as trainings are received by NLCDC from sponsors of PD.</p>

Availability of data for analysis and reporting	<p>Some specific queries and reports do exist for retrieving data from BFIS, however existing queries and reports are limited. CDD does not have the resources (e.g. IT staff) to develop and run reports as needed, but do contract specific requests out to Maximus, the original developer of the database, when prioritized as a high-level need.</p> <p>Reports BFIS does have the ability to run include: data on PD trainings (including attendance and where trainings were held, sponsor, area of knowledge; date; course ID; hour type). Note, Sylvia Godin of NLCDC currently does this as needed, but the process is very manual and has limited search capabilities. Basically, one can search in the same manner as searching the public interface of the BFIS Course Calendar; attendance data is available, although in total for a course rather than by course date (one can drill down by visually looking for course date and identifying attendance for the course on that specific date, but this process is manual and cumbersome).</p>
-------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

BFIS Provider (Program or Child Care Worker) Account

My Profile

Tab provides demographic data and contact information for programs and child care workers.

Data Elements	Description of Data Element	Notes on Data Element
Name	Last name, First name Party name (program name or child care worker name); text box field	Required to enter for licensing application
Gender	Male or Female ; check box field	Required to enter for licensing application
Citizenship	Text box field	
Date of Birth	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx); drop down select month, day, year	Required to enter for licensing application
Marital Status	Text box field	
Race	Text box field	
Ethnicity	Text box field	
Primary Language	Text box field	
Social Security Number		Only collected if being paid through BFIS for child care subsidy
Mailing Address- Street	Text box field	Required to enter for licensing application
Town	Drop down select list	Required to enter for licensing application
State	Drop down select list	Required to enter for licensing application
Zip Code	Text box field	Required to enter for licensing application
Contact Phone #	Text box field	Required to enter for licensing application
Email Address	Text box field	

Resume

This tab is one's "credential account" and provides data on qualifications, credentials and PD activities.

Each Resume or Credential Account has a unique "Quality Case ID" assigned by BFIS that is linked to one's Party ID. BFIS sends an automated report to NLCDC on all new parties with a credential account. NLCDC follows up with new credential account holders by sending a card welcoming them to the system and providing their credential account user login information and BFIS and NLCDC contact information.

Data Elements	Description of Data Element	Notes on Data Element
<i>Summary Subtab</i>		
Resume Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx);	Resume Date displays the most recent date that the resume was updated (either by licensing technician or account holder).
Achievement Level		
Achievement Date		
Current PD Plan	IPDP (Individual Professional Development Plan). IPDP is self-reported and includes individuals 5 year	Self-reported and not verified. Most of the data is descriptive/qualitative with

	goals, plan date, and mentor. The IPDP is organized by core competency and data fields corresponding to each core competency are text box fields for entering goals, strategies, resources needed and timeline. A drop down select box is available for each core competency status: not started; started; complete.	no discrete or categorical data elements. All child care workers in the regulated system are required to have current IPDPs for licensure and re-licensure, but are not required to have it in BFIS. Most are in paper format. Nancy Sugarman notes that NLCDC is making progress in requesting annual updates to IPDPs be done electronically in BFIS, but not consistent practice at this time.
Current PD Plan> Plan Format	Drop down select list: CDA; NLCDC Core Competencies; VT Dept of Ed 5 standards for educators.	Required field (if entering in BFIS)
Current PD Plan> Plan Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx);	Required field (if entering in BFIS)
Current PD Plan> Mentor	Text box field	
Transcripts	Link to PDF of scanned file.	Available if user provides copy to NLCDC for uploading. Only administrators can view scanned documents, individual "public" users cannot see documents scanned into their accounts.
Work Experience Subtab Data for this subtab is entered by self-report or by a licensing technician. If self-report, it can be updated or added to as often as desired. Licensing technicians update work experience annually upon receiving re-licensure application. None of the data entered here is verified.		
Position	Drop down select list: Applicant/Provider; Aide; Assistant; Care Provider/Household Member; Cook; Director; Head Teacher; Janitor; Other Care Provider; Other; Substitute; Teacher; Transportation. If other, one is prompted to enter position name in text box field below Position drop down select list.	Required field
Age Groups	Check box select list: Infant/Toddler; Preschool; School Age	
Start Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	Required Field; Found to not always be accurate for several reasons, including when licensing technician enters it because begin and end dates are based on when one's licensing application is renewed.
End Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	Found to not always be accurate for several reasons, including when licensing technician enters it because begin and end dates are based on when one's licensing application is renewed.
Organization Name (or Last Name)	Text box field	Required field
First Name	Text box field	
Street Address	Text box field	
City	Text box field	

State	Drop down select list: All states listed	
Zip Code	Text box field	
Phone Number	Text box field	
Education Subtab Data for this subtab is entered by self-report and NLCDC verifies all data entered when appropriate documentation is submitted to NLCDC. Data can be entered by self-report and left as not verified.		
Degree	Drop down select list: Associate; Bachelor; Certificate; Doctorate; High School or Equivalent; Master; Vocational	Required field
Date Conferred	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	Required field
Concentration	Drop down select list: Child Development; Child and Family Studies; Early Childhood Education; Early Childhood Special Education; Elementary Ed; Human Development; Human Services; Infant Studies; Infant Child Mental Health; Other; Psychology; Sociology; Social Sciences; Teacher Education	Required field
School Name	Text box field	Required field
School City	Text box field	
School State	Drop down select list: All states listed	
Country	Drop down select list: United States listed as only option	
Verified	Format entered is determined by documentation submitted (Transcript/Diploma/Other). This is a required field when entered by NLCDC and cannot be left blank.	
Bonus	Yes/No/Blank; entered by NLCDC This is a required field when entered by NLCDC.	
Bonus Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx); entered by NLCDC	
Credentials Subtab Credentials generally refer to achievement of a competency whereas a certificate generally refers to attendance or course completion. Note that the data in the credentials subtab are not always current or are outdated and the level of certificate is not shown. NLCDC tags credential data as verified in BFIS upon receipt of appropriate documentation.		
Type of Credential	Drop down select list: Apprentice; CPR; CCV; CDA; Director Certificate; DOE; Early Child Mental Health Certificate; Infant Toddler Certificate; CCP; School Age Certificate	Required field; it was noted that this field/drop down list is neither comprehensive nor accurate.
Date Obtained	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	Required field
Expiration	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	
Verified	This is a required field when entered by NLCDC (Generally Certificate/Diploma/Letter/Other)	
Bonus	Yes/No/Blank; entered by NLCDC This is a required field when entered by NLCDC.	
Bonus Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx); entered by NLCDC	
Program Participation Subtab This subtab allows for users to document PD activities in progress, but not yet complete. Data is not verified; it is self-reported. It was noted that this subtab is not used often.		
Program Type	Drop down select list: Degree; Credential	
Program Type>Degree	Drop down select list: Associate; Bachelor; Certificate; Doctorate; High School or Equivalent; Master; Vocational	Required field
Program Type>Degree>Concentration	Drop down select list: Child Development; Child and Family Studies; Early Childhood Education; Early Childhood Special Education; Elementary Ed;	Required field

	Human Development; Human Services; Infant Studies; Infant Child Mental Health; Other; Psychology; Sociology; Social Sciences; Teacher Education	
Program Type>Type of Credential	Drop down select list: Apprentice; CPR; CCV; CDA; Director Certificate; DOE; Early Child Mental Health Certificate; Infant Toddler Certificate; CCP; School Age Certificate	Required field; it was noted that this field/drop down list is not comprehensive nor accurate.
School	Text box field	Required field
Start Date	Text box field	
Anticipated Completion Date	Text box field	

Professional Development Subtab

Data in this subtab can be entered by the individual account holder as self report or by NLCDC when NLCDC receives the documentation to verify the data. NLCDC receives attendance lists from trainers of PD activities that go through NLCDC and enters those PD activities into users' credential accounts under the PD subtab upon receipt of the attendance list. For PD activities attended outside of those coordinated through NLCDC (e.g., in another state), individuals can self report and send documentation to NLCDC or send documentation NLCDC and NLCDC will enter and tag the activity as verified.

The data in this subtab is split into two sections. The top section refers to PD activities that occur through sponsors/trainers who have agreements with NLCDC. The bottom section refers to PD activities that occur external to NLCDC or activities that occur through sponsors/trainers who have agreements with NLCDC but individual's attendance is incomplete (example: 2 of 4 hours completed). Training given by instructors is also recorded here (noted as Adult Instruction Given). First Aid certification and completion of Level I Fundamentals course is also noted here because there is no way to record it in the Credentials subtab.

For PD data to be entered that is coordinated through NLCDC, one can select continuing education or PD and is prompted to include the course title (required field). BFIS searches on the course title and provides the related courses for one to select and add. One can also use data entered without selecting a course from the BFIS database. (Note that if a user selects an existing course it will not be displayed in their résumé until it is verified by NLCDC). Data elements include:

Course title	Auto populated from BFIS Course Calendar data or manually entered	
School	Auto populated from BFIS Course Calendar data or manually entered; refers to sponsor	
Date completed	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	required field
Hours	Auto populated from BFIS Course Calendar data or manually entered	
Hour Type	Auto populated from BFIS Course Calendar data; refers to clock hours or credit hours or manually entered	
Verified	NLCDC enters format of verification as other or remains blank if not yet verified	

Course Calendar

The BFIS Course Calendar is a searchable registry of PD trainings (e.g., workshops, classes, presentations) available throughout the state and coordinated through NL. Sponsors submit information on offerings to NL and NL enters the data in to the registry. Information on course offerings from 2005 to present is included. Note: All 12 Resource Development Specialists are BFIS sponsors/have agreements with NL.

Note: the accuracy of the search findings from the registry depend on the accuracy in which course data are entered and tagged (e.g., tagged with correct core knowledge area, format, etc.).

Data Elements	Description of Data Element	Notes on Data Element
Course ID	Text box field	
Course Title	Text box field	
Sponsor	Text box field	

Area of Knowledge	Drop down select list: Advanced Specialized Care; Basic Specialized Care; Principles of Child/Youth Development; Program Management; Introduction to Licensing; Observation and Assessment; Format: Conference; Families and Communities; Physical and Emotional Development; Social/Emotional Development; Healthy and Safe Environments; Fundamentals Level I; Level II Curriculum; Nutrition; Professionalism; Curriculum and Learning; First Aid; CPR: Format: Online	
Hours	Text box field	
Hour Type	Clock hours or credit hours	
Status		
Location	Drop down select list: all towns/cities in the state are listed to select from.	It was noted that this field is not reliable because often times the data entered on location is in reference to sponsor's location and not the actual location of the training.
Session Start Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	
Session Completion Date	Month/Day/Year (xx/xx/xxxx)	
Start Time		Refers to the time the training starts
Description	Text box field entered by sponsor of training	
Course Contact Name		
Course Contact Phone Number		
Cost		Refers to the cost of attending the training. This information is most often not provided by the sponsor and therefore not included.
Scholarship		
Funding		

Instructor Registry Northern Lights Career Development Center Contact: Nancy Sugarman Job Title: Director Phone: 802-828-2876 Email: nancy.sugarman@ccv.edu	
Purpose or mandate for database	The Instructor Registry is intended to help sponsors of PD find qualified instructors of adults who support the early childhood and afterschool fields. It also recognizes qualified instructors to help develop and promote instructors of adults.
Overview of Registry	The Instructor Registry is a web-based, searchable database of approved instructors teaching adults about the early childhood and afterschool fields. Instructors apply online and once approved, can choose to be listed in the public Registry. There are six types or levels of instructors in the Registry. This system was designed in 2006 and launched in January 2007 by a committee of NLCD. Updates to the Instructor Qualification System were implemented in October 2009. The Registry lets you search for both early childhood and afterschool instructors. You can search for instructors by region, core knowledge area, curricula taught, instructor level or name.
Definition of a case or record in the database	Individual instructors are entered as a record in the database.

Population included in the database	Instructors included in the Instructor Registry are those that apply and are vetted through the Instructor Qualification System. The Instructor Qualification System uses an approval process that identifies instructors who have met established criteria for high quality instruction of adults. Instructors are qualified by the system at 1 of 6 levels based on education and instruction experience.	
When and how are data collected	Instructor data are collected during the application process; by approved instructors in the registry updating their information at any time; and by instructors being required to update their application every three years. All data in the registry are verified by NLCDC.	
Availability of data for analysis and reporting	Data is accessible and reportable by the public interface of the registry.	
Search fields	One can search the Instructor Registry by region (county); Knowledge area; NLCDC Instructor Level; Curricula; and Last Name.	
Note: All data for new instructors are added and verified by NLCDC. Updates to instructor information are verified by NLCDC. The quality of the data is good: reliable, complete and accurate.		
Data Elements	Description of Data Element	Notes on Data Element
Contact Information	Name, address, phone number and email	The Registry is searchable by last name.
Instructor Level	Instructor Level: Affiliate I; Affiliate II; Certified; Master; Specialist I; Specialist II	The Registry is searchable by instructor level.
Education	Degrees and instruction received are listed	
Work Experience	Includes text on work and instructional experience, experience length and professional references.	
Additional Information	Information on instructor experiences, learning objectives, core knowledge areas	The Registry is searchable by knowledge area
Logistics	Rate, home region, regions covered	The Registry is searchable by region.

Northern Lights Career Development Center Excel Spreadsheets

Contact: Nancy Sugarman
 Job Title: Director
 Phone: 802-828-2876
 Email: nancy.sugarman@ccv.edu

NLCDC has created data repositories using Excel spreadsheets to track and monitor NLCDC related activities for internal use. NLCDC staff collects data and updates with new data on a monthly basis. Data is used for semi-annual reports to Jan Walker, Workforce Development and Quality Enhancement at CDD. Data has been tracked for about 5 years.

Credentials and Certificates

NLCDC tracks data on all credentials and certificates issued through NLCDC:

- # credentials issued (total and by type of credential, date on certificate and numbers tracked over the past 4 years)
- # certificates issued (total and by type of certificate, such as career ladder level 1, Career Ladder level II, etc.; date on certificate; and numbers tracked over the past 4 years)
- Time (in days) from application to credential creation; reasons for any delays
- Region (AHS district) of applicant
- Those who have earned more than one certificate/credential (and type)

NLCDC Website Analytics

- # Unique visitors to NLCDC website
- Total Website Hits/year over past 3 years
- Where visitors go on NLCDC Website from the NLCDC home page

NLCDC Outreach Activities

- # and type of presentations, displays, etc
- Outreach to organizations or groups and different state-wide meetings staff regularly attend

PD Trainings Offered (coordinated through NLCDC)

- Courses offered (by title or level)
- Attendance of Courses (can look at # enrolled and # completed in BFIS)

Instructor Registry

- # of new Instructors in Registry and approved at which level, date application entered into system, date approved
- Who has a supporting instructor; who they are

Miscellaneous NLCDC Activities

- # of BFIS Course Calendar Entries
- # Course attendance entries
- # BFIS Q and C cards mailed

Focus Group Guide

Good evening! Thank you for meeting with us today to talk about professional development as it relates to early childhood practitioners. My name is Fonda Kingsley and I will facilitate this evening's discussion. And, this is my colleague, Naomi Clemmons, who will be taking notes while we talk. The reason why we are having these discussions with you is that Building Bright Futures of Vermont and Vermont's Child Development Division have initiated an evaluation of Vermont's early childhood professional development system and would like to better understand:

1. What you know about Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System
2. How you find out about professional development offerings
3. What professional development offerings you participate in and why
4. Whether you use specific resources offered by the system to support your professional growth and what your experiences are using these resources

As users of the early childhood professional development system, each of you offers a valuable and unique perspective given your early childhood professional development needs and experiences. The more we can learn about your perspectives and experiences seeking and obtaining professional development the more we can do to make sure that the early childhood professional development resources, services and offerings available are meeting people's needs.

We have allocated one and one half hour for this focus group. I am going to ask a few questions, and we'd like you to respond and discuss. All of the information that you share with me will be kept anonymous. Comments will not be linked back to individuals in the group; only thematic data will be communicated. Although we will be taking notes during the discussion, we would also like to tape record the conversation in order to make sure that our notes accurately capture what you are saying. However, if any of you do not feel comfortable having the tape recorder on, we will not use it. Now, when I turn on the tape recorder, I am going to ask if there are any objections to this session being recorded. If you do not want this session recorded let me know and we will turn it off.

We hope you feel comfortable saying whatever you think or feel and we want to make sure that everyone who wants to say something gets a chance to talk today. So, we ask that you respect what others are saying; take turns talking; and, what is said in this room stays in the room— what is said needs to be kept confidential. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

I. Knowledge and Awareness of Vermont's EC Professional Development System

1. Each of you are providers of early childhood care and have annual professional development requirements that are part of the state licensing criteria. Can you tell me about your understanding of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System?
 - a. Are you aware of the system?
 - b. What resources and services are available to you in Vermont for finding and supporting your PD?
2. Have you used the Northern Lights Career Development Center website to obtain information on PD?
 - a. For those of you that have used the website, what information do you look for on the website?
 - b. For those of you that have not used the website, can you talk about why you haven't used this website?
3. How easy or difficult it is for you to find the information you need on professional development?
 - a. Can you tell me how you learn about professional development opportunities?
 - b. For those of you that use the Bright Futures Information System Course Calendar, can you talk about how frequently you use the Course Calendar to find out about professional development opportunities?
 - c. What other resources do you use to find out about professional development opportunities?
 - d. What might be done to better communicate the system offerings and professional development opportunities?

II. Accessing Professional Development Offerings

Now I'd like to spend some time talking about how accessible the offerings of the Professional Development System are to you. I'd like to understand accessibility in terms of where and when offerings are available, how offerings are delivered, the affordability of the offerings and whether the offerings meet your professional development needs.

To start, I'd like to read items from a list. I'd like for each of you to select the top 5 factors that you consider most important when choosing to participate in a professional development opportunity.

- Topic
- Core competency area
- Content level (e.g., NL career ladder level)
- # of clock hours or credit hours
- Recommendation of supervisor
- Day of the week and time of day it is scheduled
- Location of training
- Instructor
- Sponsor organization
- Cost
- Format of delivery (e.g., online, conference, workshop, lecture, etc.)
- Are there any other factors you consider?

4. Based on the factors you noted as most important in your decision-making, let's spend some time talking about why these are important to you. Why is *[factor; facilitator will go through up to top 5 factors deemed most important]* important when your determining whether to participate in a professional development opportunity.
5. Similarly, I'd like to understand why the factors you didn't choose as important do not, in general, weigh into your decision-making. Can you talk about why *[x factor]* is ranked least important to you when considering whether to participate in a professional development opportunity?

III. Utilizing the System Resources to Support Professional Growth

Lastly, I'd like to spend some time talking about what components of the professional development system you use or do not use and why. Specifically, I'd like to ask you about your experiences using the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder and your BFIS credential account.

6. Are you aware of the Career Ladder? For those that are aware of the Career Ladder, can you tell me whether you found it easy or difficult to understand and use and explain why?
 - a. Has the career ladder been a helpful guide for you when thinking about professional growth in terms of career planning and professional development activities?
7. Are you aware of having a credential account in the Bright Futures Information System? For those that are aware, can you talk about whether the credential account has been useful or helpful to you and if so, how?
 - a. What are the primary purposes you use your credential account for?
 - b. For those that don't use their credential account, can you talk about why you don't and what would encourage you to use your credential account?
8. I'd like to understand whether the system is supportive of your professional growth. Thinking of the resources and professional development offerings of the system can you talk about how the system has supported you in attaining your professional development needs, your educational goals, and your career goals?
 - a. How has the system enabled your movement along the career ladder?
9. Thinking about the overall quality of the system, what do you see as the most important strengths of the system? What do you see as the most important challenges of the system?
10. Lastly, do you have any final thoughts you'd like to share about the professional development system or suggestions for improving the system to better meet your needs?

Thank you all for your time and thoughtful discussion. Please take a moment to complete the Participant Data Sheet before you leave. I also have informational brochures on the NL/BFIS available, which include contact information should you have additional questions about the Early Childhood Professional Development System and its offerings.

Key Informant Interview Guide: Vermont

Introduction: Good [morning/afternoon]. I'm Fonda Kingsley from JSI Research and Training, Inc. I am working with the Building Bright Futures Council and Vermont's Child Development Division to provide an initial evaluation of the offerings of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System. This evaluation will be used to inform decision-making about improvements to and expansion of the system, with the goal of developing an integrated and aligned system that is supportive of professional growth and cross-sector articulation of qualifications, credentials and professional development activities. As part of this evaluation, we'd like to understand the strengths and challenges of the ECPDS from stakeholders of the system such as early childhood administrators, program directors and managers, and policymakers. To do that, we are conducting interviews with people such as you. The themes that emerge from the interviews will be used to develop recommendations for improvements to the system and to guide future evaluations of the system. While we will use the themes from the interviews, the information you share will be kept anonymous. Our final report will describe the general comments and themes that emerge during our conversations with interviewees.

There is series of questions that I'd like to ask in order to gain insight into your views and experiences with Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System. This interview process will take about 30-60 minutes. Before I begin, do you have any questions you'd like to ask us about the evaluation project or JSI?

1. To start, how would you describe Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System?
2. What do you feel are the main strengths and challenges of the Early Childhood Professional Development System?
 - a. What are your suggestions for improving the system?
3. I'd like to better understand the advisory structure of the System. Are you familiar with the advisory structure or body of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System and if so, can you describe it? *[If no, skip to question 3]*
 - a. Can you talk about whether roles and responsibilities are clearly defined or are in need of better definition?
 - b. What are your thoughts on the effectiveness of the leadership guiding, implementing and operationalizing the plans and policies of the system?
 - c. Can you talk about the flow of information throughout the system? How are plans, policies, goals, etc communicated throughout the system and/or to representatives of the system?
 - d. Are their groups or representatives from other groups that you feel should be at the table or be part of the advisory structure of the Early Childhood Professional Development System and if so, who would they be (e.g., higher ed, head start, public education)?
4. Thinking about how this system and parts of the system are funded, can you talk about how the Early Childhood Professional Development System is financially supported?
 - a. What are the current funding sources for the system?
 - b. Is the system well-funded or poorly-funded (are there parts that are well funded) and in what ways would additional funds improve the system?
 - c. Can you talk about whether the offerings of the system are financially supported (e.g. Northern Lights Career Development Center; BFIS; professional development opportunities)?
 - d. Where would you direct additional funds for the system if available?
5. Can you talk about alignment between the Vermont Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies with the professional development standards and guidelines of other related sectors, such as VT Department of Education and the VT licensing regulations for child care providers?
 - a. Do the core knowledge areas and competencies apply across all early childhood/education sectors (i.e., child care, Head Start, public education)?
 - b. Can you describe how the Vermont Early Childhood Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies were developed?
 - c. Who were the stakeholders involved, how were they selected and how involved were they in the process?

6. **What is the process for determining which professional development opportunities are offered through the system?** *[Considering the interviewees relevant context, role, and responsibility (e.g. Head Start, Public School, Home)]*
 - a. How does the system ensure that offerings available match Vermont Early Childhood Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies?
 - b. How well do the opportunities offered cover the various core knowledge areas & core competencies?
 - c. Can you talk about whether professional development opportunities are offered at various levels (e.g.: beginning, intermediate, advanced)?
 - d. Is there a mechanism in place to ensure that the professional development opportunities offered are supportive of pathways leading to qualifications, degrees, and credentials and if so can you describe this mechanism or process?
7. **What policies are in place to support those in the early care and education field advance to other roles or achieve additional qualifications and credentials?**
 - a. Can you talk about whether career pathways for early childhood professionals are clearly outlined in the system and recognized by other sectors?
 - b. How do early childhood providers find out about the variety of career opportunities and pathways in the early care and education field?
 - c. What resources are available to assist early childhood providers move to other roles or achieve additional qualifications and credentials in a seamless fashion?
 - d. What articulation agreements are in place to support professional growth of the early childhood providers in Vermont?
 - e. What articulation agreements would you like to see implemented?
8. **Moving now to data and the Bright Futures Information System, can you describe your experience and perspective with this database/information system?**
 - a. What policies are in place to guide the collection, sharing and dissemination of the data collected in BFIS that is related to the early childhood workforce and professional development?
 - b. What are the main strengths of this information system?
 - c. What are the main weaknesses of this information system?
 - d. What would you like to see done to improve capacity and usability of the information system?
9. **How does the system ensure quality?**
 - a. What quality assurance mechanisms are in place within the system to ensure the resources and offerings of the system are aligned with professional standards, supportive of professional growth and meeting the professional development needs of the early childhood workforce?
 - b. How does the system ensure accountability?
 - c. How is the content of professional development offerings evaluated?
10. **Lastly, do you have any final thoughts you'd like to share about the system?**
 - a. Based on all you've talked about, what recommendations would you put forth to improve the system?

Key Informant Interview Guide: Connecticut Charts-A-Course

1. To start, how would you describe Connecticut's ECPDS, the Connecticut Charts-A-Course?
2. What do you feel are the main strengths and challenges of the Charts-A-Course ECPDS?
 - a. What are your suggestions for improving the system?
3. I'd like to better understand the governance/advisory structure of your state's ECPDS. Can you describe the advisory structure or body of the ECPDS?
 - a. Can you talk about whether roles and responsibilities are clearly defined or are in need of better definition?
 - b. What are your thoughts on the effectiveness of the leadership guiding, implementing and operationalizing the plans and policies of the system?
 - c. Can you talk about the flow of information throughout the system? How are plans, policies, goals, etc. communicated throughout the system and/or to representatives of the system?
 - d. Are their groups or representatives from other groups that you feel should be at the table or be part of the advisory structure of the ECPDS and if so, who would they be (e.g., higher ed, head start, public education)?
4. Thinking about how this system and parts of the system are funded, can you talk about how the ECPDS is financially supported?
 - a. What are the current funding sources for the system?
 - b. Can you talk about whether the offerings of the system are financially supported (e.g. professional development trainings, the professional development registry, funding incentives for providers or early childhood, etc.)
 - c. Where would you direct additional funds for the system if available?
5. Are the CT Charts-A-Course core knowledge areas aligned with other standards set for early childhood care and education? If so, was alignment or is alignment ensured by the system?
6. What is the process for determining which professional development trainings/opportunities are offered through the system?
 - a. How does the system ensure that offerings available match Core Knowledge Areas?
 - b. Are the PD offerings of the system adequate to meet the needs of all early childhood providers throughout Connecticut?
 - c. Can you talk about whether professional development opportunities are offered at various levels (e.g.: beginning, intermediate, advanced)?
7. Can you talk about whether career pathways for early childhood professionals are clearly outlined in the system and recognized by other sectors?
 - a. How do early childhood providers find out about the variety of careers and career pathways in the early care and education field through the Charts-A-Course system?
 - b. What resources are available in the ECPDS to assist early childhood providers move to other roles or achieve additional qualifications and credentials in a seamless fashion?
 - c. What articulation agreements are in place to support professional growth of the early childhood providers in Connecticut?
 - d. What articulation agreements would you like to see implemented?
8. Can you describe your state's ECPDS registry or data collection system?
 - a. What data are collected? Who enters the data? Is the data verified?
 - b. What policies are in place to guide the collection, sharing and dissemination of the data collected by the system?
 - c. Is participation in the registry voluntary or mandatory? If voluntary, what policies are in place to incentivize EC professionals to participate in the registry?
 - d. What are the main strengths of this information system?
 - e. What are the main weaknesses of this information system?
9. What recommendations and/or lessons learned would you share with other state's working to build a coordinated, integrated and aligned ECPDS?

Key Informant Interview Guide: The Nevada Registry

1. To start, how would you describe Nevada's ECPDS, The Nevada Registry?
2. What are the main strengths and challenges of The Nevada Registry ECPDS?
 - a. What are your suggestions for improving the system?
3. I'd like to better understand the governance/advisory structure of your state's ECPDS. Can you describe the advisory structure or body of the ECPDS?
 - a. Can you talk about whether roles and responsibilities are clearly defined or are in need of better definition?
 - b. What are your thoughts on the effectiveness of the leadership guiding, implementing and operationalizing the plans and policies of the system?
 - c. Can you talk about the flow of information throughout the system? How are plans, policies, goals, etc. communicated throughout the system and/or to representatives of the system.
 - d. Are their groups or representatives from other groups that you feel should be at the table or be part of the advisory structure of the ECPDS and if so, who would they be (e.g., higher ed, head start, public education)?
4. Thinking about how this system and parts of the system are funded, can you talk about how the ECPDS is financially supported?
 - a. What are the current funding sources for the system?
 - b. Can you talk about whether the offerings of the system are financially supported (e.g. professional development trainings, the professional development registry, funding incentives for providers or early childhood, etc.?)
 - c. Where would you direct additional funds for the system if available?
5. Are Nevada's core knowledge areas and core competencies aligned with other standards set for early childhood care and education in Nevada? If so, how is alignment ensured by the system?
6. What is the process for determining which professional development trainings/opportunities are offered through the system?
 - a. How does the system ensure that offerings available match Core Knowledge Areas?
 - b. Are the PD offerings of the system adequate to meet the needs of all early childhood providers throughout Nevada?
 - c. Can you talk about whether professional development opportunities are offered at various levels (e.g.: beginning, intermediate, advanced)?
7. Can you talk about whether career pathways for early childhood professionals are clearly outlined in the system and recognized by other sectors?
 - a. How do early childhood providers find out about the variety of careers and career pathways in the early care and education field though the Nevada Registry?
 - b. What resources are available in the ECPDS to assist early childhood providers move to other roles or achieve additional qualifications and credentials in a seamless fashion?
 - c. What articulation agreements are in place to support professional growth of the early childhood providers in Nevada?
 - d. What articulation agreements would you like to see implemented?
8. Can you describe your state's ECPDS registry or data collection system?
 - a. What data are collected? Who enters the data? Is the data verified?
 - b. What policies are in place to guide the collection, sharing and dissemination of the data collected by the system?
 - c. Is participation in the registry voluntary or mandatory? If voluntary, what policies are in place to incentivize EC professionals to participate in the registry?
 - d. What are the main strengths of this information system?
 - e. What are the main weaknesses of this information system?
9. What recommendations and/or lessons learned would you share with other state's working to build a coordinated, integrated and aligned ECPDS?



2011 Vermont Early Childhood and Afterschool Professional Development Survey

**Conducted by the Vermont Department for Children and Families,
Child Development Division**

Reported June 2012



Agency of Human Services

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
History.....	5
Methods.....	5
Response.....	6
Respondent Demographics.....	7
Type of Program.....	7
Age of Respondents.....	8
Education.....	8
Type of Work.....	10
Professional Development Information & Access.....	11
Preference for Location of Professional Development.....	11
Interest in Vermont and National Credentials and Certificates.....	12
Getting Professional Development Information.....	13
Access to Mentoring and Support.....	15
Awareness of Vermont's Professional Development Statewide Systems.....	16
How did you hear about Northern Lights Career Development Center?.....	18
Northern Lights Services Used.....	20
Need for Personal Support.....	22
Awareness and Interest in Specific Professional Development.....	24
Child Development Training.....	25
Families and Communities Training.....	26
Teaching and Learning Training.....	27
Professionalism and Program Management.....	27
Health and/or Developmental Issues.....	28
Obtaining Professional Development.....	30
Preferred Method of Learning.....	30
Challenges in Obtaining Professional Development.....	30
Financial Supports.....	32
Time Valued.....	33
Recognition Received.....	33
Overall Comments.....	34
Challenges.....	34
What Works.....	35
Supports That Are/Would Be Helpful.....	36
Funding Vermont's Early Childhood and Afterschool Professional Development System.....	37
Conclusions.....	38
Appendix	
I. Survey Instrument.....	40
II. PD supports Available by Region and Type of Program.....	59
III. Eight Core Areas of Professional Development Investment.....	62

Executive Summary

The Vermont Early Childhood and Afterschool Professional Development Survey was created in the spring of 2011 by CDD staff and key stakeholders. It was designed to gather data on professional development needs in the Vermont early childhood and afterschool profession. 968 individuals responded to the survey completely or in part, and were asked a variety of questions about their professional development and the challenges they face in accessing professional development. Individuals were asked to identify demographic information such as area of Vermont worked and type of program they work in. The survey was then analyzed based on that data.

Respondent demographics

67% of responses were from individuals who work in registered home and licensed centers across Vermont. The highest percentage of responses was from Chittenden County, while the lowest was from Springfield area. The overall age distribution reflects the majority of respondents between the age of 36 and 60 years old. This age distribution was consistent through the program types, except Legally Exempt Child Care (LECC) professionals. The highest percentage of LECC professionals were 26 to 35 years old. Overall 20.2% of the respondents have achieved a bachelor's degree in a field related to education and/or child development, and 28.4% have achieved a bachelor's degree in any field. 52.4% of respondents indicated they direct a child care program, and/or direct a program and teach a group of children. When the majority of respondents are directors or owners it can have an effect on the data.

Professional Development Information & Access

When asked where they prefer to get professional development the majority of respondents indicated a preference for professional development to be offered in their area. Many respondents were willing to drive within an

hour of their workplace with preference shown for specific towns. However respondents from Chittenden County were least likely to seek professional development in other areas of the state.

When asked what works in getting information about professional development 25% indicated that receiving emails was preferred, however 91 comments were received that indicated emails and information is not currently received in a timely fashion. Respondents were also asked about their current access to professional development and mentoring. In all areas of the state and all types of programs the highest percentage of responses indicated that professionals have access to a variety of types of professional development opportunities.

In most regions and types of programs no one indicated that they do not have access to professional development or mentoring, except legally exempt professionals where 12.5% indicated they do not have access to professional development opportunities.

Awareness of Vermont's Professional Development Statewide Systems

Respondents were asked several questions regarding their awareness about statewide systems including Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC), the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder, the Vermont Afterschool Pathways, and the Instructor Registry for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals. The majority of respondents had heard of at least one of the components. When asked where they had heard about Northern Lights Career Development Center the highest percentage of respondents indicated they heard at a workshop or training.

There was some variation by region in where respondents had heard about NLCDC and significant variation by program. Registered home professionals heard from their local community child care support agency; licensed

early childhood and afterschool professionals heard from attending a workshop or training; public preschool professionals heard from STARS; and CIS professionals heard from co-workers and workshops. Legally exempt professionals were most likely to not have heard about NLCDC.

When asked what NLCDC services they had used the majority of respondents indicated sending professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) and using the Northern Lights website for professional development information. The least amount of responses were for attending a career planning training by NLCDC staff and attending a career coaching seminar. In addition the respondents were asked if they wanted specific personalized assistance with planning professional development. Overall the majority of respondents indicated they did not need or want specific personalized assistance.

Awareness and Interest in Specific Professional Development

Respondents were asked about specific trainings and types of trainings. They indicated that many of the trainings had not been heard of by many respondents, or they had already taken the training. When asked about the needs for different types of trainings they indicated:

- Not enough advanced level infant/toddler training
- Not enough trainings on how to engage families to support the program and communicating and working with challenging families.
- Not enough math and science training at any level
- Not enough professionalism and program management training at any level
- Not enough health and/or developmental issues training at any level

Obtaining Professional Development

Respondents were asked about their preferred method of learning, challenges they face, financial supports that are useful, and how

their time was valued. 41.3% of respondents indicated that that they would prefer to get professional development in a series of training sessions on the same topic. 28.4% indicated that professional development is too expensive and that is a challenge for them. Many of the financial supports that were options respondents indicated were not available. However the financial supports that were useful include paid time to attend professional development, low cost or free trainings from the local community child care trainer; and low cost or free training through a community or statewide organization.

Respondents indicated that their time was valued by training and coursework that was offered during the evening so that they could attend during a time that was convenient.

Funding Vermont's Early Childhood and Afterschool Professional Development System

Finally the respondents were asked about how they would like to see Vermont's early childhood and afterschool professional development system funded. They were given an imaginary one hundred dollars and asked to distribute it in 8 core areas based on how they would like to see funding for those areas. Responses indicated the most funding should be put into making the system affordable and available and funding to the programs; while the least amount of funding should go to consultation to programs & mentor support to individuals.

Conclusion

Early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont have a wide range of experience, education and professional development needs. However there is a need for a wider variety and more advanced professional development opportunities across Vermont. Information about opportunities needs to be timely, and information should be given in a variety of formats. This data could be used as a baseline of information about needs in specific regions or by different types of professionals. Changes could be made and additional surveys could be completed to determine the impact of those programs.

History

In the 2010 Vermont legislative session the Department for Children and Families (DCF) was challenged to change the way it operates. DCF Child Development Division (CDD) was given the task of engaging critical stakeholders in detailed planning around three strategies:

1. Consolidate CDD administered child development services for families and children in each AHS region through a single community partner contract within each region.
2. Creation of centralized call center for child care referral services.
3. Creation of a statewide approach to ensuring a well qualified early childhood and afterschool workforce and supporting continuous quality improvement in early childhood and afterschool programs.

CDD's goal was to take this opportunity to engage community partners, clients and other stakeholders in a transparent participatory process that solicited input.

One stakeholder group was the "Early Childhood and Afterschool Program Consultation, Quality Improvement and Professional Development Group." The group's purpose was to address strategy three:

Creation of a statewide approach to ensuring a well qualified early childhood and afterschool workforce and supporting continuous quality improvement in early childhood and afterschool programs.

The group discussed surveying the early childhood and afterschool community to determine their professional development

needs. The purpose of this survey was to collect information about the challenges and barriers that people experience about professional development in Vermont.

The survey was then created in the spring of 2011 by CDD staff and key stakeholders based on the information discussed by the "Early Childhood and Afterschool Program Consultation, Quality Improvement and Professional Development Group". It was tested by early childhood and afterschool professionals. The survey was created to be an electronic survey, and paper copies were distributed as requested by individuals, programs or agencies.

The survey was initially distributed in June of 2011 through email list serves. It was sent to the CDD "e-provider" listserv, CDD partners list serves, and statewide organizations that provide support in professional development. It was then distributed further by the Children's Integrated Services (CIS) blog, Northern Lights Career Development Center newsletter, the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence newsletter, and a postcard was sent to all regulated child care programs in Vermont encouraging participation.

A second distribution of the survey was completed in September of 2011 again through the CDD "e-provider" listserv, and CDD partners list serves. Copies of the survey were available to participants at the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children conference and the Vermont Afterschool Conference both in October of 2011. The survey was closed to additional entries in December of 2011.

Methods

This informal survey was created for all early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont. Due to the distribution method the trend was that it was more likely for the manager or director of an early childhood or afterschool program to see the survey. This may be why many of the individuals completing the survey were directors or owners of programs, and teaching assistants were less

likely to respond. The respondents represent more individuals that have internet access, as 98.14% of the responses were via online survey. The survey was analyzed by program type and region of the state. Due to the low response from non-recurring care program staff the information break down does not include those types of programs.

Response

968 individuals responded to the survey from across the state and program types. People were asked where in Vermont they work, the type of program they worked in, the type of work they

did, their age and highest level of education. This information was then used to analyze the data to observe trends in regions and work environments.

Type of Program Definitions

Registered homes are programs that are regulated to provide care within a home setting for up to six children under the age of six years, and four school age children.

Licensed early childhood programs includes programs licensed for up to 12 children within a home setting and licensed early childhood programs outside the home, not including public preschool programs or nonrecurring care programs.

Afterschool programs include programs that were identified as regulated by CDD and programs that are not regulated such as a community recreation program.

Non-recurring care programs are programs that are typically at ski resorts and provide drop in care.

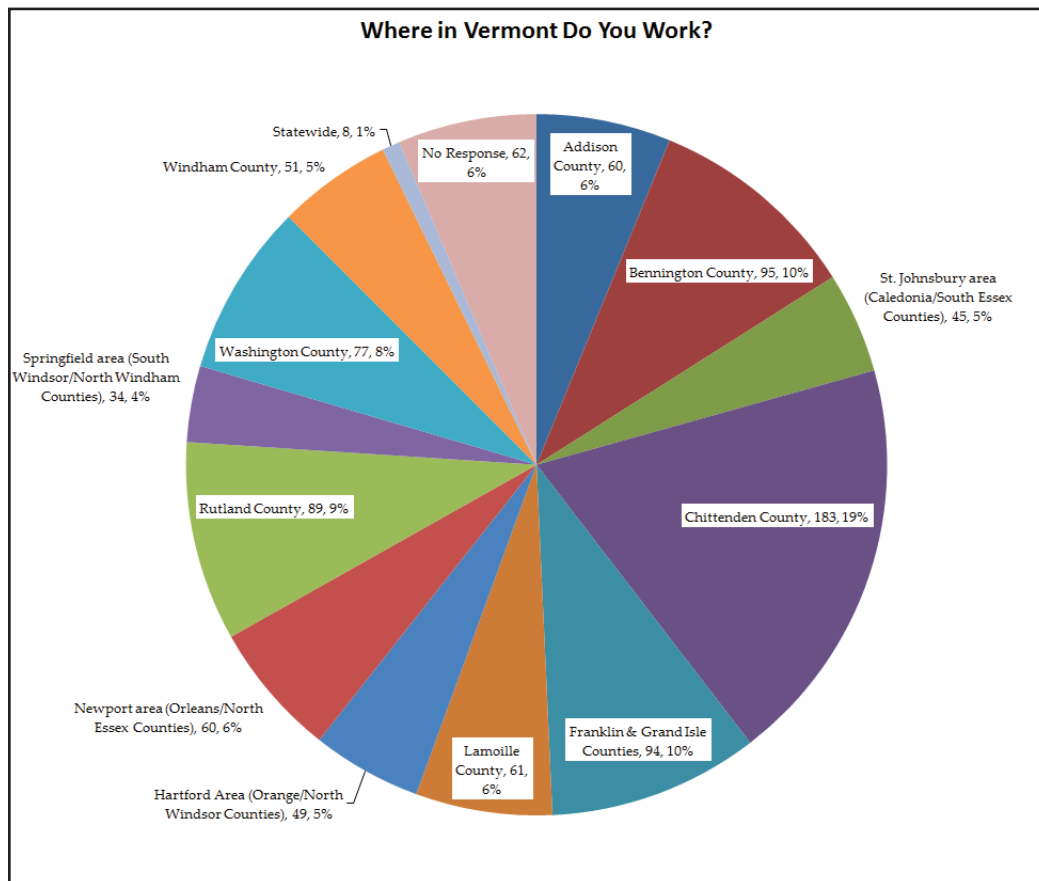
Public preschool programs are licensed early childhood programs that are in a public school setting, typically run by the school system.

CIS are programs receiving funding to provide early intervention, early childhood and family mental health, or a parent child center through Vermont Children's Integrated Services.

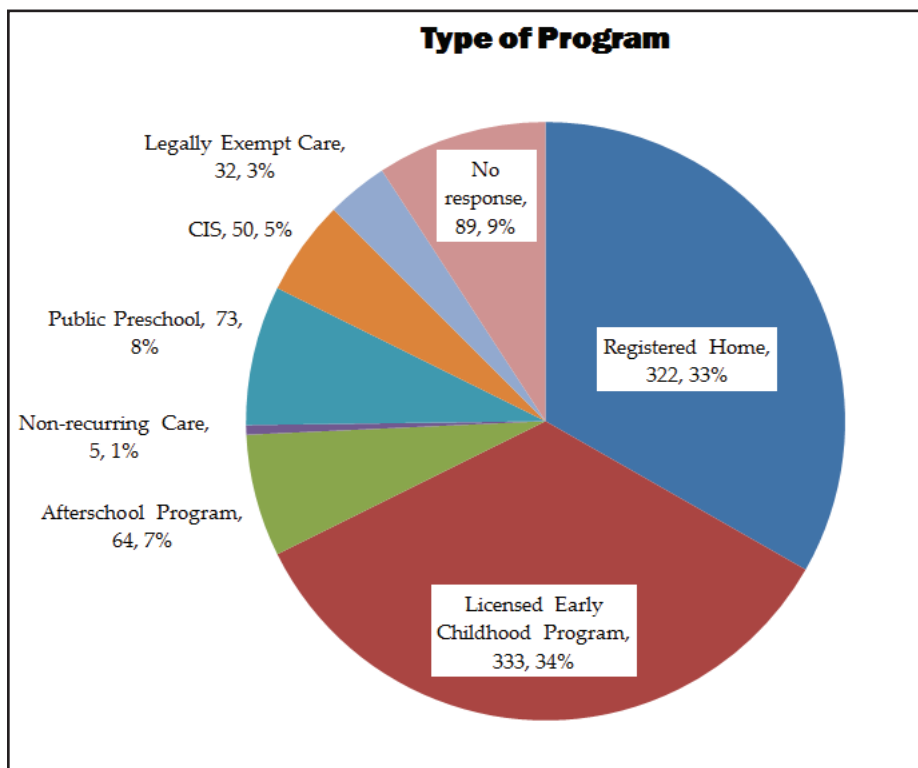
Legally Exempt includes programs that are not required to be regulated through Vermont Statute, except afterschool programs.

Respondent Demographics

Respondents were asked a variety of demographic questions including where they worked; the type of program they work in; the type of work they do; and their education level. The areas of the state were divided by Vermont Agency of Human Services districts, and responses were received from every district. The highest percentage of responses was from Chittenden County, which has the largest percentage of Vermont's population and the largest percentage of regulated child care programs in Vermont. Springfield area had the lowest percentage of responses, and while the area has a smaller population this is a low response rate for the population.



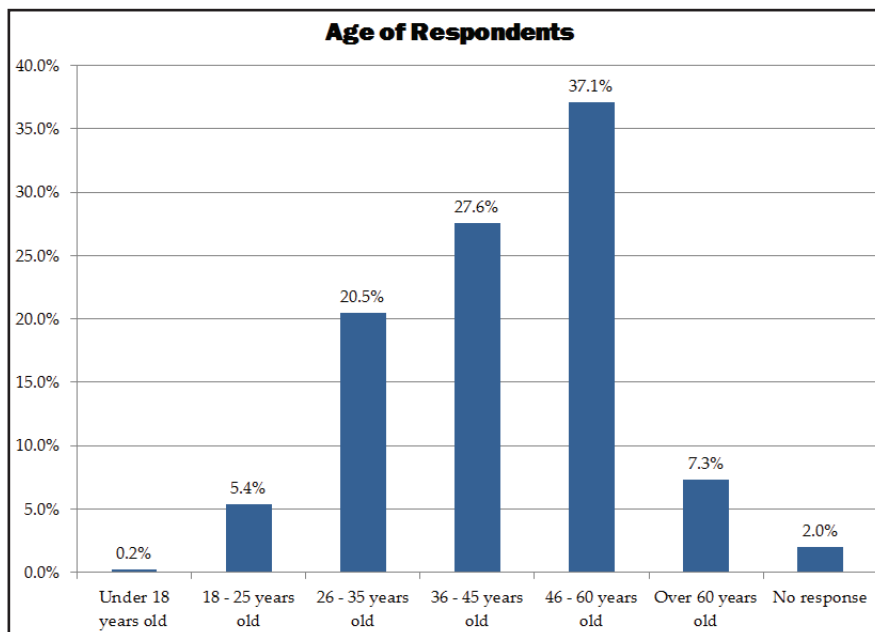
Type of Program



67% of responses were from individuals who work in registered homes and licensed centers. One reason this may have occurred is the distribution methods used. The surveys were repeatedly distributed to regulated programs in a variety of ways. Different survey distribution with a focus on teaching assistants, CIS professionals and legally exempt programs may have yielded different results.

Age of Respondents

The overall age distribution reflects the majority of respondents between the age of 36 and 60 years old. The majority of respondents also indicated they own or direct a program. One possible reason for this distribution is that 52.4% of the respondents are directing a program and the teachers or teaching assistants of programs were less likely to complete this survey, indicating that beginning level and younger staff may not have been accurately represented. Further data analysis from BFIS and other sources may be necessary to determine if the early childhood and afterschool workforce is aging.



Age of Respondents by Program Type							
Age							
Program	Under 18 years	18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - 60 years	Over 60 years	No response
Registered Home	0.3%	2.8%	19.3%	32.1%	37.7%	7.8%	0.3%
Licensed Early Childhood Program	0.0%	8.2%	24.4%	24.7%	36.0%	6.7%	0.0%
Afterschool Program	0.0%	10.9%	23.4%	18.8%	37.5%	9.4%	0.0%
Public Preschool	0.0%	1.4%	8.2%	39.7%	43.8%	6.8%	0.0%
CIS	0.0%	4.1%	20.4%	24.5%	49.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Legally Exempt Care	3.1%	12.5%	28.1%	25.0%	25.0%	6.3%	0.0%

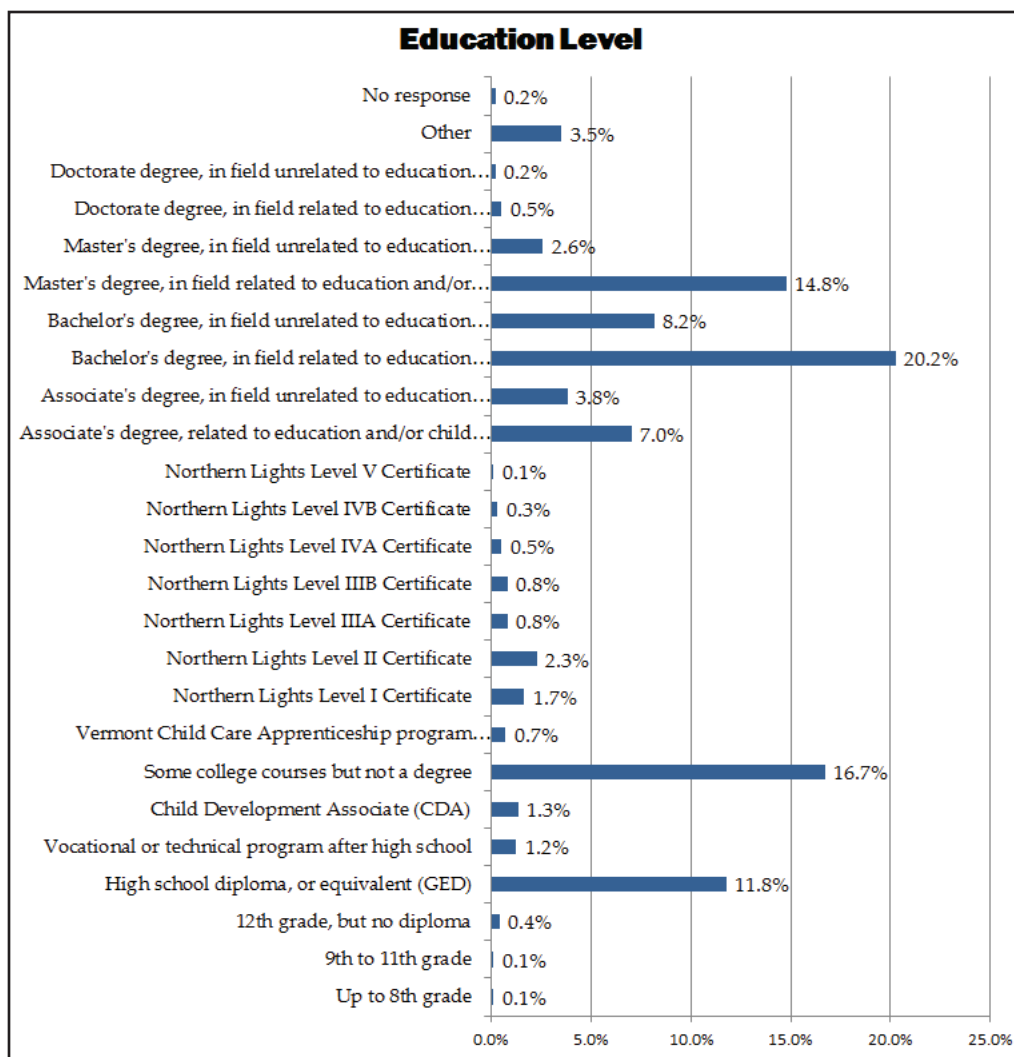
The age distribution was consistent across the regions of the state and the types of programs, except the professionals that are legally exempt. In those programs 28.1% of the respondents were 26 – 35 years old.

Education

Respondents were asked: “What is the highest level of education you have achieved?” Overall 20.2% of the respondents have achieved a bachelor’s degree in a field related to education and/or child development, and 28.4% have achieved a bachelor’s degree in any field.

There was some variation in the training based on the program type and region. In the program

types many of the programs had a majority of people with bachelor’s degrees or master’s degrees. Public preschool programs had a large majority of staff with master’s degrees. Registered homes and legally exempt programs had the majority of respondents with a high school diploma or some college.



Within the regions of Vermont - Addison, Chittenden, Franklin/Grand Isle, Lamoille, Rutland, Springfield, and Windham areas the largest majority of respondents have achieved a bachelor's degree. In Washington County the largest group of respondents had achieved a master's degree. Newport and St. Johnsbury the largest groups had a high school diploma, while

in the Bennington region the largest group had some college.

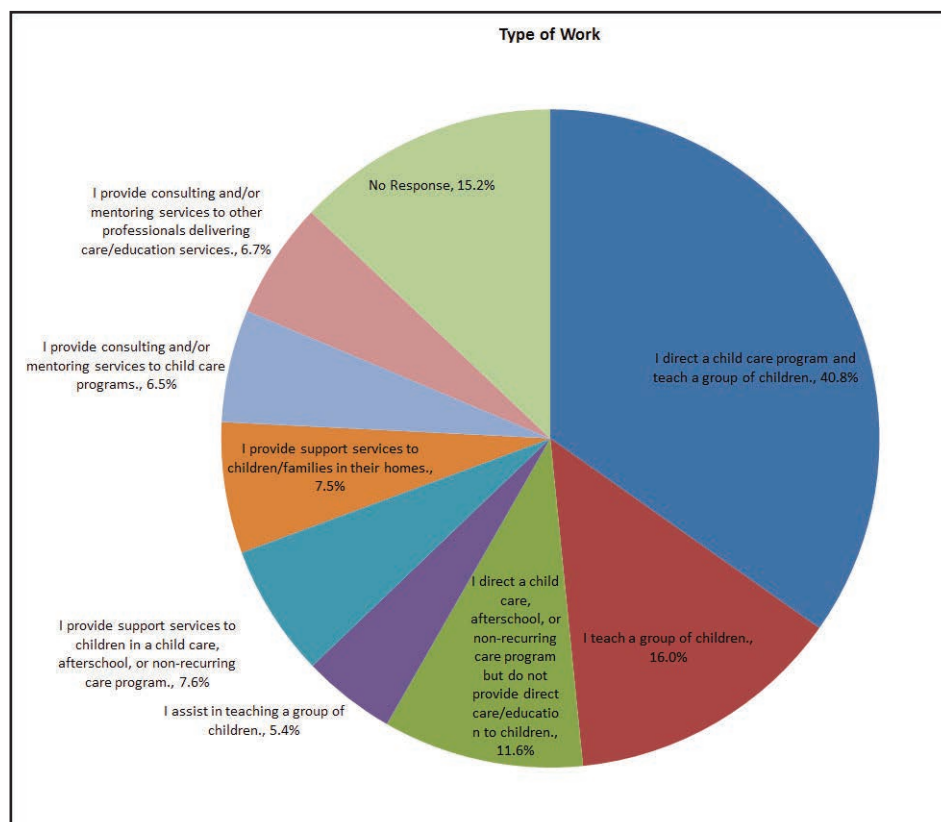
The majority of respondents indicated they own or direct a program and this may cause an over representation of individuals with higher education degrees.

Education Level By Program Type												
Program	Education Level											
	Have not completed high school	High School Diploma	Technical School	Level I	Level II or CDA	Some College	Level III A or Apprenticeship Certificate	Level IIIB or Associate's Degree	Level IVA/IVB or Bachelor's Degree	Level V or Master's Degree	Doctorate	No response
Registered Home	1.0%	27.0%	3.0%	3.0%	6.0%	27.0%	1.0%	12.0%	14.0%	2.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Licensed Early Childhood Program	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	1.5%	3.0%	14.1%	3.3%	16.2%	35.0%	14.4%	0.0%	9.9%
Afterschool Program	0.0%	4.9%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	9.0%	0.0%	8.2%	44.0%	24.6%	1.6%	4.7%
Public Preschool	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	1.4%	32.9%	57.5%	1.4%	0.0%
CIS	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	4.3%	0.0%	8.0%	40.0%	38.0%	2.1%	0.0%
Legally Exempt Care	0.0%	32.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	35.5%	0.0%	6.4%	12.0%	6.0%	0.0%	2.0%

Education Level by Region												
Area of Vermont	Education Level											
	Have not completed high school	High School Diploma	Technical School	Level I	Level II or CDA	Some College	Level III A or Apprenticeship Certificate	Level IIIB or Associate's Degree	Level IVA/IVB or Bachelor's Degree	Level V or Master's Degree	Doctorate	No response
Addison County	2.0%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	2.0%	22.0%	0.0%	13.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Bennington County	1.0%	17.0%	2.0%	1.0%	0.0%	23.0%	0.0%	14.0%	21.0%	15.0%	0.0%	6.0%
St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	0.0%	25.0%	2.0%	0.0%	7.0%	9.0%	0.0%	33.0%	4.0%	9.0%	0.0%	11.0%
Chittenden County	5.0%	8.0%	1.0%	1.0%	2.0%	9.0%	2.0%	10.0%	39.0%	17.0%	1.0%	5.0%
Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	0.0%	20.0%	2.0%	4.0%	1.0%	15.0%	2.0%	10.0%	27.0%	12.0%	0.0%	7.0%
Lamoille County	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.0%	28.0%	1.0%	4.0%	28.0%	10.0%	1.0%	7.0%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	0.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	16.0%	0.0%	16.0%	31.0%	20.0%	0.0%	7.0%
Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	0.0%	23.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	18.0%	0.0%	18.0%	20.0%	10.0%	0.0%	6.0%
Rutland County	1.0%	9.0%	2.0%	3.0%	0.0%	18.0%	1.0%	19.0%	21.0%	16.0%	1.0%	9.0%
Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	0.0%	9.0%	3.0%	3.0%	6.0%	21.0%	3.0%	3.0%	24.0%	18.0%	0.0%	10.0%
Washington County	0.0%	8.0%	1.0%	3.0%	0.0%	16.0%	3.0%	9.0%	19.0%	29.0%	1.0%	11.0%
Windham County	2.0%	10.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	14.0%	33.0%	12.0%	2.0%	15.0%
Statewide	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.0%	63.0%	0.0%	24.0%

Type of Work

The respondents were asked to identify the type of work they do, this information was used to help analyze the needs of the workforce. The highest percentage of respondents (40.8%) indicated that they direct a child care program and teach a group of children. This is in line with the type of professionals that responded to the survey with 33% of responses from registered home professionals. The smallest percentage of responses was from individuals that identified as assisting in teaching a group of children (5.4%).



Professional Development Information & Access

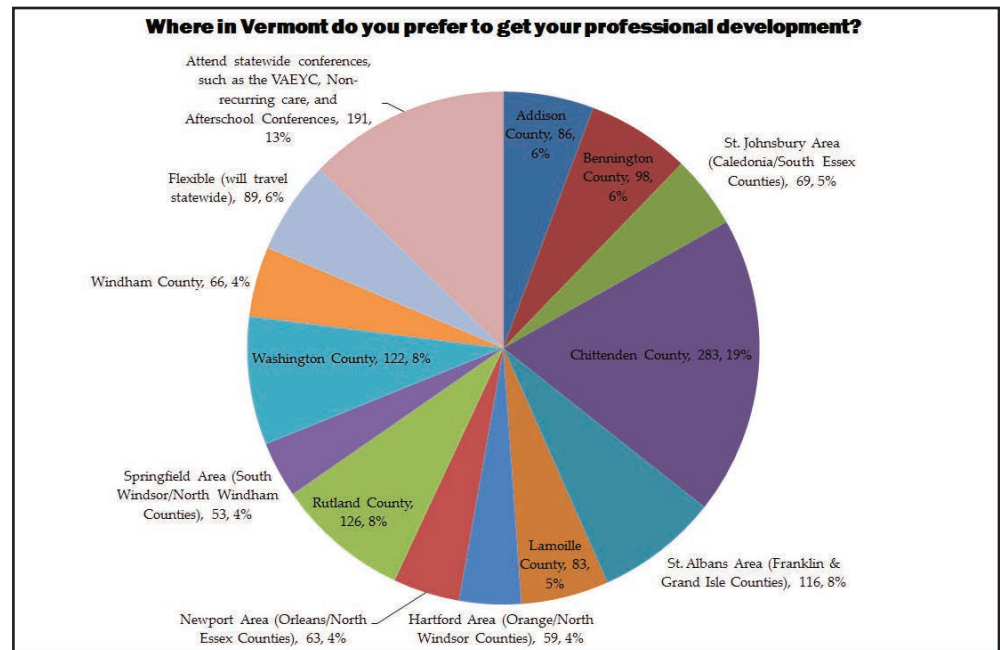
Respondents were asked a variety of questions about their access to and information about professional development opportunities,

including location preference, credential achievements, and mentoring.

Preference for Location of Professional Development

Respondents indicated that they prefer professional development in their county/region. Many respondents were willing to drive within an hour of their workplace for professional development, with preference shown for specific towns. Respondents from Addison, Franklin/Grand Isle, Morrisville, & Washington Counties indicated they were willing to travel to Chittenden County for professional development; while the respondents from Chittenden County were the least likely to seek professional development in other areas of the state.

When identifying challenges in accessing professional development (see page 30) the respondents in many areas indicated the driving



distance to professional development is a challenge. However only 8.8% of respondents in Chittenden County indicated this was a challenge. Many professional development opportunities, especially advanced professional

Area of the state preferred for professional development by type of program						
Region for Professional Development	Type of program					
	Registered Home	Licensed Early Childhood Program	Afterschool Program	Public Preschool	CIS	Legally Exempt Care
Addison County	6.5%	10.5%	7.8%	8.2%	18.0%	3.1%
Bennington County	10.9%	12.6%	7.8%	2.7%	12.0%	0.0%
St. Johnsbury Area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	7.1%	6.0%	7.8%	11.0%	4.0%	3.1%
Chittenden County	18.9%	32.4%	37.5%	42.5%	48.0%	18.8%
St. Albans Area (Franklin & Grand Isle Counties)	15.2%	10.2%	6.3%	12.3%	10.0%	21.9%
Lamoille County	8.4%	7.5%	12.5%	16.4%	4.0%	12.5%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	4.0%	7.8%	1.6%	5.5%	12.0%	9.4%
Newport Area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	8.4%	5.1%	3.1%	6.8%	4.0%	12.5%
Rutland County	11.2%	12.6%	20.3%	9.6%	22.0%	12.5%
Springfield Area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	6.2%	4.5%	9.4%	2.7%	8.0%	6.3%
Washington County	9.0%	12.3%	15.6%	38.4%	4.0%	6.3%
Windham County	6.8%	8.7%	7.8%	2.7%	8.0%	0.0%
Flexible (will travel statewide)	4.0%	10.2%	15.6%	13.7%	14.0%	3.1%
Attend statewide conferences, such as the VAEYC, Non-recurring care, and Afterschool Conferences	3.1%	27.0%	40.6%	38.4%	12.0%	6.3%

development, are offered in Chittenden County. This may be way Chittenden County respondents were less likely to seek professional development in other areas. Respondents from public schools indicated that the majority of trainings are provided by their school district. And

respondents from CIS indicated they received most of their professional development through the CIS regional and state teams.

Area of the state preferred for professional development by work location												
Region for Professional Development	Work Area											
	Addison County	Bennington County	St. Johnsbury Area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	Chittenden County	St. Albans Area (Franklin & Grand Isle Counties)	Lamoille County	Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	Newport Area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	Rutland County	Springfield Area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	Washington County	Windham County
Addison County	93.3%	4.2%	0.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	10.1%	2.9%	0.0%	2.0%
Bennington County	0.0%	94.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	2.9%	0.0%	2.0%
St. Johnsbury Area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	0.0%	0.0%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.9%	8.2%	23.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
Chittenden County	36.7%	4.2%	2.2%	91.3%	31.9%	29.5%	4.1%	1.7%	7.9%	2.9%	18.2%	7.8%
St. Albans Area (Franklin & Grand Isle Counties)	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	10.4%	85.1%	4.9%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Lamoille County	0.0%	0.0%	15.6%	0.5%	4.3%	86.9%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	11.7%	0.0%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	85.7%	1.7%	0.0%	5.9%	3.9%	2.0%
Newport Area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	1.1%	1.6%	0.0%	96.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Rutland County	8.3%	24.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	93.3%	14.7%	0.0%	3.9%
Springfield Area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	85.3%	0.0%	29.4%
Washington County	1.7%	0.0%	8.9%	3.3%	2.1%	14.8%	22.4%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	89.6%	0.0%
Windham County	0.0%	8.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.6%	0.0%	86.3%
Flexible (will travel statewide)	15.0%	12.6%	8.9%	10.4%	4.3%	14.8%	8.2%	5.0%	4.5%	14.7%	6.5%	11.8%
Attend statewide conferences, such as the VAEYC, Non-recurring care, and Afterschool Conferences	25.0%	18.9%	13.3%	20.8%	13.8%	27.9%	22.4%	13.3%	11.2%	20.6%	24.7%	15.7%
Did not answer	1.7%	2.1%	2.2%	3.3%	2.1%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.2%	2.9%	5.2%	3.9%

Interest in Vermont and national credentials and certificates

Respondents were asked their interest in or achievement of the following certificates and credentials:

- Child Development Associate (CDA) Infant/Toddler, Preschool, Family Child Care and Home Visitor;
- CCV Child Care Certificate;
- Vermont Director Credential Steps One through Three;
- Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Certificate;

- Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential;
- Vermont teaching license with early childhood endorsement, early childhood special education endorsement, elementary education endorsement, or other type of endorsement.

Overall there was a variety of level of interest for each of the different certificates or credentials; however the majority of respondents were not interested in the certificates and credentials.

Have you achieved, are working on, or would like to learn about national or state awarded credential or Vermont Department of Education teaching license/endorsement?						
Type of Credential	Interest in Credentials					
	Have Achieved	Currently working towards this	Would like to learn more about this	Would like to earn in the future	No interest at this time	Did not respond
Child Development Associate (CDA)- Infant/Toddler	3.93%	1.96%	3.72%	2.38%	14.36%	73.66%
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Preschool	4.65%	1.65%	4.24%	2.79%	13.43%	73.24%
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Family Child Care	7.13%	2.17%	3.82%	2.58%	13.53%	70.76%
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Home Visitor	0.21%	0.10%	2.17%	1.24%	16.22%	80.06%
Child Care Certificate from Community College of Vermont (CCV)	0.83%	0.93%	4.75%	1.65%	13.95%	77.89%
Vermont Director Credential - Step 1	3.72%	1.34%	7.13%	2.07%	13.84%	71.90%
Vermont Director Credential - Step 2	1.24%	2.07%	3.20%	2.58%	14.15%	76.76%
Vermont Director Credential - Step 3	0.41%	1.55%	3.72%	3.10%	13.95%	77.27%
Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Certificate of Completion	0.83%	1.14%	3.41%	3.62%	14.46%	79.24%
Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential	0.21%	0.83%	3.62%	2.27%	14.26%	78.82%
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Early Childhood endorsement	8.06%	3.00%	6.61%	5.37%	11.67%	65.29%
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Elementary Education endorsement	4.03%	0.72%	2.79%	2.58%	12.81%	74.59%
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Other type of endorsement	2.27%	0.41%	2.07%	1.45%	14.46%	79.34%

Getting Professional Development Information

Respondents indicated that they prefer getting professional development information in the same way they are currently receiving it. They indicated a variety of ways to get professional development, and the top five methods were:

- Receive emails from various sponsors of training/education
- Read my local child care support agency newsletter
- Check the Bright Futures Information System course calendar
- Call my local child care support agency/trainer
- Hear from my co-workers

When asked what works in getting information many comments were received that indicated the preference is to receive emails, however receiving emails in a timely fashion is a challenge that was identified.

How do you currently find out about professional development? And how would you prefer professional development opportunities? (Please rate by your top five most frequent methods)		
Method	How information is received currently	Preferred method of receiving
Call my local child care support agency/trainer	31.8%	12.9%
Read my local child care support agency newsletter	53.0%	20.0%
Ask my director/supervisor	26.0%	10.1%
Check the Bright Futures Information System course calendar	36.8%	15.3%
Talk to my advisor at the college I attend	8.4%	4.4%
Search the internet for "distance" learning through college or other sponsors of training (in and out of state)	19.0%	8.2%
Hear from my co-workers	30.6%	11.1%
Learn about training at my local provider network (for example Starts Points groups)	22.3%	9.9%
Receive emails from various sponsors of training/education	54.5%	25.0%
CIS State/Regional Teams	13.0%	6.7%
I don't know what to ask or where to go for professional development	5.7%	3.1%

There were variations in responses based on the type of program and region.

Registered home professionals indicated their highest preference in receive information is by reading the local child care support agency newsletter. All other types of programs preferred to get information through email.

Regionally the following variations occurred:

- Addison County and Bennington County preferred to get information in the local community child care support agency newsletter.
- St. Johnsbury area, Chittenden County, Franklin & Grand Isle Counties, Lamoille County, Newport area, Springfield area, and

Washington County preferred to receive information through emails.

- Rutland and Windham Counties preferred to receive information from the local community child care support agency newsletter and through email.

How do you currently find out about professional development? And how would you prefer professional development opportunities? (Please rate by your top five most frequent methods)						
Method	Preferred method of receiving information					
	Registered Home	Licensed Early Childhood Programs	After-school Programs	Public Preschool	CIS	Legally Exempt
Call my local child care support agency/trainer	14.3%	12.0%	20.3%	6.8%	6.0%	21.9%
Read my local child care support agency newsletter	21.4%	21.3%	28.1%	12.3%	12.0%	21.9%
Ask my director/supervisor	4.0%	10.8%	23.4%	11.0%	18.0%	12.5%
Check the Bright Futures Information system course calendar	12.1%	15.6%	17.2%	16.4%	10.0%	21.9%
Talk to my advisor at the college I attend	3.4%	3.0%	9.4%	6.8%	2.0%	9.4%
Search the internet for "distance" learning through college or other sponsors of training (in and out of state)	3.4%	8.4%	20.3%	16.4%	10.0%	21.9%
Hear from my co-workers	6.2%	12.9%	32.8%	11.0%	22.0%	12.5%
Learn about training at my local provider network (for example Starts Points groups)	12.1%	8.7%	20.3%	8.2%	4.0%	9.4%
Receive emails from various sponsors of training/education	18.9%	25.5%	32.8%	31.5%	32.0%	25.0%
CIS State/Regional Teams	3.7%	5.7%	14.1%	8.2%	20.0%	6.3%
I don't know who to ask or where to go for professional development	3.4%	1.5%	6.3%	1.4%	0.0%	18.8%

How do you currently find out about professional development? And how would you prefer professional development opportunities? (Please rate by your top five most frequent methods)												
Method	Preferred method of receiving information											
	Addison County	Bennington County	St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	Chittenden County	Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	Lamoille County	Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	Rutland County	Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	Washington County	Windham County
Call my local child care support agency/trainer	11.7%	12.6%	20.0%	6.0%	11.7%	19.7%	16.3%	18.3%	9.0%	17.6%	27.3%	11.8%
Read my local child care support agency newsletter	28.3%	25.3%	20.0%	19.7%	18.1%	16.4%	28.6%	13.3%	15.7%	26.5%	32.5%	15.7%
Ask my director/supervisor	10.0%	9.5%	6.7%	6.0%	9.6%	16.4%	10.2%	11.7%	12.4%	8.8%	20.8%	3.9%
Check the Bright Futures Information System course calendar	8.3%	12.6%	13.3%	14.8%	13.8%	23.0%	20.4%	16.7%	12.4%	20.6%	35.1%	5.9%
Talk to my advisor at the college I attend	5.0%	2.1%	2.2%	3.3%	4.3%	3.3%	4.1%	8.3%	3.4%	2.9%	10.4%	3.9%
Search the internet for "distance" learning through college or other sponsors of training (in and out of state)	6.7%	4.2%	6.7%	11.5%	8.5%	3.3%	14.3%	11.7%	5.6%	8.8%	15.6%	9.8%
Hear from my co-workers	10.0%	11.6%	6.7%	10.4%	11.7%	8.2%	12.2%	15.0%	7.9%	17.6%	22.1%	7.8%
Learn about training at my local provider network (for example Starts Points groups)	1.7%	12.6%	11.1%	8.2%	10.6%	8.2%	10.2%	15.0%	9.0%	20.6%	11.7%	11.8%
Receive emails from various sponsors of training/education	13.3%	22.1%	24.4%	26.8%	29.8%	21.3%	32.7%	25.0%	15.7%	41.2%	61.0%	15.7%
CIS State/Regional Teams	3.3%	3.2%	8.9%	6.0%	6.4%	6.6%	2.0%	13.3%	7.9%	11.8%	5.2%	5.9%
I don't know who to ask or where to go for professional development	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	1.6%	3.2%	4.9%	4.1%	6.7%	1.1%	2.9%	3.9%	3.9%

Access to Mentoring & Support

Respondents were asked about their current access to professional development opportunities, mentoring, professional development technical assistance and program quality improvement technical assistance. Responses varied by location and by type of program.

In all areas of the state and all types of programs the highest percentage of respondents indicated that they have access to a variety of types of professional development opportunities. In many areas and types of programs 0% indicated that they do not have access, however 12.5% of legally exempt professionals indicated they do not have access to professional development opportunities

Overall respondents indicated they either had limited access or access to a variety of types of mentoring. In Bennington County, Hartford area, Newport area and Rutland County a higher percentage of respondents indicated they have limited access to mentoring. Afterschool and CIS professionals also indicated limited access to mentoring. 15.6% of legally exempt professionals indicated that they do not have access to mentoring.

Respondents indicated that they have access to a variety of types of professional development technical assistance. A higher percentage of respondents in Bennington County, Hartford area, Newport area, Springfield area and Franklin/Grand Isle Counties have limited access

to professional development technical assistance. Most types of programs indicated they had access to a variety of types of professional development technical assistance however CIS professionals indicated that they had limited access.

Respondents indicated they had access to a variety of types or limited access to program quality improvement technical assistance. In the following areas the highest percentage of respondents indicated that they had limited access to program quality improvement technical assistance:

- Bennington County
- Franklin & Grand Isle Counties
- Lamoille County
- Rutland County
- Windham County
- Hartford area
- Newport area
- Springfield area

The responses by program in quality improvement technical assistance were similar to the statewide trend, except for CIS professionals that indicated limited access.

See Appendix II for detailed program specific and region specific data.

In your region do you have access to professional development opportunities, mentoring and technical assistance related to professional development and/or program quality improvements support?				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Professional development opportunities	15.7%	55.7%	9.4%	0.9%
Mentoring	28.1%	31.2%	3.1%	6.7%
Professional development technical assistance	25.7%	31.0%	3.9%	5.9%
Program quality improvement technical assistance	24.9%	29.5%	3.0%	6.3%

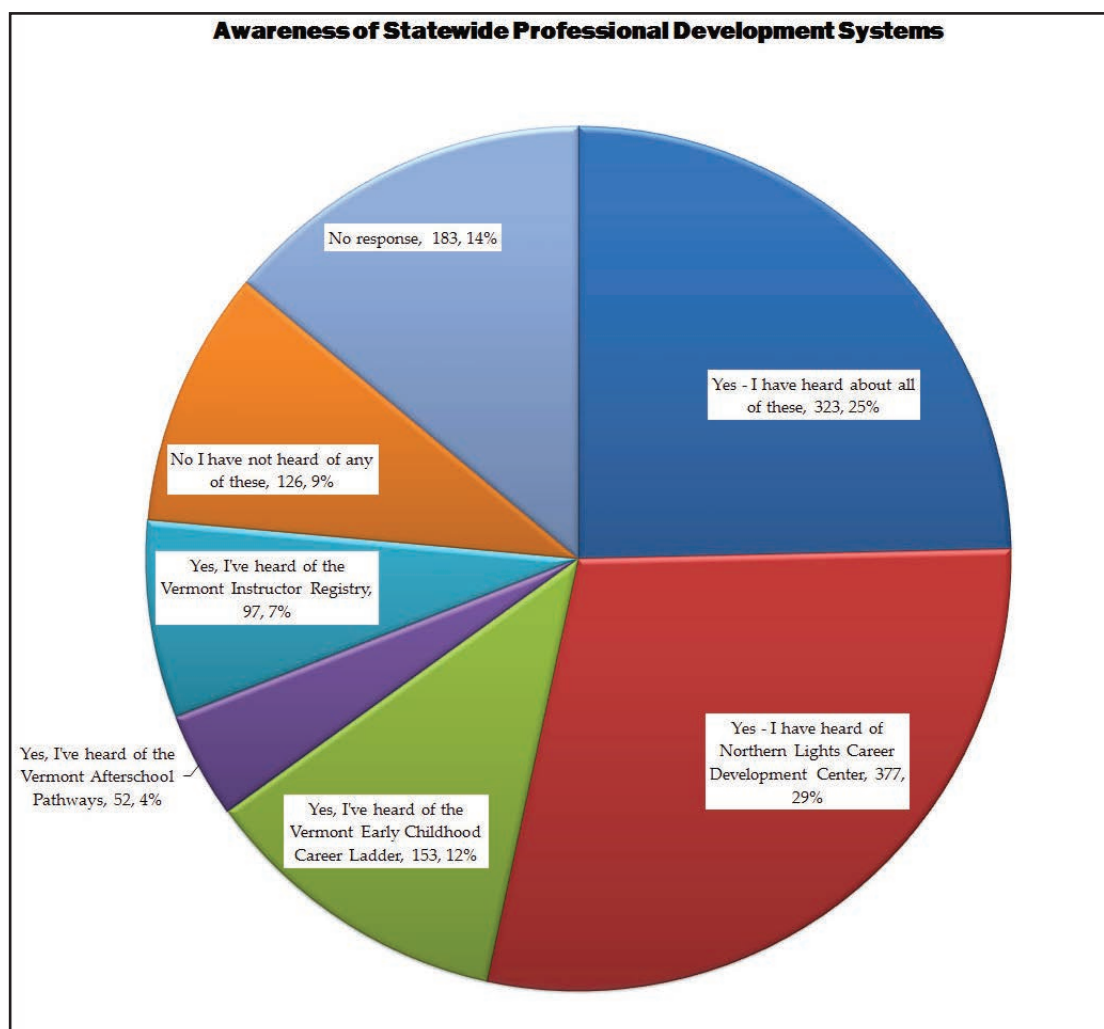
Awareness of Vermont's Professional Development Statewide Systems

Respondents were asked "Have you heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) and/or the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/ Instructor Registry". The majority of respondents had heard of at least one of the components.

In the regions the majority of respondents have knowledge of at least one of the components, with many having heard of either all of the components or Northern Lights Career Development Center. In St. Johnsbury area and Franklin/Grand Isle Counties a large percentage

of the respondents had not heard about any of the components.

The majority of respondents in each type of program also have awareness of at least one of the components, with many having heard of either all of the components or Northern Lights Career Development Center. Legally Exempt programs were the least likely to be aware of any of the components, with 59.4% of respondents indicating they had not heard of any of the components.



Have you heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) and/or the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/Instructor Registry (Check all that apply)							
Region	Yes - I have heard about all of these	Yes - I have heard of Northern Lights Career Development Center	Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder	Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Afterschool Pathways	Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Instructor Registry	No I have not heard of any of these	No response
Addison County	30.0%	45.0%	18.3%	8.3%	13.3%	8.3%	21.7%
Bennington County	33.7%	37.9%	9.5%	2.1%	4.2%	12.6%	20.0%
St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	31.1%	33.3%	17.8%	6.7%	8.9%	28.9%	13.3%
Chittenden County	39.3%	36.6%	12.0%	4.9%	8.2%	13.7%	14.2%
Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	26.6%	38.3%	17.0%	3.2%	8.5%	21.3%	18.1%
Lamoille County	37.7%	47.5%	21.3%	4.9%	16.4%	6.6%	14.8%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	36.7%	42.9%	18.4%	4.1%	6.1%	12.2%	14.3%
Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	35.0%	30.0%	13.3%	5.0%	8.3%	16.7%	25.0%
Rutland County	23.6%	20.2%	9.0%	3.4%	5.6%	11.2%	49.4%
Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	38.2%	52.9%	26.5%	5.9%	23.5%	0.0%	17.6%
Washington County	24.7%	51.9%	19.5%	7.8%	11.7%	7.8%	20.8%
Windham County	37.3%	78.4%	29.4%	11.8%	17.6%	11.8%	19.6%

Have you heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) and/or the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/Instructor Registry (Check all that apply)							
Program	Yes - I have heard about all of these	Yes - I have heard of Northern Lights Career Development Center	Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder	Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Afterschool Pathways	Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Instructor Registry	No I have not heard of any of these	No response
Registered Home	27.3%	41.3%	17.1%	4.7%	9.0%	13.0%	22.0%
Licensed Early Childhood Program	39.6%	39.9%	21.0%	4.2%	11.7%	6.6%	17.7%
Afterschool Program	42.2%	37.5%	7.8%	12.5%	6.3%	12.5%	12.5%
Public Preschool	39.7%	46.6%	11.0%	8.2%	16.4%	16.4%	5.5%
CIS	30.0%	46.0%	10.0%	4.0%	6.0%	14.0%	16.0%
Legally Exempt Care	6.3%	15.6%	9.4%	6.3%	3.1%	59.4%	21.9%

Northern Lights Career Development Center has organized all the info. - it's great!

I don't understand how it all works. Again why can't one entity take care of all this. Professional development comes from all over and we submit it here? Confusing to me.

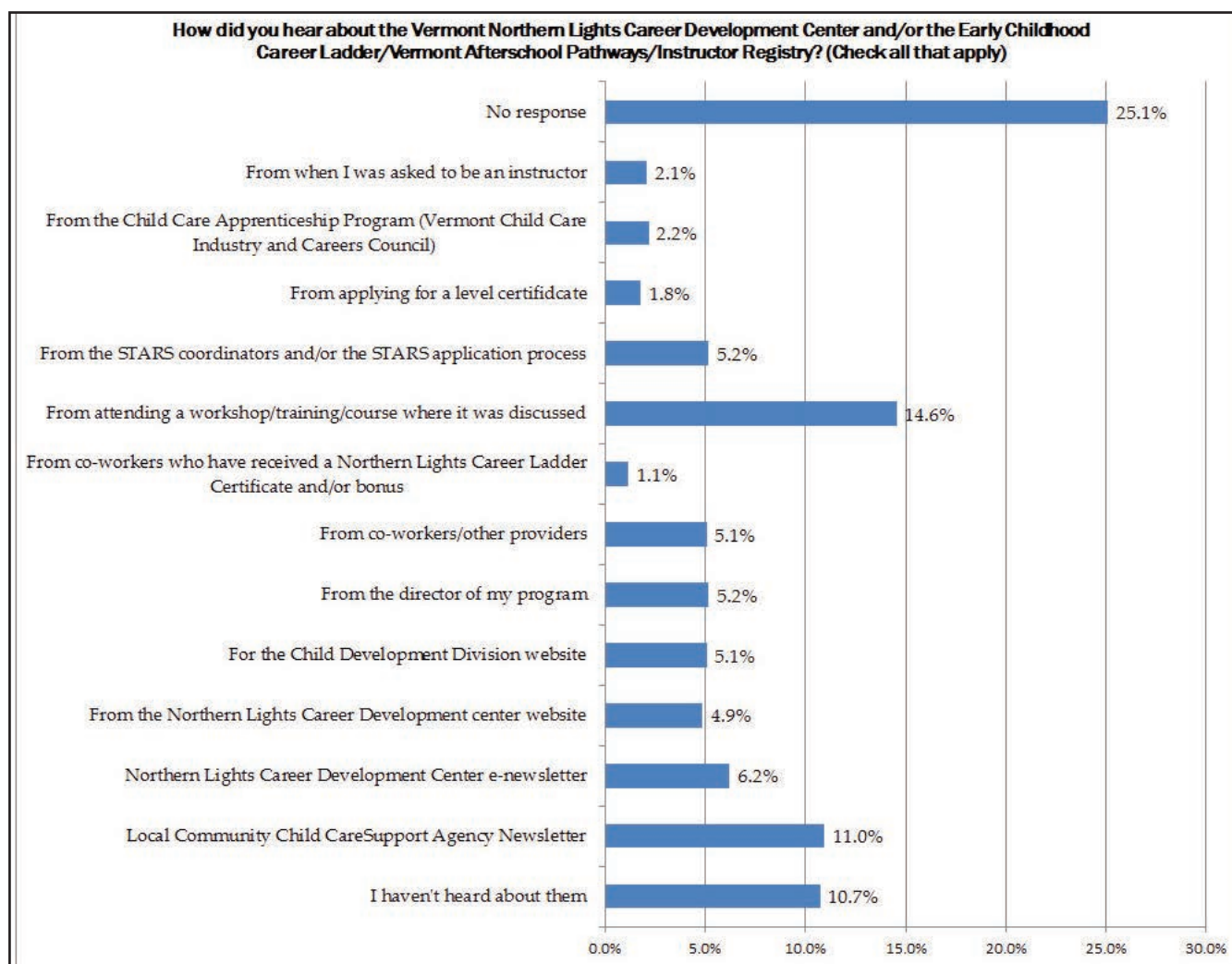
How did you hear about Northern Lights Career Development Center?

The highest percentage of people indicated they heard about Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) from attending a workshop, while the least was from co-workers who received a certificate or bonus. There is some variation by region with the majority of respondents from Addison County, Bennington County, St. Johnsbury area, Hartford area, Rutland County and Windham County hearing about NLCDC from their Local community Child Care Support Agency Newsletter. While respondents in Chittenden County, Franklin & Grand Isle Counties, Lamoille County, Newport area, Springfield area and Washington County heard about NLCDC from attending a workshop/training/course where it was discussed.

There is also variation by program with the

majority of:

- Registered home professionals heard about it from their local community child care support agency newsletter
- Licensed early childhood and afterschool professionals heard about it from attending a workshop/training/course where it was discussed
- Public preschool professionals heard about it from the STARS coordinators and/or the STARS application process
- CIS professionals heard from two places – from co-workers/other providers and from attending a workshop/training/course where it was discussed



How did you hear about the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center and/or the Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/Instructor Registry? (Check all that apply)												
	Addison County	Bennington County	St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	Chittenden County	Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	Lamoille County	Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	Rutland County	Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	Washington County	Windham County
I haven't heard about them	8.3%	12.6%	15.6%	10.4%	17.0%	6.6%	12.2%	11.7%	14.6%	2.9%	3.9%	9.8%
Local Community Child Care Support Agency Newsletter	15.0%	14.7%	24.4%	8.2%	9.6%	8.2%	16.3%	5.0%	18.0%	8.8%	6.5%	11.8%
Northern Lights Career Development Center e-newsletter	3.3%	7.4%	6.7%	3.8%	6.4%	8.2%	4.1%	3.3%	6.7%	2.9%	13.0%	7.8%
From the Northern Lights Career Development center website	3.3%	6.3%	4.4%	6.6%	1.1%	9.8%	6.1%	3.3%	4.5%	8.8%	3.9%	2.0%
From the Child Development Division website	3.3%	6.3%	4.4%	5.5%	2.1%	4.9%	6.1%	6.7%	4.5%	0.0%	6.5%	7.8%
From the director of my program	8.3%	8.4%	2.2%	6.0%	5.3%	3.3%	2.0%	8.3%	2.2%	2.9%	2.6%	5.9%
From co-workers/other providers	6.7%	4.2%	2.2%	5.5%	3.2%	8.2%	2.0%	5.0%	2.2%	11.8%	1.3%	7.8%
From co-workers who have received a Northern Lights Career Ladder Certificate and/or bonus	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	4.1%	1.7%	1.1%	2.9%	1.3%	0.0%
From attending a workshop/training/course where it was discussed	15.0%	9.5%	13.3%	13.7%	20.2%	21.3%	14.3%	11.7%	13.5%	20.6%	18.2%	9.8%
From the STARS coordinators and/or the STARS application process	1.7%	1.1%	2.2%	6.0%	6.4%	3.3%	10.2%	8.3%	4.5%	0.0%	10.4%	3.9%
From applying for a level certificate	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	3.3%	2.0%	1.7%	0.0%	2.9%	3.9%	2.0%
From the Child Care Apprenticeship Program (Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council)	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	4.9%	3.2%	3.3%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	2.6%	0.0%
From when I was asked to be an instructor	1.7%	2.1%	0.0%	2.7%	3.2%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	11.8%	1.3%	0.0%
No response	30.0%	22.1%	24.4%	25.1%	21.3%	18.0%	18.4%	33.3%	27.0%	20.6%	24.7%	31.4%

How did you hear about the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center and/or the Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/Instructor Registry? (Check all that apply)						
	Registered Home	Licensed Early Childhood Programs	Afterschool Programs	Public Preschool	CIS	Legally Exempt
I haven't heard about them	9.9%	5.4%	10.9%	15.1%	12.0%	43.8%
Local Community Child Care Support Agency Newsletter	17.1%	11.1%	7.8%	5.5%	6.0%	0.0%
Northern Lights Career Development Center e-newsletter	8.1%	5.1%	4.7%	11.0%	2.0%	3.1%
From the Northern Lights Career Development center website	3.7%	6.6%	4.7%	6.8%	6.0%	0.0%
From the Child Development Division website	7.1%	3.6%	4.7%	2.7%	10.0%	0.0%
From the director of my program	0.3%	9.9%	7.8%	6.8%	6.0%	0.0%
From co-workers/other providers	5.0%	4.2%	3.1%	4.1%	12.0%	3.1%
From co-workers who have received a Northern Lights Career Ladder Certificate and/or bonus	1.6%	0.9%	0.0%	1.4%	4.0%	0.0%
From attending a workshop/training/course where it was discussed	14.9%	16.2%	21.9%	9.6%	12.0%	6.3%
From the STARS coordinators and/or the STARS application process	5.0%	3.3%	10.9%	17.8%	2.0%	0.0%
From applying for a level certificate	0.3%	4.5%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
From the Child Care Apprenticeship Program (Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council)	0.9%	3.6%	1.6%	1.4%	2.0%	3.1%
From when I was asked to be an instructor	0.3%	1.5%	3.1%	9.6%	6.0%	0.0%
No response	25.8%	24.0%	17.2%	8.2%	20.0%	40.6%

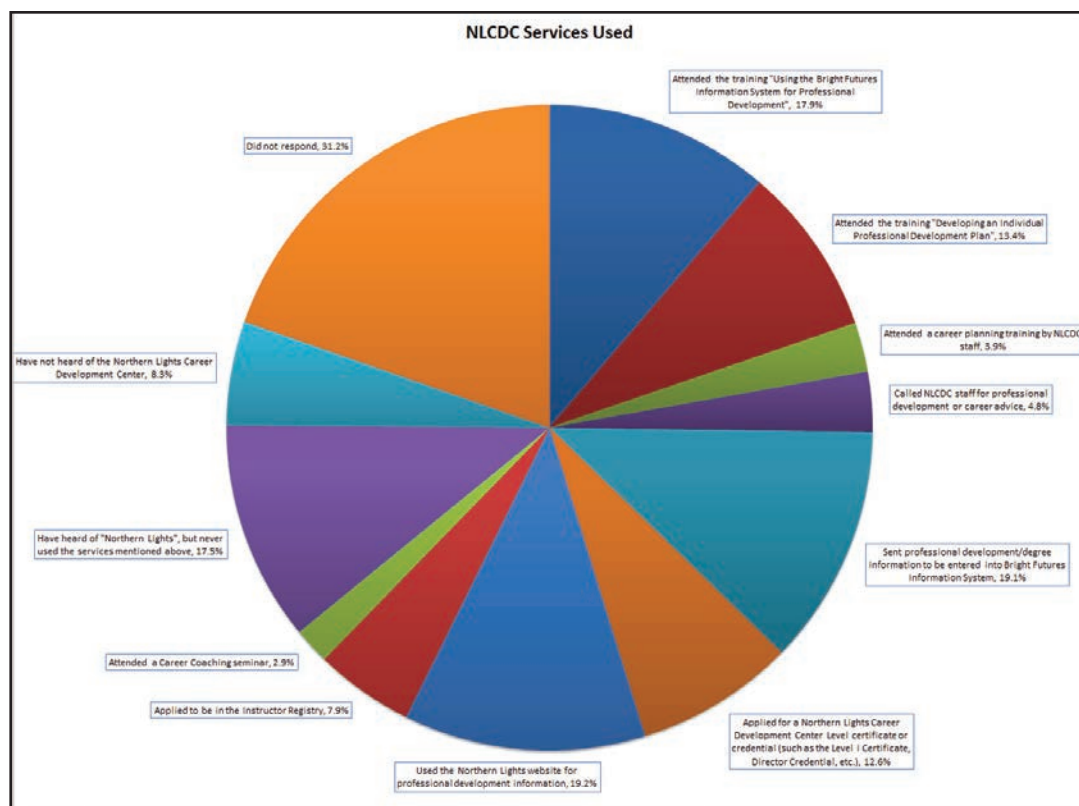
Northern Lights Services Used

Respondents were asked “Which of the following Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) services have you used.” The two services that the majority of respondents used were sending professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) and using the Northern Lights website for professional development information. The least amount of responses were attending a career planning training by NLCDC staff and attending a career coaching seminar. Those two options were not as widely available until recently which may be the reason for the low percentage of respondents indicating they had used those services. There was some variation by region:

- In Addison County, Bennington County, Franklin & Grand Isle Counties and the Newport area the highest percentage of respondents indicated they sent professional development/degree information to be entered into BFIS.
- In Chittenden County, Lamoille County and Washington County the highest percentage of respondents indicated they use Northern Lights website for professional development information.
- In St. Johnsbury area the highest percentage of respondents indicated they attended the training “Using the Bright Futures Information system for Professional Development”.
- In the Hartford area the highest percentage

of respondents indicated three services were used – Applied for Northern Lights Career Development Center level certificate or credential; used Northern Lights website for professional development information; and have heard of “Northern Lights”, but never used the services mentioned.

- In Rutland County the highest percentage of



respondents indicated two services that were used: Attended the training “Using the Bright Futures Information system for Professional Development” and called NLCDC staff for professional development or career advice.

- In Springfield area the two services with the highest percentage of respondents were attended the training “Using the Bright Futures Information system for Professional Development”; and sent professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System.
- Windham County’s highest percentage of responses indicated they heard about “Northern Lights”, but have never used the

services mentioned.

- Calling NLCDC staff for professional development or career advice received low responses in all areas, except Rutland County and Springfield area.
- Applying to be in the Instructor Registry received low responses except in the Springfield area (23.5%)

There is also variation in responses by program type:

- Registered home professional responses were highest for

attending the training "Using the Bright Futures Information System for Professional Development"

- Licensed early childhood and afterschool professionals responses were highest for using the Northern Lights website for professional development information
- Public preschool professionals' responses were highest for sending professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System.
- CIS professionals responses were highest for "Have heard of Northern Lights, but never used the services mentioned" category
- The majority of professionals in legally exempt settings have not heard of Northern Lights.
- Applying for a Northern Lights Career

Northern Lights Services Used - By Program Type						
	Registered Home	Licensed Early Childhood Program	Afterschool Program	Public Preschool	CIS	Legally Exempt Care
Attended the training "Using the Bright Futures Information System for Professional Development"	21.1%	21.6%	25.0%	6.8%	6.0%	3.1%
Attended the training "Developing an Individual Professional Development Plan"	12.7%	19.2%	17.2%	2.7%	6.0%	3.1%
Attended a career planning training by NLCDC staff	3.4%	5.4%	6.3%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Called NLCDC staff for professional development or career advice	4.0%	6.9%	6.3%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Sent professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System	14.9%	25.8%	21.9%	26.0%	4.0%	9.4%
Applied for a Northern Lights Career Development Center Level certificate or credential (such as the Level I Certificate, Director Credential, etc.)	11.5%	21.9%	10.9%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Used the Northern Lights website for professional development information	12.4%	27.0%	29.7%	20.5%	12.0%	9.4%
Applied to be in the Instructor Registry	2.8%	8.7%	10.9%	15.1%	10.0%	3.1%
Attended a Career Coaching seminar	0.3%	4.5%	4.7%	1.4%	4.0%	0.0%
Have heard of "Northern Lights", but never used the services mentioned above	21.1%	14.1%	10.9%	19.2%	30.0%	0.0%
Have not heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center	5.9%	3.3%	12.5%	15.1%	8.0%	46.9%
Did not respond	36.0%	26.4%	18.8%	23.3%	38.0%	40.6%

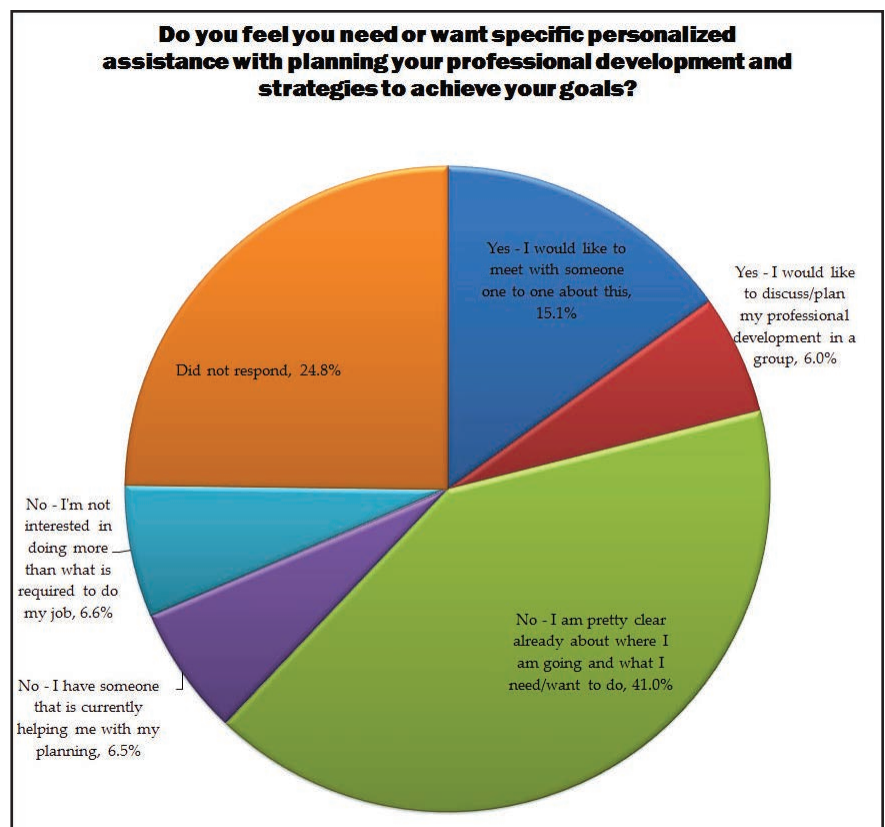
Development Center level certificate or credential was low for public preschool, CIS and legally exempt professionals; however 21.9% of licensed early childhood professionals had applied for a certificate or credential.

- Applying to be in the Instructor Registry was low for registered home, licensed early childhood and legally exempt professionals, but 15.1% of public preschool professionals had applied to be in the registry.

Northern Lights Services Used - By Region												
	Addison County	Bennington County	St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	Chittenden County	Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	Lamoille County	Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	Rutland County	Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	Washington County	Windham County
Attended the training "Using the Bright Futures Information System for Professional Development"	20.0%	24.2%	22.2%	15.8%	18.1%	18.0%	10.2%	16.7%	20.2%	35.3%	15.6%	9.8%
Attended the training "Developing an Individual Professional Development Plan"	15.0%	22.1%	8.9%	12.0%	10.6%	18.0%	12.2%	18.3%	14.6%	23.5%	9.1%	3.9%
Attended a career planning training by NLCDC staff	1.7%	5.3%	4.4%	7.1%	1.1%	1.6%	2.0%	1.7%	6.7%	8.8%	3.9%	2.0%
Called NLCDC staff for professional development or career advice	1.7%	6.3%	4.4%	3.8%	2.1%	3.3%	4.1%	6.7%	20.2%	20.6%	2.6%	0.0%
Sent professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System	23.3%	28.4%	17.8%	18.6%	20.2%	16.4%	10.2%	21.7%	19.1%	35.3%	18.2%	11.8%
Applied for a Northern Lights Career Development Center Level certificate or credential such as the Level I Certificate, Director Credential, etc.)	11.7%	14.7%	6.7%	10.4%	18.1%	21.3%	18.4%	10.0%	7.9%	26.5%	9.1%	7.8%
Used the Northern Lights website for professional development information	20.0%	18.9%	8.9%	20.2%	13.8%	23.0%	18.4%	18.3%	18.0%	29.4%	22.1%	17.6%
Applied to be in the Instructor Registry	10.0%	5.3%	8.9%	9.3%	7.4%	8.2%	0.0%	6.7%	3.4%	23.5%	2.6%	11.8%
Attended a Career Coaching seminar	1.7%	0.0%	4.4%	2.7%	2.1%	0.0%	6.1%	0.0%	3.4%	11.8%	1.3%	7.8%
Have heard of "Northern Lights", but never used the services mentioned above	16.7%	17.9%	26.7%	17.5%	14.9%	16.4%	18.4%	15.0%	14.6%	11.8%	23.4%	19.6%
Have not heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center	5.0%	7.4%	11.1%	6.6%	13.8%	4.9%	8.2%	15.0%	12.4%	2.9%	5.2%	3.9%
Did not respond	31.7%	25.3%	24.4%	33.9%	28.7%	27.9%	26.5%	31.7%	37.1%	23.5%	31.2%	39.2%

Need for Personal Support

Respondents were asked "Do you feel you need or want specific personalized assistance with planning your professional development and strategies to achieve your goals?" Overall the majority of respondents indicated they did not need or want specific personalized assistance with professional development. It is important to note that at the time of the survey many mentor programs available were specific to programs such as accreditation or the national Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) which may have influenced the understanding of this question.



Respondents indicated differences in the specific professional development assistance by type of program and location. Individuals in Bennington County, St. Johnsbury area, Chittenden County, Lamoille County and Newport area were more likely to indicate they would like to meet with someone one on one. Individuals in early childhood programs, afterschool programs and registered homes also were more likely to indicate they would like to meet with someone one-on-one for support.

Do you feel you need or want specific personalized assistance with planning your professional development an strategies to achieve your goals?						
	Registered Home	Licensed Early Childhood Program	Afterschool Program	Public Preschool	CIS	Legally Exempt Care
Yes - I would like to meet with someone one to one about this	14.6%	17.4%	26.6%	8.2%	10.0%	6.3%
Yes - I would like to discuss/plan my professional development in a group	7.5%	6.6%	6.3%	5.5%	2.0%	0.0%
No - I am pretty clear already about where I am going and what I need/want to do	36.0%	41.4%	39.1%	61.6%	44.0%	40.6%
No - I have someone that is currently helping me with my planning	4.3%	9.9%	1.6%	5.5%	14.0%	6.3%
No - I'm not interested in doing more than what is required to do my job	10.2%	3.3%	4.7%	5.5%	4.0%	21.9%
Did not respond	27.3%	21.3%	21.9%	13.7%	26.0%	25.0%

Do you feel you need or want specific personalized assistance with planning your professional development an strategies to achieve your goals?												
	Addison County	Bennington County	St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	Chittenden County	Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	Lamoille County	Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	Rutland County	Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	Washington County	Windham County
Yes - I would like to meet with someone one to one about this	8.3%	15.8%	20.0%	17.5%	11.7%	16.4%	12.2%	21.7%	9.0%	8.8%	16.9%	19.6%
Yes - I would like to discuss/plan my professional development in a group	0.0%	14.7%	4.4%	4.4%	4.3%	3.3%	4.1%	6.7%	9.0%	5.9%	7.8%	3.9%
No - I am pretty clear already about where I am going and what I need/want to do	56.7%	35.8%	35.6%	39.9%	44.7%	49.2%	59.2%	28.3%	44.9%	50.0%	32.5%	37.3%
No - I have someone that is currently helping me with my planning	6.7%	7.4%	8.9%	9.3%	2.1%	6.6%	4.1%	5.0%	2.2%	11.8%	2.6%	11.8%
No - I'm not interested in doing more than what is required to do my job	3.3%	7.4%	6.7%	8.2%	10.6%	3.3%	2.0%	10.0%	3.4%	5.9%	9.1%	0.0%
Did not respond	25.0%	18.9%	24.4%	20.8%	26.6%	21.3%	18.4%	28.3%	28.1%	17.6%	31.2%	27.5%

Awareness and Interest in Specific Professional Development

Respondents were asked about a variety of trainings offered in Vermont and their awareness and interest of the training. There was significant variation in awareness and interest in each type of training based on program type and region.

Overall there was some variation of responses based on the training.

- I Am Moving, I Am Learning; Touch Points; Bridges Out of Poverty; Partnering with Parents; Registered Child Care Apprenticeship; VSA Vermont the highest percentage of responses indicated they had not heard about these trainings.
- Building Blocks for Literacy; Mother Goose Cares About; Care for Kids; Foundations for Learning and Never Too Early the highest percentage of responses indicated they had taken the training.
- Vermont Early Learning Guidelines and the Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals had the similar responses in they haven't heard about and taken this training responses.

There was variation in responses by program type:

- Legally Exempt professionals were the least likely to have heard about or taken any of the trainings listed.
- Licensed early childhood professionals responses were similar to the statewide responses except they were more likely

Which of the following trainings/classes have you heard about and which would you be interested in taking?						
	Haven't heard about it	Heard of this training	Heard of it but not interested	Interested in taking	I've taken some training in this before and want more!	I've taken this training
I Am Moving, I Am Learning	23.2%	9.6%	4.8%	9.9%	3.2%	10.4%
TouchPoints	18.4%	9.7%	3.9%	12.7%	3.5%	13.6%
Building Blocks for Literacy	5.9%	12.9%	4.8%	11.7%	6.3%	22.2%
Mother Goose Cares About (Math, Science, etc...)	10.8%	8.8%	6.3%	11.7%	8.2%	17.9%
Bridges Out of Poverty	24.6%	6.6%	3.2%	14.3%	3.0%	11.1%
Partnering with Parents	20.8%	11.3%	3.4%	15.5%	2.6%	7.2%
Vermont Early Learning Guidelines	15.6%	11.8%	4.9%	8.7%	4.0%	15.7%
Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program and related college courses	16.9%	11.7%	16.0%	4.8%	3.6%	5.3%
VSA Vermont (Very Special Arts)	31.8%	5.1%	4.9%	10.3%	1.9%	4.2%
Care For Kids (by Prevent Child Abuse Vermont)	13.0%	9.8%	3.2%	8.5%	5.6%	22.5%
Foundations for Learning (FEL - Supporting Social Emotional growth)	15.8%	7.6%	2.7%	14.0%	5.3%	17.1%
Never Too Early (Vermont Humanities Council)	16.5%	6.9%	3.4%	7.7%	6.2%	21.0%
Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals	14.5%	11.0%	9.5%	6.2%	4.1%	14.7%

to respond that they had heard about the Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program, but were not interested in taking.

- CIS professionals were more likely to have taken Touch Points and Bridges Out of Poverty; and less likely to have heard about Mother Goose Cares About, Care for Kids, and never Too Early. They were also more likely to respond that they were interested in taking Partnering with Parents training.
- Public PreK professionals were more likely to have taken Bridges Out of Poverty training, and were less likely to have heard about Never Too Early. They were more likely to respond that they were interested in taking Touch Points training.

- Registered home professionals were less likely to have heard about the Foundations for Learning training.
- Afterschool professionals were less likely to have heard about Mother Goose Cares About, Care for Kids, Foundations for Learning, and Never Too Early trainings.

There was variation in responses by region:

- I Am Moving, I Am Learning training was more likely to have been taken by respondents in Newport, St. Johnsbury, Bennington and Middlebury.
- Touchpoints was more likely to have been taken by respondents in Bennington and Middlebury
- Respondents in St. Johnsbury area were more likely to be interested in taking Building Blocks for Literacy, Mother Goose Cares About, Partnering with Parents, and Vermont Early Learning Guidelines.
- Windham County respondents were more likely to be interested in taking Mother Goose Cares About training.

- Respondents in Springfield area were more likely to be interested in taking Touch Points, Bridges Out of Poverty and Partnering with Parents trainings.
- Rutland County respondents were more likely to be interested in taking Building Blocks for Literacy and Mother Goose Cares About training.
- Respondents in Washington County were more likely to be interested in taking Never Too Early training.
- Addison County and Lamoille County respondents were more likely to be interested in taking Foundations for Learning training.
- Newport area respondents were more likely to be interested in taking Bridges Out of Poverty, Partnering with Parents and Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program training.
- Respondents in Hartford area, Washington County, Rutland County, Franklin & Grand Isle Counties and Chittenden County were more likely to indicate they had not heard of the Foundations for Learning training.

Child Development Training

Respondents were asked to rate the amount of training and level for their region. For child development they were asked about infant/toddler, preschool and school age training.

Overall respondents indicated:

- Infant/Toddler – there is not enough advanced level trainings statewide
- Preschool – There is enough training at all levels statewide
- School age – there is enough training at all levels statewide

The responses varied based on the age the respondent was working with. Typically whichever group they worked with the individual felt there was not enough advanced training. For example the respondents from afterschool programs indicated there is enough infant/toddler and preschool

child development training, but not enough advanced level school age training.

- Registered home professionals responded that there was enough training at all levels for all types of child development trainings.
- Licensed early childhood, CIS and Public PreK professionals were more likely to

Child Development Training						
	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Infant/Toddler	15.3%	12.4%	2.9%	8.0%	16.2%	8.9%
Preschool (3 - 5 year old children)	19.1%	6.5%	2.4%	8.6%	18.3%	9.4%
Elementary/School age	16.1%	8.9%	3.0%	5.5%	10.5%	5.3%
Other	2.1%	1.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.9%	1.0%

indicate there was not enough advanced level trainings for infant/toddler and preschool development.

- Legally exempt professionals were more likely to indicate there was not enough infant/toddler training at any level
- Afterschool professionals were more likely to indicate there was not enough advanced level school age development training.

Regionally there were variations in the highest responses for training needs:

- Addison County, Hartford area, Lamoille County, and Washington County respondents were similar to the statewide responses.
- Bennington, Franklin & Grand Isle Counties' respondents indicated that there is enough of all of the child development trainings at all levels.
- Chittenden County and Springfield area respondents indicated that there was

not enough infant/toddler and preschool advanced level training; well they indicated there was enough school age development training at all levels.

- Windham County respondents indicated that there is not enough infant/toddler development college courses; and not enough advance level preschool and school age development training.
- St. Johnsbury area respondents indicated that there is enough infant/toddler and preschool training, but not enough school age development training at any level.
- Rutland County respondents indicated that there is not enough infant/toddler training at any level, preschool training at advanced levels, and school age development college courses.

Families and Communities Training

For families and communities respondents were asked about their access and interest in professional development in how to strengthen/support families; how to engage families to support their program; community resources and helpful connections; and communicating/working with challenging families.

Overall respondents indicated their access to families and communities' professional development was:

- How to strengthen/support families – there is enough training at all levels across the state;
- How to engage families to support their program – there is not enough training at any level across the state;
- Community resources and helpful

connections – there is enough training at all levels across the state; and

- Communicating/working with challenging families – there is not enough training at any level across the state.
- There was some variation in response by program type:

Families and Communities Training						
	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
How to strengthen/support families	15.7%	13.8%	4.9%	8.4%	15.0%	5.3%
How to engage families to support my program	13.0%	16.8%	5.0%	7.9%	12.6%	4.2%
Community resources and helpful connections	17.9%	14.7%	5.5%	6.7%	10.0%	3.6%
Communication/working with challenging families	12.3%	16.8%	5.0%	8.2%	15.2%	4.9%

- Licensed early childhood professionals responses were similar to the statewide response.

- CIS and Public PreK professionals were more likely to respond that there was not enough advanced level training across the families and community type trainings
- Legally exempt and afterschool professionals were more likely to respond that there is not

enough training at any level.

- Registered home professionals were more likely to respond that there is enough training at all levels.

Teaching and Learning Training

In the teaching and learning area of professional development respondents were asked about their access to trainings.

Overall the responses indicated statewide there is enough training at all levels in:

- Literacy/Communication
- Physical Development
- Creative Expression
- Social Emotional
- Child Observation and Assessment
- Curriculum Planning
- Setting up and maintaining the learning environment(s)

While there is not enough training statewide at any level for:

- Math
- Science

There were however responses in every

category of access for all of the types of training, possibly indicating that training needs are dependent on the individual and program's needs.

By region there was little variation with many respondents indicating the need for advanced training in all of the areas. There was some variation in respondents by type of program with legally exempt professionals and public school staff indicating there was enough training in all areas; while CIS, early childhood programs, afterschool and registered homes reflecting the pattern indicated by statewide data.

Teaching and Learning Training						
	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Literacy/Communication	21.7%	8.9%	2.5%	6.4%	12.6%	5.1%
Math	13.2%	13.9%	4.1%	7.0%	13.3%	4.8%
Science	12.7%	14.4%	3.8%	6.3%	13.5%	5.3%
Physical Development	19.2%	11.2%	3.2%	5.9%	13.0%	4.3%
Creative Expression	16.1%	12.8%	3.7%	6.7%	11.9%	5.0%
Social/Emotional Development	18.5%	11.0%	3.9%	6.5%	12.2%	5.4%
Child Observation and Assessment	16.8%	12.3%	5.3%	5.7%	12.9%	4.9%
Curriculum Planning	15.6%	13.3%	5.5%	5.9%	12.7%	4.6%
Setting up and maintaining learning environment(s)	16.0%	13.6%	4.8%	5.8%	11.7%	3.9%
Other	1.7%	1.7%	0.5%	0.4%	1.3%	0.3%

Professionalism and Program Management Training

In the professionalism and program management area of professional development respondents were asked about their access to trainings in the following categories:

- Budgeting and Finance
- Developing policy handbooks
- Legal issues
- Staff supervision and support
- Program assessment
- Grants and quality enhancement resources

- Advocacy
- Meeting facilitation and group dynamics
- Identifying, measuring and achieving outcomes

Public school professionals indicated there was enough training in each of the above areas. However all other respondents indicated that for all of the above areas there is not enough training at any level statewide. The regions of Vermont had similar responses to the statewide data, except:

- Chittenden County respondents indicated that there was enough program assessment and advocacy training at all levels, while there was not enough advanced level training in budgeting and finance, staff supervision and support, meeting facilitation and group dynamics, and identifying, measuring and achieving outcomes.

Professionalism and Program Management Training						
	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Budgeting and Finance	12.6%	18.1%	6.3%	3.6%	9.5%	2.7%
Developing policy handbooks	13.6%	18.4%	6.7%	3.7%	8.0%	2.5%
Legal issues	9.7%	21.7%	6.2%	3.6%	9.4%	2.7%
Staff supervision and support	12.6%	16.3%	4.6%	3.4%	9.6%	2.6%
Program assessment	13.3%	17.3%	5.8%	4.2%	8.8%	2.7%
Grants and quality enhancement resources	8.9%	22.5%	5.1%	4.6%	9.6%	3.3%
Advocacy	14.4%	17.1%	4.8%	4.4%	7.6%	2.4%
Meeting facilitation and group dynamics	13.0%	17.3%	4.9%	4.2%	8.7%	2.7%
Identifying, measuring and achieving outcomes	12.1%	18.3%	4.3%	4.8%	9.5%	2.9%
Other	1.5%	1.9%	0.5%	0.4%	1.0%	0.1%

- Springfield area respondents indicated that there was not enough advanced level training in all of the professionalism and program management areas.
- St. Johnsbury area respondents indicated that there was enough professionalism and program management training at all levels, except in the grants and quality enhancement resources.

Health and/or Developmental Issues

In the health/developmental issues area of professional development respondents were asked about their access to trainings in the following categories:

- Supporting children with health challenges (such as asthma, allergies, diabetes)
- Supporting children with developmental challenges/delays (such as delays in fine or gross motor skills, or speech)
- Mental health/behavior issues
- Training in implementing safe and healthy practices
- On-site technical assistance in advising and monitoring my program for safe and healthy practices
- Nutrition/healthy food preparation/USDA Food Program and child behavior and development related to eating patterns and behavior

- Childhood obesity prevention practices and policies

CIS professionals indicated that there was not enough training at any level for all of the different health/development issues professional development areas. While the other respondents indicated that there are not enough training opportunities at any level except for training in implementing safe and healthy practices and nutrition/healthy food preparation which the responses indicated there was enough training

Health and Developmental Issues Training						
	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Supporting children with health challenges (such as asthma, allergies, diabetes)	12.0%	21.5%	7.9%	4.2%	9.5%	2.7%
Supporting children with developmental challenges/delays (such as delays in fine or gross motor skills, or speech)	11.2%	21.1%	7.3%	4.3%	11.5%	3.7%
Mental health/behavior issues	10.6%	21.9%	6.2%	5.4%	12.5%	3.0%
Training in implementing safe and healthy practices	21.4%	12.9%	4.9%	4.8%	7.2%	2.1%
On-site technical assistance in advising and monitoring my program for safe and healthy practices	17.3%	19.2%	4.3%	4.4%	4.9%	1.8%
Nutrition/healthy food preparation/USDA Food Program and child behavior and development related to eating patterns and behavior	22.7%	15.2%	3.6%	3.9%	6.6%	2.1%
Childhood obesity prevention practices and policies	15.5%	20.2%	5.0%	3.9%	6.7%	1.9%
Other	1.3%	1.9%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%

statewide.

Half of the regions varied from the statewide data trend in this area:

- Lamoille County respondents indicated that there is not enough nutrition and healthy food preparation training at any level.
- Addison County respondents indicated that there is not enough advanced training in supporting children with developmental challenges/delays and mental health/behavior issues; while they indicated there is enough childhood obesity prevention training at all levels.
- Rutland County respondents indicated that there is not enough training in implementing safe and healthy practices and nutrition/healthy food preparation at any level.
- Windham County respondents indicated that there is not enough advanced level training in supporting children with developmental challenges or delays.
- Chittenden County respondents indicated that there is enough training in supporting children with health challenges at all levels.
- Springfield area respondents indicated that there is not enough advanced level training in supporting children with health challenges, supporting children with developmental challenges/delays and mental health/behavior issues.

Other than courses for the Director's Credential, we need targeted trainings for Directors, specifically in legal/financial/HR.

Without some kind of tuition reimbursement for college courses, they remain out of price range.

I have had extreme challenges with families, esp. reporting cases, where I felt lost and alone, with no one to turn to for support as a director. there are trainings on mandated reporting, and I understand how to do this, but it doesn't cover how to deal with the family after reporting or how to deal emotionally with what happened.

Sometimes relevant courses can be difficult to find.

VHEC has done a nice job upgrading professional classes for endorsements.

Obtaining Professional Development

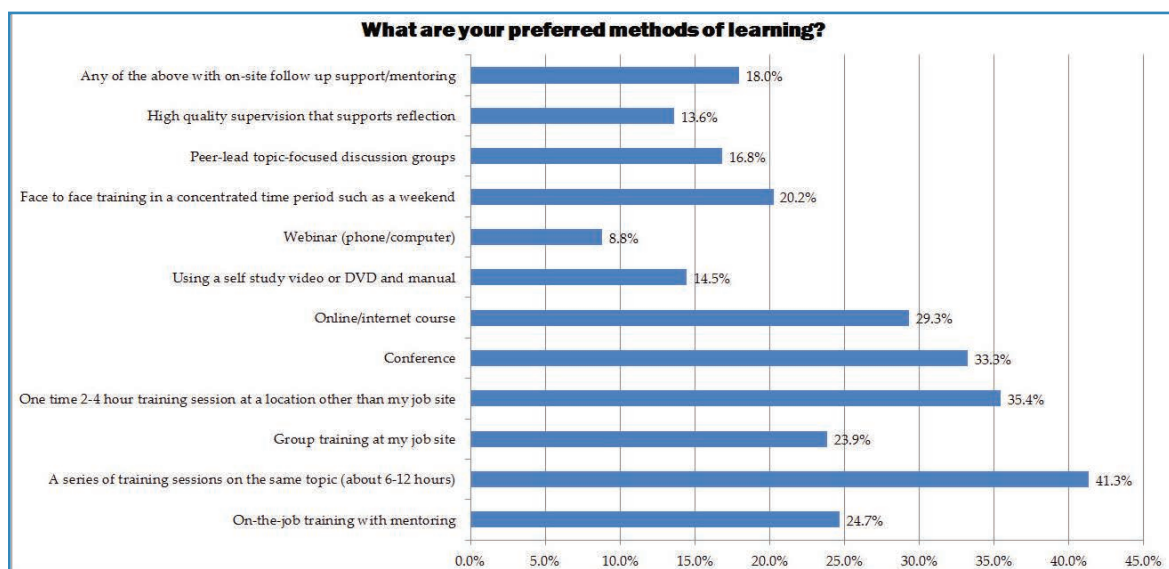
Preferred Method of Learning

Respondents were asked about a variety of methods of learning, and asked to pick the top five they prefer. They could choose from the following options:

- On-the-job training with mentoring
- A series of training sessions on the same topic (about 6 – 12 hours)
- Group training at my job site
- One time 2-4 hour training session at a location other than my job site
- Conference
- Online/ internet course
- Using a self-study video or DVD and manual
- Webinar

The results were similar across program type and region:

1. A series of training sessions on the same topic (about 6 – 12 hours) - 41.3%
2. One time 2 – 4 hour training session at a location other than my job site - 35.4%
3. Conference – 33.3%
4. Online/internet course – 29.3%
5. On-the-job training with mentoring – 24.7%



Challenges in Obtaining Professional Development

Respondents were asked – “What challenges do you face in getting the professional development you want?” The highest percentage of respondents indicated that a challenge for them was that professional development is too expensive. This correlates with the responses from the question about financial supports. A high percentage of respondents indicated that many of the financial supports were unavailable to them. The lowest percentage of responses was to the option of not having a computer, this may be due to the high percentage of people responding having access to a computer to complete the survey.

There was variation in the responses based on the

type of program:

- Registered home professionals indicated that the trainings not offered at a convenient time is a challenge;
- Licensed Early Childhood professionals indicated that trainings were too expensive and they were not able to find high quality or advanced training;
- Afterschool professionals indicated that trainings were not available in a reasonable driving distance and were too expensive;
- Public preschool professionals indicated that they were not able to find training in the content area they needed or wanted and they

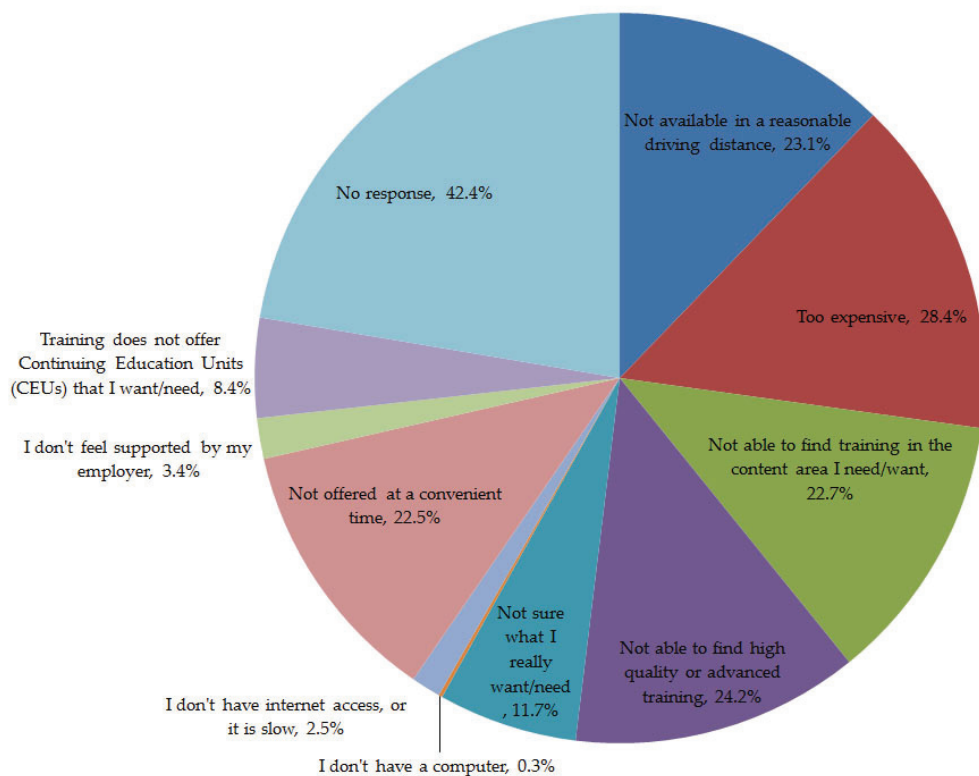
were not able to find high quality or advanced training;

- CIS professionals indicated that trainings were too expensive;
- Legally exempt care professionals indicated that they were not sure what they really wanted or needed.
- Licensed early childhood professionals were the only group to indicate that they did not have access to a computer

The region also had variation in responses:

- Bennington County, St. Johnsbury area and Hartford area professionals indicated that trainings was not available in reasonable driving distance.

Challenges in Obtaining Professional Development



- Addison County, Windham County and Lamoille County professionals indicated that training is too expensive.
- Chittenden County professionals indicated they were unable to find high quality or advanced training and training is too expensive.

Challenges in Getting Professional Development						
	Registered Home	Licensed Early Childhood Program	Afterschool Program	Public Preschool	CIS	Legally Exempt Care
Not available in a reasonable driving distance	19.9%	26.7%	28.1%	24.7%	20.0%	21.9%
Too expensive	20.8%	35.4%	28.1%	23.3%	46.0%	18.8%
Not able to find training in the content area I need/want	17.4%	26.4%	31.3%	39.7%	10.0%	15.6%
Not able to find high quality or advanced training	13.0%	34.8%	23.4%	38.4%	18.0%	6.3%
Not sure what I really want/need	15.8%	7.5%	25.0%	8.2%	0.0%	28.1%
I don't have a computer	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I don't have internet access, or it is slow	1.2%	3.6%	3.1%	2.7%	2.0%	3.1%
Not offered at a convenient time	26.4%	22.8%	26.6%	28.8%	8.0%	15.6%
I don't feel supported by my employer	0.9%	3.9%	6.3%	5.5%	6.0%	0.0%
Training does not offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs) that I want/need	7.1%	9.9%	7.8%	11.0%	8.0%	6.3%
No response	49.1%	37.2%	32.8%	27.4%	42.0%	50.0%

- Franklin & Grand Isle Counties and Newport area professionals indicated they were not able to find training in the content area they need or want, training was too expensive and training was not available in a reasonable driving distance.
- Rutland County professionals indicated that they were not able to find high quality or advanced training.

- Springfield area professionals indicated that they were not able to find high quality or advanced training and it was not available in a reasonable driving distance.
- Washington County professionals indicated that trainings are not offered at a convenient time.

Challenges in Accessing Professional Development												
	Addison County	Bennington County	St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	Chittenden County	Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	Lamoille County	Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	Rutland County	Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	Washington County	Windham County
Not available in a reasonable driving distance	15.0%	37.9%	31.1%	8.2%	26.6%	31.1%	32.7%	31.7%	21.3%	35.3%	16.9%	17.6%
Too expensive	33.3%	30.5%	26.7%	32.2%	26.6%	44.3%	26.5%	35.0%	16.9%	20.6%	23.4%	25.5%
Not able to find training in the content area I need/want	20.0%	30.5%	8.9%	20.2%	26.6%	27.9%	12.2%	35.0%	22.5%	29.4%	23.4%	19.6%
Not able to find high quality or advanced training	26.7%	26.3%	6.7%	33.3%	20.2%	21.3%	20.4%	16.7%	24.7%	35.3%	23.4%	21.6%
Not sure what I really want/need	6.7%	15.8%	13.3%	11.5%	11.7%	9.8%	2.0%	20.0%	12.4%	5.9%	14.3%	11.8%
I don't have a computer	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%
I don't have internet access, or it is slow	0.0%	4.2%	2.2%	1.6%	3.2%	1.6%	1.0%	1.7%	1.1%	2.9%	6.5%	0.0%
Not offered at a convenient time	28.3%	23.2%	17.8%	19.7%	25.5%	23.0%	20.4%	28.3%	21.3%	17.6%	26.0%	15.7%
I don't feel supported by my employer	1.7%	3.2%	0.0%	4.4%	3.2%	8.2%	2.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	2.6%	2.0%
Training does not offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs) that I want/need	5.0%	9.5%	0.0%	7.1%	8.5%	13.1%	8.2%	15.0%	12.4%	11.8%	7.8%	3.9%
No response	41.7%	37.9%	44.4%	38.8%	35.1%	31.1%	49.0%	35.0%	53.9%	44.1%	46.8%	52.9%

Financial Supports

Respondents were asked what financial supports, resources and recognition was useful. In general respondents indicated that many of the supports listed were not available to them, except low cost or free training from their local community child care trainer. The least likely to be available was the employer paying tuition or books for a college class and paid time on-the-job to do homework or research for class. The highest percentage of respondents indicated that the following were useful:

- Paid time to attend professional development
- Low cost or free training from my local community child care trainer
- Low cost or free training through a community or statewide organization

Financial Supports					
	Was useful	not necessary	Not useful	but I did not use	Was not available to me
VSAC grant for college	5.1%	0.9%	2.0%	4.9%	17.9%
CDD college tuition grant	5.3%	0.8%	2.0%	4.4%	18.2%
My employer paid tuition or books for a college class (all or in part)	11.4%	0.6%	1.2%	2.2%	21.3%
Free/low cost college class through the Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program	7.7%	0.8%	2.1%	5.1%	15.8%
Paid time on-the-job to do homework or research for class	5.2%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	24.4%
Paid time to attend professional development	26.3%	0.6%	1.0%	1.3%	15.1%
CDD grant for the CDA application fee	4.2%	1.2%	3.0%	4.4%	16.9%
CDD bonus payment for achieving a career level/certificate	7.9%	0.8%	1.9%	2.8%	19.0%
Low cost or free training from my local community child care trainer (Resource Development Specialist)	30.8%	1.1%	1.8%	2.9%	6.6%
Low cost or free training through a community or statewide organization (such as the public library, rescue squad, etc)	23.0%	1.4%	1.4%	2.9%	10.4%
Low cost or free training through my local or the statewide Children's Integrated Services Team	18.7%	0.8%	1.3%	2.6%	12.4%
I received a pay increase because of my professional development	8.4%	0.5%	1.2%	1.5%	22.5%

Time Valued

Respondents indicated that their time was valued by training and coursework that was offered during the evening so that they could attend during a time that was convenient. Respondents indicated that most of the options were either helpful or not available to them, with transportation provided being the least available.

Time was valued by:					
	Was useful	Useful but not necessary	Not useful	Was available but I did not use	Was not available to me
Training/coursework was during the evening so I could attend during a time that was convenient to me.	36.3%	1.4%	2.3%	1.4%	3.8%
Daytime training/coursework was offered so that I could attend during my work day.	16.1%	0.9%	6.2%	2.4%	13.7%
Online training/coursework that didn't take me away from my program	17.3%	0.8%	1.9%	3.9%	13.6%
Transportation was provided	2.7%	2.5%	4.8%	1.0%	21.9%
Substitute teacher was provided	9.8%	2.1%	2.5%	2.0%	19.3%

Recognition Received

Respondents indicated that the most useful recognition was receiving a certificate, credential or degree to display, while the least useful/available was an awards ceremony with colleagues and/or the public.

Recognition Received					
	Was useful	Useful but not necessary	Not useful	Was available but I did not use	Was not available to me
An awards ceremony with colleagues and/or the public	2.5%	2.3%	5.6%	0.9%	22.0%
Praise and recognition from my director and co-workers	14.2%	4.8%	2.6%	0.5%	16.0%
Praise and recognition from the parents of children in my class/program/caseload	15.9%	3.8%	2.5%	0.7%	14.3%
Receiving a certificate, credential, degree to display	21.1%	4.2%	3.2%	1.5%	10.1%
A higher level in STARS because of my professional development	17.1%	1.4%	3.0%	3.4%	12.4%

Overall Comments

Challenges

Information about what trainings are available – 91 respondents indicated that getting or finding information in a timely manner directly or in one place is very difficult.

Need different or advanced trainings – 79 respondents indicated that it is difficult finding advanced trainings. Many of the comments indicated that the trainings offered in their region is the same training year after year.

Type needed not available – 45 respondents indicated that the type of training they needed was not available. This represented many different types of training including training in special needs, training for appropriate ages and program types, and graduate coursework.

Cost – 40 respondents indicated that cost was a challenge in accessing professional development.

Location – 34 respondents indicated that the location and subsequent travel to other locations was a challenge.

Time – 33 respondents indicated that the timing of trainings was such that it was difficult to access them.

Access to an advisor/mentor – 11 respondents indicated they wanted a advisor or mentor to work with them and had limited access to this type of resource.

Course/training not offered frequently – 10 respondents indicated that trainings or courses they wanted to take were not offered or held frequently enough.

Availability – 9 respondents indicated that the availability of trainings was difficult. This included not enough trainings being offered in their area, and courses filling so quickly that the trainings were unavailable.

Director level training – 7 respondents indicated that finding director level trainings was challenging.

Trainings were full – 6 respondents indicated that frequently trainings filled up and were unavailable to them.

Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) – 6 respondents indicated that BFIS was difficult to navigate, not updated, or did not work .

Access to a phone to sign up for trainings is limited – 4 respondents indicated that their access to a phone to be able to sign up for trainings during the day is limited.

Child care to attend trainings is limited and/or expensive – 4 respondents indicated that it is expensive or difficult to find child care for their own children to attend trainings.

Computer/internet access – 4 respondents indicated that computer and/or internet access is difficult and limits their ability to get information about professional development.

Classes for teaching endorsement – 3 respondents indicated the lack of classes specific to obtain or maintain a teaching endorsement was a challenge.

Lack of substitutes – 2 respondents indicated that a challenge was in finding substitutes to cover staff hours during trainings.

Requirements for instructors and trainers – 1 respondent indicated that the amount of requirements to be an instructor or training is challenging when trying to set up trainings.

What Works

Email – 169 respondents indicated that receiving emails from a variety of sources and being on email list serves were helpful in getting professional development information.

Newsletters – 100 respondents indicated that receiving newsletters from sources such as the community child care support agency, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children and Northern Lights Career Development Center were helpful.

Community Child Care Support Agencies (CCCSA) – 63 respondents indicated that talking to the local CCCSA staff was helpful.

Internet – 40 respondents indicated that using the internet in a variety of ways helps to get information about professional development.

Talking to co-workers and other professionals – 32 respondents indicated that it was helpful to network with peers to get information about professional development.

Supervisor/director – 28 respondents indicated that it was helpful to get information from their director or supervisor.

Starting Points Networks – 26 respondents indicated that being part of a network was helpful in getting professional development.

Direct mailings – 24 respondents indicated that receiving flyers and information in the mail was helpful.

Searching on own – 20 respondents indicated that they find information by searching on their own.

Being part of a statewide organization – 16 respondents indicated that being part of a statewide organization helped them get professional development and information. The following were found helpful by 15 or less respondents:

- Bright Futures Information System
- College
- Statewide conferences
- Mentor
- Trainings at work location
- Weekend trainings
- Car pooling
- Building Bright Futures
- Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC)
- Partnering with another organization to attend their trainings
- Developing an Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP)
- Employer paying for training
- Traveling distances for training
- CIS network/blog
- Having a variety of options
- Having “schoolagers” in workshop description
- Department of Education
- Head Start
- College tuition support

Supports That Are/Would Be Helpful

- College tuition support - 29 comments
- Advisor/mentor – 22 comments
- Money – 24 comments
- Low cost or free trainings – 16 comments
- Higher wages – 14 comments
- More trainings in my area - 10 comments
- Timely/better information - 9 comments
- Recognition from employer, CDD and parents - 10 comments
- Weekend trainings - 9 comments
- More bonuses - 8 comments
- Allowed to use paid work time to take training - 7 comments
- Travel expenses paid
- Support from my employer - 7 comments
- Online classes/trainings - 6 comments
- More variety in available trainings - 6 comments
- More graduate level courses - 5 comments
- Advanced trainings - 4 comments
- Help with STARS - 4 comments
- Grants for program improvements - 4 comments
- Support from families of children in care - 4 comments
- Work benefits – 3 comments
- College classes in my area in early childhood- 3 comments
- Trainings for afterschool programs working with high school children/school age children – 3 comments
- Program support - 3 comments
- Training at different times - 3 comments
- Affordable substitutes - 2 comments
- Training could count toward a credential - 2 comments
- Support for teacher licensure process - 2 comments
- Email with only professional development information - 2 comments
- Training paid by employer - 2 comments
- More participating by CDD on provider recognition night and other provider events - 2 comments
- VSAC non-degree grants - 2 comments
- Online support
- Less requirements to reach different Early Childhood Career Ladder Levels
- Snacks at trainings
- Fewer hoops to jump through
- Closer location
- Help paying for own child care to attend training
- Community child care support agency
- More collaboration between CDD, Northern Lights, VTDOE and VCAE
- Loan forgiveness
- Help with accreditation
- Technology training
- Local apprenticeship program
- System of clear credentials to encourage more advanced trainings
- College credit for trainings attended
- Contact person for professional development questions, possibly at Northern Lights or CDD
- Trainings about Northern Lights

Funding Vermont's Early Childhood and Afterschool Professional Development System

A question asked by the state-wide stakeholders group was:

What is needed to encourage practitioners in early childhood and afterschool programs in both home-based and center-based settings, to access and utilize professional development and quality improvement opportunities connected to Northern Lights Career Development Center and STARS?

The CDD has limited resources and is interested in ideas on how CDD resources should be distributed in support of professional development. Eight core areas of investment

were identified by the statewide stakeholders group. See the Appendix III for a description of each core area.

Respondents were given an imaginary one hundred dollars and asked how they would spend it in each area. They could split up the money however they chose, putting all of the money in one area or dividing it in several areas.

The following table is the average number of dollars respondents wanted to spend in each core area.

Core Area	Money Allocated
Affordable & available	\$30.03
Appropriate	\$20.47
Information, education & outreach	\$21.61
Individual bonus	\$23.68
Individual financial support	\$18.72
Program incentives	\$20.18
Funding to programs	\$28.27
Consultation to programs & mentor support to individuals	\$17.22

Respondents overall put the most funding into the “affordable & available” core area, and the then into funding to programs. This correlates with several of the questions and the comments received where respondents indicated that significant challenges are faced in paying for professional development and having it available in a convenient location.

The least amount of funding was distributed by respondents to “consultation to programs & mentor support to individuals.” This correlates with the responses received to the question about supports available to individuals and programs. In general respondents indicated that they had access to a variety of types of consultant and mentoring.

Conclusions

Early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont have a wide range of experience, education and professional development needs. However there is a need for a wider variety and more advanced professional development opportunities across Vermont. Information about opportunities needs to be timely, and information should be given in a variety of formats. This data could be used as a baseline of information about needs in specific regions or by different types of professionals. Changes could be made

and additional surveys could be completed to determine the impact of those programs.

Some areas that may need further study include:

- Age of the workforce population
- Size of the workforce
- What specific incentives or rewards might encourage professional development growth

APPENDIX

Appendix I

Survey Instrument

Dear Professional,

This is a BIG and very important Professional Development survey! You can start and stop (and even skip certain questions) but the more questions you answer the better.

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the challenges and barriers that people experience about professional development in Vermont. Your answers about who you are and your professional development needs, interests and challenges will help the Child Development Division target professional development resources where they are most needed and wanted.

For this survey, “professional development” includes workshops, trainings, conferences, mentoring, online learning, college courses (including degree seeking options), and any other opportunities that help you grow professionally. A section is provided for you to share your thoughts on how the Child Development Division should distribute professional development and program quality funds.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance. We estimate that this survey will take about 45 minutes but remember you can stop at any time and get back to it. The survey is confidential. Feel free to contact me with any comments or questions.

Thank you!

Jan Walker, Director Workforce Development and Quality Enhancement
Child Development Division
103 South Main Street 2 North
Waterbury, VT 056712902
Phone 8022412198 FAX 8022411220 jan.walker@ahs.state.vt.us

2. Section I: About You

1. Where in Vermont do you work?

- ☐ Barre area (Washington County)
- ☐ Bennington area (Bennington County)
- ☐ Brattleboro (Windham County)
- ☐ Burlington area (Chittenden County)
- ☐ Hartford area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)
- ☐ Middlebury area (Addison County)
- ☐ Morrisville area (Lamoille County)
- ☐ Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)
- ☐ Rutland area (Rutland County)
- ☐ Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)
- ☐ St. Albans area (Franklin & Grand Isle Counties)
- ☐ St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)
- ☐ Statewide

Other (please specify)

2. Where in Vermont do you prefer to get your professional development? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Attend statewide conferences, such as the VAEYC, Non-recurring care, and Afterschool conferences
- ☐ Barre area (Washington County)
- ☐ Bennington area (Bennington County)
- ☐ Brattleboro (Windham County)
- ☐ Burlington area (Chittenden County)
- ☐ Flexible (will travel statewide)
- ☐ Hartford area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)
- ☐ Middlebury area (Addison County)
- ☐ Morrisville area (Lamoille County)
- ☐ Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)
- ☐ Rutland area (Rutland County)
- ☐ Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)
- ☐ St. Albans area (Franklin & Grand Isle Counties)
- ☐ St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)

Other (please specify)

3. What type of program/agency do you work in?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Registered home | <input type="radio"/> Licensed public preschool program (in a public school) |
| <input type="radio"/> Licensed home | <input type="radio"/> CIS - Early intervention agency |
| <input type="radio"/> Licensed afterschool program | <input type="radio"/> CIS - Mental health agency |
| <input type="radio"/> Afterschool program that is not regulated | <input type="radio"/> CIS - Parent Child Center |
| <input type="radio"/> Non-recurring care program (ski resort) | <input type="radio"/> Legally Exempt Child Care Program |
| <input type="radio"/> Licensed early childhood program (in a community setting) | <input type="radio"/> Child care that is not regulated |

Other (please specify)

4. What type of work do you do?

- ☐ I direct a child care program and teach a group of children.
- ☐ I teach a group of children.
- ☐ I direct a child care, afterschool, or non-recurring care program but do not provide direct care/education to children.
- ☐ I assist in teaching a group of children.

- ☐ I provide support services to children in a child care, afterschool, or non-recurring care program.
- ☐ I provide support services to children/families in their homes.
- ☐ I provide consulting and/or mentoring services to child care programs.
- ☐ I provide consulting and/or mentoring services to other professionals delivering care/education services.

Other (please specify)

5. How old are you?

- ☐ Under 18 years old
- ☐ 18 - 25 years old
- ☐ 26 - 35 years old
- ☐ 36 - 45 years old
- ☐ 46 - 60 years old
- ☐ Over 60 years old

3. Education and training achievements

1. What is the highest level of education you have achieved? (Check the highest level(s) that apply: for example you might check "Apprenticeship" and "Northern Lights Level IIIA Certificate")

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Up to 8th grade | <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level IVA Certificate |
| <input type="radio"/> 9th to 11th grade | <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level IVB Certificate |
| <input type="radio"/> 12th grade, but no diploma | <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level V Certificate |
| <input type="radio"/> High school diploma, or equivalent (GED) | <input type="radio"/> Associate's degree, related to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> Vocational or technical program after high school | <input type="radio"/> Associate's degree, in field unrelated to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> Some college courses but not a degree | <input type="radio"/> Bachelor's degree, in field related to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> VT Child Care Apprenticeship program Certificate of Completion | <input type="radio"/> Bachelor's degree, in field unrelated to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level I Certificate | <input type="radio"/> Master's degree, in field related to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level II Certificate | <input type="radio"/> Master's degree, in field unrelated to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level IIIA Certificate | <input type="radio"/> Doctorate degree, in field related to education and/or child development |
| <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Level IIIB Certificate | <input type="radio"/> Doctorate degree, in field unrelated to education and/or child development |

Other (please specify)

2. Have you achieved, are working on, or would like to learn about a national or state awarded credential or Vermont Department of Education teaching license/endorsement?

	Current Interest
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Infant/Toddler	<input type="text"/>
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Preschool	<input type="text"/>
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Family Child Care	<input type="text"/>
Child Development Associate (CDA) - Home Visitor	<input type="text"/>
Child Care Certificate from Community College of Vermont (CCV)	<input type="text"/>
Vermont Director Credential - Step 1	<input type="text"/>
Vermont Director Credential - Step 2	<input type="text"/>
Vermont Director Credential - Step 3	<input type="text"/>
Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Certificate of Completion	<input type="text"/>
Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential	<input type="text"/>
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Early Childhood endorsement	<input type="text"/>
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Early Childhood Special Education endorsement	<input type="text"/>
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Elementary Education endorsement	<input type="text"/>
Vermont teaching license through the VT Department of Education - Other type of endorsement	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>

3. In your region do you have access to professional development opportunities, mentoring and technical assistance related to professional development and/or program quality improvements support?

	Current Access
Professional development opportunities	<input type="text"/>
Mentoring	<input type="text"/>
Professional development technical assistance	<input type="text"/>
Program quality improvement technical assistance	<input type="text"/>
Comments	<div><div></div><div></div></div>

4. If you do not have a degree do you have a professional development plan that includes a goal of attaining an associates degree or other type of degree?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A

Comments

4. Section II: About how and where you find professional development

1. How do you currently find out about professional development? And how would you prefer to find out about professional development opportunities?(Please rate by your top five most frequent methods)

	I receive information this way right now	I would prefer to receive information this way
Call my local child care support agency/trainer	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Read my local child care support agency newsletter	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Ask my director/supervisor	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Check the Bright Futures Information System course calendar	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Talk to my advisor at the college I attend	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Search the internet for "distance" learning through colleges or other sponsors of training (in or out of state)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hear from my co-workers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Learn about training at my local provider network (for example, Starting Points groups)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Receive emails from various sponsors of training/education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CIS State/Regional Teams	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
I don't know who to ask or where to go for professional development	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>	

2. What challenges have you had in getting information about professional development that meets your needs/interests?

3. What has worked well for you in getting information about professional development that meets your needs/interests?

4. Who do you go to for professional mentoring and support, and for help developing a plan for your professional development?

	All the time	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
My director/supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A co-worker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Another child care provider	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local child care support agency (trainer)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments

5. Northern Lights Career Development Center

1. Have you heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) and/or the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/Instructor Registry? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes - I've heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center and the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder, the Vermont Afterschool Pathways, and the Instructor registry
- ☐ Yes - I've heard of Northern Lights Career Development Center
- ☐ Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder
- ☐ Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Afterschool Pathways
- ☐ Yes, I've heard of the Vermont Instructor Registry

2. How did you hear about the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center and/or the Early Childhood Career Ladder/Vermont Afterschool Pathways/Instructor Registry? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> I haven't heard about them | <input type="radio"/> From co-workers who have received a Northern Lights Career Ladder Certificate and/or bonus |
| <input type="radio"/> Local Community Child Care Support Agency Newsletter | <input type="radio"/> From attending a workshop/training/course where it was discussed |
| <input type="radio"/> Northern Lights Career Development Center e-newsletter | <input type="radio"/> From the STARS coordinators and/or the STARS application process |
| <input type="radio"/> From the Northern Lights Career Development Center website | <input type="radio"/> From applying for a level certificate |
| <input type="radio"/> From the Child Development Division website | <input type="radio"/> From the Child Care Apprenticeship Program (Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council) |
| <input type="radio"/> From the director of my program | <input type="radio"/> From when I was asked to be an instructor |
| <input type="radio"/> From co-workers/other providers | |

Other (please specify)

3. Which of the following Northern Lights Career Development Center (NLCDC) services have you used? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Attended the training "Using the Bright Futures Information System for Professional Development"
- ☐ Attended the training "Developing an Individual Professional Development Plan"
- ☐ Attended a career planning training by NLCDC staff
- ☐ Called NLCDC staff for professional development or career advice
- ☐ Sent professional development/degree information to be entered into Bright Futures Information System
- ☐ Applied for a Northern Lights Career Development Center Level certificate or credential (such as the Level I Certificate, Director Credential, etc.)
- ☐ Used the Northern Lights website for professional development information
- ☐ Applied to be in the Instructor Registry
- ☐ Attended a Career Coaching seminar
- ☐ Have heard of "Northern Lights", but never used the services mentioned above
- ☐ Have not heard of the Northern Lights Career Development Center

Other (please specify)

4. Have you heard of the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Yes, and I have applied/received a Career Ladder level certificate
- ☐ No

Other (please specify)

5. Do you feel you need or want specific personalized assistance with planning your professional development an strategies to achieve your goals?

- ☐ Yes - I would like to meet with someone one to one about this
- ☐ Yes - I would like to discuss/plan my professional development in a group
- ☐ No - I am pretty clear already about where I am going and what I need/want to do
- ☐ No - I have someone that is currently helping me with my planning
- ☐ No - I'm not interested in doing more than what is required to do my job

Other (please specify)

6. Section III: Professional Development Content and Delivery

1. Which of the following trainings/classes have you heard about and which would you be interested in taking?

	Haven't heard about it	Heard of this training	Heard of it but not interested	Interested in taking	I've taken some training in this before and want more!	I've taken this training
I Am Moving, I Am Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TouchPoints	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building Blocks for Literacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mother Goose Cares About (Math, Science, etc...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bridges Out of Poverty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnering with Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vermont Early Learning Guidelines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program and related college courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VSA Vermont (Very Special Arts)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Care For Kids (by Prevent Child Abuse Vermont)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foundations for Learning (FEL - Supporting Social Emotional growth)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Never Too Early (Vermont Humanities Council)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What do you think about the amount and level of training/education currently provided in Vermont in the following areas of knowledge?

2. Child Development

	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Infant/Toddler	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preschool (3-5 year old children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elementary/Schoolage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

3. Families and Communities

	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
How to strengthen/support families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How to engage families to support my program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community resources and helpful connections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicating/working with challenging families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

4. Teaching and Learning

	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Literacy/Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative Expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Emotional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child Observation and Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Setting up and maintaining learning environment(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

5. Professionalism and Program Management

	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Budgeting and Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing policy handbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff supervision and support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grants and quality enhancement resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting facilitation and group dynamics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying, measuring and achieving outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

6. Health/Developmental Issues

	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Supporting children with health challenges (such as asthma, allergies, diabetes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting children with developmental challenges/delays (such as delays in fine or gross motor skills, or speech)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health/behavior issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training in implementing safe and healthy practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On-site technical assistance in advising and monitoring my program for safe and healthy practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutrition/healthy food preparation/USDA Food Program and child behavior and development related to eating patterns and behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Childhood obesity prevention practices and policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

7. Other professional development/education needs

	Enough at all levels	Not enough at any level	Not enough introductory level	Not enough to support an experienced provider like me	Not enough advanced training	Not enough college level courses
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

8. Choose in order of priority to you areas of learning you would like to see developed into a certificate that would be recognized as part of the Northern Lights Professional Development System.

	My top priority	Second priority	Third priority	Fourth priority	Fifth priority
Child Development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Families and Communities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching and Learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professionalism and Program Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Special needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe and Healthy Practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child Health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

9. What are your preferred methods of learning? (Pick your top five in order of preference)

	Top Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Fourth Choice	Fifth Choice
On-the-job training with mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A series of training sessions on the same topic (about 6-12 hours)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Group training at my job site	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
One time 2-4 hour training session at a location other than my job site	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online/internet course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using a self study video or DVD and manual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Webinar (phone/computer)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Face to face training in a concentrated time period such as a weekend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer-lead topic-focused discussion groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High quality supervision that supports reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any of the above with on-site follow up support/mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

7. Supports and challenges to accessing professional development

1. What challenges do you face in getting the professional development you want? (Choose all that apply)

- ☐ Not able to find high quality or advanced training
- ☐ Not able to find training in the content area I need/want
- ☐ Not sure what I really want/need
- ☐ I don't feel supported by my employer
- ☐ I don't have a computer
- ☐ I don't have internet access, or it is slow
- ☐ Not available in a reasonable driving distance
- ☐ Training does not offer Continuing Education Units (CEU's) that I want/need
- ☐ Too expensive
- ☐ Not offered at a convenient time

Other (please specify)

In the past 12 months, which of the following supports did you have? Indicate how useful each support was to you.

2. Financial supports

	Most useful	Somewhat useful	Useful, but not necessary	Not useful	Was available but I did not use	Was not available to me
Paid time to attend professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VSAC grant for college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Free/low cost college class through the Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paid time on-the -job to do homework or research for class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CDD Bonus payment for achieving a Career Level/certificate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I received a pay increase because of my professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low cost or free training through a community or statewide organization (such as the public library, rescue squad, etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CDD College Tuition Grant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My employer paid tuition or books for a college class (all or in part)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low cost or free training through my local or the statewide Children's Integrated Services Team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low cost or free training from my local community child care trainer (Resource Development Specialist)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CDD grant for the CDA application fee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

3. My time was valued by:

	Most useful	Somewhat useful	Useful, but not necessary	Not useful	Was available but I did not use	Was not available to me
Substitute teacher was provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training/coursework was during the evening so I could attend during a time that was convenient to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Daytime training/coursework was offered so that I could attend during my work day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation was provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online training/coursework that didn't take me away from my program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

4. Recognition I received:

	Most useful	Somewhat useful	Useful, but not necessary	Not useful	Was available but I did not use	Was not available to me
Praise and recognition from the parents of children in my class/program/caseload	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receiving a certificate, credential, degree to display	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A higher level in STARS because of my professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Praise and recognition from my director and co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
An awards ceremony with colleagues and/or the public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

5. What supports related to professional development would be most valuable to you in encouraging/supporting your professional growth in the future?

8. Allocating Money for Professional Development in Vermont

The CDD has limited resources and is very interested in your ideas on how these financial resources should be distributed in support of professional development. In this section are core areas of professional development that a state-wide stakeholder group identified critical to an effective professional development system.

1.

OPTIONAL QUESTION (You may skip this question without answering if you wish and proceed to be entered into the drawing)

The key question asked by the state-wide stakeholders group was: What is needed to encourage practitioners in early childhood and afterschool programs in both home-based or center-based settings, to access and utilize professional development and quality improvement opportunities connected to Northern Lights Career Development Center and STARS?

The CDD has limited resources and is very interested in your ideas on how CDD resources should be distributed in support of professional development. Below are the 8 core areas of investment that have been identified by the state-wide stakeholders group.

Click on each title for a description of that core area of investment. After reading the description, we would like you to put how many dollars you would want spent in each area. You will be given a total of 100 dollars to spend. You can split up your money however you choose. You can put all of your money in one area, or divide it in several areas. The total of your money must be 100. (Only use numbers, do not include symbols such as \$)

[Affordable & available](#)

[Appropriate](#)

[Information, education & outreach](#)

[Individual bonus](#)

[Individual financial support](#)

[Program incentives](#)

[Funding to programs](#)

[Consultation to programs & mentor support to individuals](#)

2. How much money do you spend out of your own pocket for professional development in a year?

Appendix II

Professional Development Supports Available by Region and Type of Program

Professional development opportunities - By Location				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Addison County	13.3%	68.3%	6.7%	0.0%
Bennington County	22.1%	43.2%	9.5%	2.1%
St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	8.9%	62.2%	4.4%	0.0%
Chittenden County	6.6%	71.6%	8.7%	0.0%
Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	21.3%	51.1%	5.3%	0.0%
Lamoille County	21.3%	59.0%	8.2%	1.6%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	12.2%	53.1%	12.2%	4.1%
Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	18.3%	45.0%	16.7%	5.0%
Rutland County	13.5%	47.2%	15.7%	1.1%
Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	26.5%	44.1%	5.9%	0.0%
Washington County	15.6%	55.8%	7.8%	0.0%
Windham County	11.8%	62.7%	9.8%	0.0%

Professional development opportunities				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Registered Home	12.4%	56.8%	6.8%	0.6%
Licensed Early Childhood	14.7%	61.6%	9.9%	0.0%
Afterschool	26.6%	45.3%	18.8%	0.0%
Public Preschool	9.6%	74.0%	8.2%	0.0%
CIS	26.0%	34.0%	16.0%	4.0%
Legally Exempt Care	9.4%	37.5%	6.3%	12.5%

Mentoring - By Location				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Addison County	23.3%	41.7%	3.3%	1.7%
Bennington County	32.6%	22.1%	4.2%	7.4%
St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	22.2%	35.6%	0.0%	6.7%
Chittenden County	19.7%	44.8%	3.8%	4.4%
Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	28.7%	29.8%	0.0%	9.6%
Lamoille County	34.4%	41.0%	1.6%	4.9%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	34.7%	14.3%	0.0%	16.3%
Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	40.0%	18.3%	10.0%	10.0%
Rutland County	29.2%	23.6%	4.5%	7.9%
Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	29.4%	38.2%	2.9%	0.0%
Washington County	20.8%	27.3%	3.9%	5.2%
Windham County	29.4%	37.3%	0.0%	3.9%

Mentoring - By type of program				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Registered Home	23.0%	34.2%	1.9%	4.7%
Licensed Early Childhood Program	30.6%	31.2%	4.5%	5.7%
Afterschool Program	40.6%	31.3%	6.3%	7.8%
Public Preschool	28.8%	39.7%	1.4%	9.6%
CIS	38.0%	22.0%	0.0%	10.0%
Legally Exempt Care	15.6%	18.8%	3.1%	15.6%

Professional development technical assistance - By Location				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Addison County	26.7%	41.7%	3.3%	1.7%
Bennington County	31.6%	23.2%	2.1%	10.5%
St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	20.0%	35.6%	4.4%	2.2%
Chittenden County	18.0%	43.7%	3.3%	3.3%
Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	28.7%	26.6%	2.1%	6.4%
Lamoille County	29.5%	34.4%	8.2%	3.3%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	32.7%	18.4%	0.0%	12.2%
Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	31.7%	18.3%	11.7%	15.0%
Rutland County	27.0%	29.2%	5.6%	4.5%
Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	32.4%	29.4%	2.9%	0.0%
Washington County	19.5%	32.5%	2.6%	3.9%
Windham County	21.6%	27.5%	2.0%	5.9%

Professional development technical assistance - By Type of Program				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Registered Home	21.7%	29.5%	2.5%	5.0%
Licensed Early Childhood Program	27.6%	32.7%	3.6%	5.1%
Afterschool Program	35.9%	37.5%	7.8%	6.3%
Public Preschool	21.9%	46.6%	11.0%	2.7%
CIS	40.0%	16.0%	0.0%	12.0%
Legally Exempt Care	12.5%	21.9%	9.4%	12.5%

Program quality improvement technical assistance				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	Have access to some types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Addison County	25.0%	38.3%	1.7%	0.0%
Bennington County	30.5%	20.0%	5.3%	7.4%
St. Johnsbury area (Caledonia/South Essex Counties)	20.0%	33.3%	2.2%	2.2%
Chittenden County	13.7%	46.4%	1.1%	4.9%
Franklin & Grand Isle Counties	26.6%	25.5%	2.1%	7.4%
Lamoille County	34.4%	27.9%	3.3%	6.6%
Hartford Area (Orange/North Windsor Counties)	30.6%	18.4%	2.0%	14.3%
Newport area (Orleans/North Essex Counties)	35.0%	20.0%	6.7%	11.7%
Rutland County	27.0%	23.6%	5.6%	6.7%
Springfield area (South Windsor/North Windham Counties)	35.3%	32.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Washington County	18.2%	28.6%	3.9%	5.2%
Windham County	23.5%	21.6%	2.0%	7.8%

Program Quality Improvement Technical Assistance - By Program Type				
	Have limited access	Have access to a variety of types	types but it does not fit the needs of the area	Do not have access
Registered Home	20.8%	28.3%	2.2%	5.3%
Licensed Early Childhood Program	27.3%	30.6%	2.7%	5.1%
Afterschool Program	35.9%	40.6%	4.7%	3.1%
Public Preschool	30.1%	38.4%	6.8%	4.1%
CIS	38.0%	16.0%	0.0%	12.0%
Legally Exempt Care	15.6%	18.8%	3.1%	15.6%

Appendix II

Eight Core Areas of Professional Development Investment

Vermont Child Development Division Challenges for Change Group #3 Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality Improvement

Core Funding Area #1

1. Make Professional Development Affordable & Available

What does this mean?

Affordable – Reasonably Priced (Professional development opportunities need to be affordable to both providers and programs.) AND **Available -- Increased Methods and Channels For Delivery of Content**
Challenges for Change

Funding in this area would contribute to providers participating in professional development they want and need because there would be equal access in all areas of the state, training would be offered at different times and days, on-line courses and increased use of technology would expand the traditional professional development opportunities.

What do you think?

I think making Professional Development be Affordable and Available should be:

- Highest priority
- Fairly High priority
- Medium priority
- Some funds should support this but not too much

Vermont Child Development Division Challenges for Change Group #3 Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality Improvement

Core Funding Area #2

2. Appropriate

- **Appropriate -- Expanded Learning Content and Formats** There is a need to increase local opportunities that are high quality, relevant, meaningful and diverse to meet all levels of learners and to promote implementation of best practices including extended learning opportunities.
- Relevant
 - individualized, helpful, personable, continuous, connected
 - Who you serve, where you are professionally (range)
 - Relevant to day-to-day work
 - Providers help plan professional development opportunities (voucher system?)
- Topics/Formats
 - New, original training topics
 - Providers want to participate in groups of peers (for support and to feel comfortable)
 - Responsive to local interests and needs; learning styles; individual needs; time constraints and challenges
 - Access to high level trainings
 - Pre-service training – BA, AA
 - Follow up opportunities that extend learning to practice (MATCH), extend 2 hour workshops
 - More comprehensive opportunities (beyond 2 hour workshops) that bring individuals closer to IPDP and programs closer to 5-Star+ accreditation.
 - Offer in-depth training (extended learning)
 - Mentoring
- Quality
 - Assure all opportunities are high quality
 - Competency based instructors so can measure, identify quality of instruction

**Vermont Child Development Division
Challenges for Change Group #3
Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality
Improvement**

Core Area #3

3. Information, Education and Outreach

Outreach and Promotion About What Is Available And How To Access It Address the gaps in knowledge about the existing professional development framework, the professional development opportunities available, and the available supports for program quality improvement. Include information about the value of the professional development opportunities and quality improvement frameworks to both providers/programs and the children/families they serve. Include families and the general public in this outreach education effort.

Information About What Is Available And How To Access It

There are gaps in knowledge among providers about the existing frameworks, the professional development opportunities available for practitioners, and the programmatic supports for quality improvement.

- Information about what is available and how to access it
 - (Lack of) clarity about what counts as “training”
- Really well-coordinated information systems about what’s available who is qualified to provide trainings; who charges how much
 - “Warm Line” w/ timely, accurate info
- Support for providers to use the system
- Instructions/training on BFIS and Northern Lights
- Criteria related to instructors – who can do the trainings

**Vermont Child Development Division
Challenges for Change Group #3
Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality
Improvement**

Core Area #4

4. Individual Bonuses

Individual Bonuses/Recognition The number of financial incentives/rewards that are in place and could be expanded for individuals to seek training, for well-trained people to enter the field, and for highly trained people to stay in field.

**Vermont Child Development Division
Challenges for Change Group #3
Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality
Improvement**

Core Area #5

5. Individual Financial Support

Individual Financial Support In addition to bonuses and recognition, individuals need direct financial support for professional development.

Vermont Child Development Division Challenges for Change Group #3 Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality Improvement

Core Area #6

6. Program Incentives

Program Incentives and Rewards

Additionally, incentives are needed for programs to be encouraged to use and adopt the quality improvement frameworks. Examples:

- More than 1-time bonus for STARS—STARS bonus every time
- Yearly incentive for maintaining higher level of STARS (\$ higher certificate)
- Higher bonuses w/ increased STARS level
- Re-examine fee structure - FAP – STAR benefit to program
- Professional development built into fee structure – various funding sources
- Financial incentive (not connected to subsidy)
- Financial incentives for maintaining high quality standards
- Money to pay increases connected to professional development
- Grants available tied to recognized levels (STARS, No. Lights)?
- Support linked to quality improvement

Registered and Licensed Program Incentives and Rewards Financial Incentives/Rewards are helpful to programs' maintenance of high quality standards and for ongoing participation in program quality improvement frameworks (STARS, Accreditation). An example of use of funds in this way is to not only continue the current bonuses for program quality but to also have ongoing STARS/quality bonus payments (not just one time for each level achieved).

**Vermont Child Development Division
Challenges for Change Group #3
Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality
Improvement**

Core Area #7

7. Funding to Programs

Regular and predictable opportunities for quality funding to be paid to programs that could be used for such things as, purchasing equipment, paying for substitutes/release time/administrative support in freeing up staff to manage the the accreditation/STARS application process.: as paying staff time for attending training, raising salaries

**Vermont Child Development Division
Challenges for Change Group #3
Supports and Incentives for Professional Development and Quality
Improvement**

Core Area #8

8. Consultation to programs & Mentor Support to Individuals

Consultation to Programs Stakeholders recommended multidisciplinary expert consultation available to programs to assist with professional development and quality improvement. and **Mentor Support System for Individuals** There was widespread agreement on the need to develop and support a mentoring system—including on-site visits with providers and group/cohort support.

Vermont Department for Children and Families
Child Development Division
103 South Main Street, 3 North
Waterbury, VT 05671-5500
800-649-2642
<http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd>

CORE KNOWLEDGE AREAS AND COMPETENCIES

for Early Childhood Professionals

*The foundation for Vermont's
unified professional development system*



Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

2013

**Vermont Northern Lights
Career Development Center**

Of the Community College of Vermont and the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council.
Funded by the Child Development Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services.



Early Childhood Core Knowledge Areas and Subheadings

Core Knowledge Area 1: Child Development

Early childhood professionals understand how children develop and the factors that are involved in development. They use their understanding of child development combined with their knowledge of each child as an individual to support children's overall development.

Child Development Subheadings

- A. How Children Develop
- B. Influences on Development
- C. Individual Variance

Core Knowledge Area 2: Families and Communities

Early childhood professionals understand that children are members of a family and that both the family and the program are part of a community. They work in partnership with families by communicating respectfully and by sharing information and resources that support children and families.

Families and Communities Subheadings

- A. Relationships
- B. Communication
- C. Community Resources and Involvement

Core Knowledge Area 3: Teaching and Learning

Early childhood professionals understand that the substance of teaching and learning is a combination of interactions, routines, and experiences in children's daily lives.

Teaching and Learning Subheadings

- A. Interactions
- B. Learning Environment
- C. Curriculum and Content
- D. Assessment

Core Knowledge Area 4: Healthy and Safe Environments

Early childhood professionals use practices that protect children and promote health, including good nutrition and physical activity.

Healthy and Safe Environments Subheadings

- A. Healthy Environments and Health Needs
- B. Safe Environments
- C. Nutrition
- D. Physical Activity

Core Knowledge Area 5: Professionalism and Program Organization

Early childhood professionals understand they have the responsibility to provide services that meet or exceed standards of practice and support positive outcomes for children, families and professionals, including themselves, staff and other colleagues.

Professionalism and Program Organization Subheadings

- A. Professionalism
- B. Working with Staff and Colleagues
- C. Program Organization and Administration

Table of Contents

Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals pages 1-8

- 1 Introduction and Overview
- 3 Levels of the Core Knowledge and Competencies
- 5 Format of the Competencies in this Booklet
- 6 Use of the Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies
- 6 Who the Early Childhood Core Competencies are for
- 8 Specialty Competencies

Northern Lights Core Competencies: Level I, II and III pages 9-25

Child Development

Level I (9) Level II (10) Level III (11)

Families and Community

Level I (12) Level II (12-13) Level III (14)

Teaching and Learning

Level I (14-15) Level II (16-17) Level III (17-18)

Healthy and Safe Environments

Level I (19-20) Level II (20-21) Level III (21-22)

Professionalism and Program Organization

Level I (22-23) Level II (23-24) Level III (25)

Additional information pages 27-37

- 26 Alignment with the Vermont Agency of Education Teaching License
- 28 Northern Lights Resources for Professional Development
- 29 Frequently Asked Questions
- 30 Core Competencies and Other Standards of Quality
- 32 History of Vermont's Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies
- 33 Acknowledgements
- 34 Definitions of Core Knowledge and Subheadings
- 36 References

Inside Front Cover: Early Childhood Core Knowledge Areas and Subheadings

Inside Back Cover: Northern Lights Early Childhood Career Ladder

This entire document can also be downloaded at no cost from the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>. The core competencies grids (in section 2 above) are also available on the website as writable PDF documents to download and use.

Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals became effective on August 1, 2005 and were reviewed in 2007-2008. These revised competencies became effective July 1, 2008. This document was reviewed, updated and reprinted in July 2013. This document will be reviewed and revised again in 2018.

Connecting Professional Development for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals
Generously supported by the Child Development Division, Department of Children and Families,
and Vermont Agency of Human Services

Introduction

Welcome to Northern Lights Career Development Center's Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals. This booklet provides comprehensive information about the core knowledge areas and competencies. It also organizes the competencies so they can be used as an assessment tool. Find and download this booklet on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

The Northern Lights Career Development Center is Vermont's unified system of professional

development for early childhood and afterschool professionals. Its goal is to support and enhance the development of a quality, statewide professional development system. This system should be consistent, accessible and comprehensive in meeting the needs of early childhood and afterschool professionals from entry to advanced levels.

Northern Lights Career Development Center welcomes learning about your experiences using this document and the core competencies. Contact us via our website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

Overview

Vermont's Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals is a broad title to describe a tiered system.

Core Knowledge Areas are the "big chunks" - the knowledge needed by professionals to effectively work with young children and their families. There are five early childhood core knowledge areas that encompass Vermont's core competencies for early childhood professionals:

- Child Development
- Families and Communities
- Teaching and Learning
- Healthy and Safe Environments
- Professionalism and Program Orientation.

Subheadings break the core knowledge areas into smaller "chunks." They describe the component parts that make up each core knowledge area.

Core competencies are the smallest pieces. They describe the core knowledge specifically. They are also called standards of practice. Core competencies are concrete and achievable. They detail the observable skills and attitudes needed by professionals in order to provide high quality services. In this booklet we also added examples of how you might see each core competency in practice.

Core knowledge areas and competencies are one of the basic tools of professionals, both those who work with children and their families and those who support these professionals.

The "core" refers to the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are central to the profession and should be mastered by all professionals in the field. There are two core competency documents in Vermont, one for early childhood professionals and one for afterschool professionals. Many professionals who have worked in the field for a long time also develop more advanced skills and specialties beyond the core. There are additional competencies for those specialties, branching from the core competencies.



The competencies for early childhood apply to all professionals working with young children ages birth to eight, and their families. In this booklet, core competencies describe a range of knowledge and skill levels, from entry level staff through seasoned staff with many years of experience and education.

The competencies for after school apply to all professionals working with school age children, beginning with the kindergarten year, providing services in before school, after school or summer programs. They are designed to serve entry level staff persons and build up to competencies typical of after school program administrators.

The core knowledge areas and competencies are one part of the system defining quality early childhood and after school services in Vermont. They describe what you need to know, do, and believe in order to do your job as an early educator / caregiver or director. Core knowledge areas and competencies are essential in creating a consistent professional development system statewide. When professionals have and use well-defined competencies, it means there is agreement about the expectations of the professionals working with young children.

1. Core Knowledge Area (the big chunk)

Ex: Child Development

A. Subheading (breaks down each core knowledge area)

Ex: Individual Variance

i. Core Competency (what a professional knows & does)

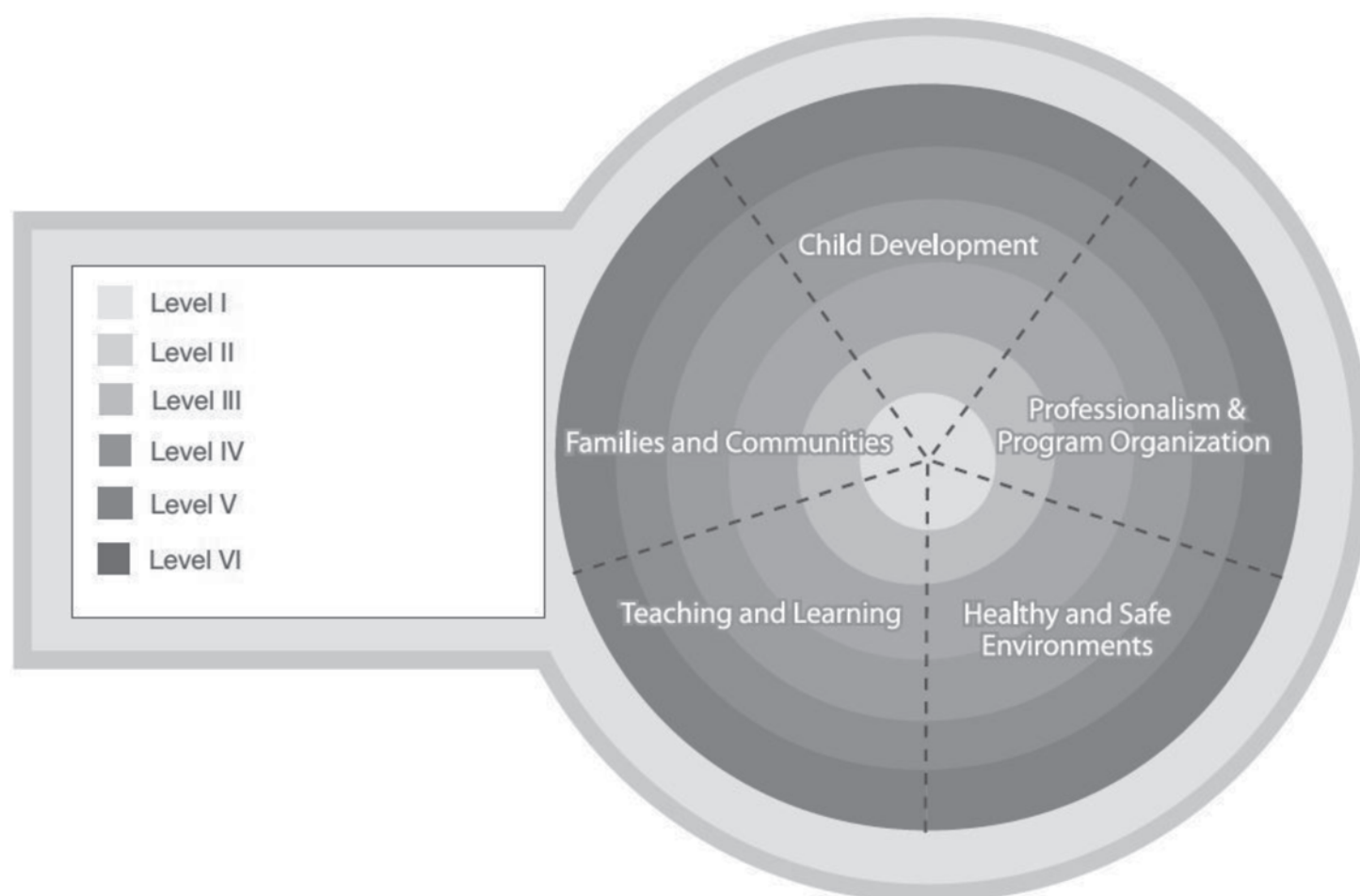
Ex: Defines temperament and the role it plays in how children respond to people and the environment

Levels of the Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies

The core competencies are also arranged in *levels*, from entry level to advanced, building on each other. Level two includes the competencies of level one, level three includes both levels one and two, and so forth.

The core competency levels correspond to the levels of the Northern Lights Career Ladder. **See the inside back cover and the Northern Lights website for details on the Career Ladder.** This ladder describes how the competencies can be met through education and experience in a progression from Level I through VI. Each level is achieved through both education and experience. In reality, professionals enter the field of early childhood at different points on the career ladder. The Northern Lights Career Ladder is a guide and a tool for tracking and planning professional growth. (See the *Career Advising Guide for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals* on the Northern Lights website for further information).

This diagram illustrates how the five core knowledge areas together create the whole, and how each level builds on the level below it:



Level I Competencies

include the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for entry-level professionals. They acquire them from experience gained under supervision or with support from networks or organizations, and by completing training. The course, Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals was designed based on the Level I early childhood core competencies. It is offered through the community child care support agencies and some other organizations. There are also other options to achieve the competencies and meet the education requirements of a Level I certificate.

Level II Competencies

include Level I competencies plus the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with Level II. These competencies can be achieved through experience and education. Education related to Level II competencies include: completing four college courses that cover two or more of the core knowledge areas; achieving the Child Development Associate credential; or an equivalent.

Level III Competencies

include Levels I and II competencies plus the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with Level III. These competencies can be achieved through experience and by completing college-level education courses or programs. Education options associated with Level III include: the Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program, the Child Care Certificate from Community College of Vermont, 21 college credits in several core knowledge areas, or an associate's degree with at least 21 credits related to early childhood education.

Level IV Competencies

include Levels I, II and III competencies plus the knowledge and skills and attitudes associated with Level IV. These competencies can be achieved through experience and completion of a bachelor's degree with at least 30 credit hours of college course work covering several core knowledge areas. The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) teaching license with an endorsement in early childhood or early childhood special education is an enhancement of Level IV.

Level V Competencies

include Levels I through IV competencies plus the knowledge, skills and attitudes associated with Level V. These competencies can be achieved by experience and earning a master's degree in early childhood or a related field. The Vermont Agency of Education teaching license with an endorsement in early childhood or a related field of endorsement is an enhancement of Level V.

Level VI Competencies

include Levels I through V competencies plus the knowledge, skills and attitudes associated with Level VI. These competencies can be achieved by experience and completing a Ph.D. or Ed.D. in early childhood education, a related field or an equivalent credential. Most level VI professionals have additional specialized knowledge and skills related to their area of expertise.

Northern Lights Career Development Center issues a Certificate for each Level achieved.

This document details Level I, II and III core competencies. The competencies that support Level IV, V and VI align with the Agency of Education standards for Vermont Educators and the Program Director Competencies. Page 26 provides additional information and resources for Level IV, V and VI competencies.

Format of the Competencies in this Booklet

The core competencies themselves, the heart of this document, (pages 9-25) are formatted in a grid so they can be used as an assessment tool for Level I, Level II or Level III competencies. In each core knowledge area the Level I competencies are listed first, then Level II and then Level III.

For each area, examples are provided to show how different professionals in various settings might demonstrate their competence. *These are only examples* – and are not meant to be exclusive or complete, but to show some of the possibilities that might exist.

When using it as a self-assessment at any level, a person could find his or her skills or knowledge to be:

- “new” – the competency is not something the person is familiar with
- “emerging” – the competency is familiar but not always evident
- “solid” – the competency is well established and routinely evident

The appropriate box can be checked, perhaps with a date, to indicate a person’s strengths and areas for further growth. On the Northern Lights website you can download these pages, save them and type in them yourself.

This is what the writable version looks like on the website:

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Examples
CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LEVEL III COMPETENCIES		new	emerging	solid	
A. How Children Develop	38. Compares and contrasts major theories of child development, identifying underlying processes and sources of influence in different theories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type in your notes here....
	39. Applies knowledge of the sequence of development (across all domains) to anticipate children's interests and needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	40. Uses observation strategies to analyze children's play, interests and behavior and record developmental changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	41. Names a variety of practices that support brain development in infants and toddlers and chooses appropriate practices within the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Influences on Child Development	42. Supports children in creating healthy relationships with significant adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type in your notes here....
	43. Employs strategies that support and promote the healthy development of children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	44. Considers the impact of stress (due to trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty and other factors) when addressing the needs of individual children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	45. Identifies environment factors influencing development in individual children, including prenatal factors, media factors, pollutants and contaminants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	46. Analyzes physical or behavior changes in children as possible indicators of the presence of stress and takes appropriate action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	47. Responds appropriately to the variety of ways children experience grief and loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

In using the assessment tool, it’s important to know that individuals may be solid in competencies at more than one level. Also, even experienced professionals might not be “solid” with every competency in a level. After taking a Level I, II or III professional development activity you might not yet be “solid” with all of the competencies in the level. Competency is gained over time from a combination of education, experience and reflection. Other professionals can help you gain competence by providing examples, resources and reflecting with you.

Use of the Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies

The core knowledge areas and competencies connect to other standards for quality services. Programs have regulations or accreditation standards. Learning standards provide guidance on outcomes for children. The core knowledge areas and competencies define standards for professionals.

Core Competencies and Standards of Quality, found in the Additional Information section of this document, describes how these three types of standards work together to support quality services.

Who the Early Childhood Competences are for

The core knowledge areas and competencies can be used by everyone working in the field of early childhood - classroom teachers, home visitors, adult instructors, mentors, family child care providers, paraeducators, special educators, supervisors, sponsors of professional development, presenters and those aspiring to work in the field.

Practitioners and professionals working directly with children and families (teachers, providers, caregivers, paraprofessionals and others) can use the competencies to assess their own skills, knowledge and attitudes. This helps them identify their strengths and learning needs.

Supervisors, administrators, mentors and employers can use the competencies to organize professional development opportunities; develop or review job descriptions; evaluate performance; assess strengths, challenges and learning needs; design and evaluate course content; and support individuals in creating professional development plans.

The Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals are also useful to home visitors. Home visitors include a wide range of professionals who come from different disciplines including early intervention, education and special education, health, mental health, family support, and social services. They are welcomed into the homes of

families with young children in order to provide information, support and resources. Though home visitors share many of the skills, knowledge and characteristics required of early childhood professionals who work with young children in groups, they need additional expertise because of the different context in which they work.

Home visitors are in contact with families - and often with many members of a family - more frequently than many other early childhood professionals, and often develop close relationships with them. Home visiting requires professionals to be skilled adult educators, as well as child educators. Two core knowledge areas - teaching and learning, and health and safety - are framed differently when the professional and the family members together design the child's learning environment. Family-centered and family-driven practices should be used. Finally, when the family's home is also the work setting, professional boundaries change.



Specific examples of ways competencies can be used:

Individuals working in an early childhood program use it to assess themselves and then develop their Individual Professional Development Plan based on the results.

Mentors, consultants, or supervisors help the people they work with complete the self-assessment based on the competencies, to help them identify strengths and provide guidance to them.

Instructors ask their adult students to do the self assessment in class or as homework and bring it back to discuss. Together, the students review their self-assessments and start the process of identifying priorities, professional development goals, and action steps to create Individual Professional Development Plans.

Instructors applying for the Instructor Registry, indicate in which core knowledge areas they can instruct. This helps sponsors find instructors in the areas they need.

Instructors planning a presentation or course for adults, use the core competencies to identify objectives they will address, based on the level of the students they will teach.

Sponsors of professional development activities create documentation of professional development forms before each workshop, with the core knowledge areas and subheadings covered in that training. After the workshop, participants get a signed copy to have a record.

An organization that sponsors training uses the core knowledge areas and competencies as a framework to review past trainings and plan future trainings. This determines which core knowledge areas and subheadings were addressed, and which areas should be addressed in the future.

A sponsor or instructor assesses a curriculum to learn which core competencies are included. This tells them how this particular curriculum fits with the other training within the field of early care and education.

A review committee seeks to recognize individuals' skills and knowledge for equivalent coursework. The review committee uses the competencies that align with prescribed course work as a basis for assessment of the individual.

Staff of a large early childhood program work in teams, assessing the knowledge and skills of their team in each core knowledge area. They discuss examples from their work. Together, the teams reflect on their combined skills and areas for growth. A plan is made for how those staff members with the most knowledge and skills in an area might share them with others. Skills and knowledge needed by many staff members are identified and added to a staff training schedule.

Specialty Competencies

As people specialize in a particular role or job, they add more field-specific competencies to their core competencies. Specialties are based on the core competencies with enhanced skills and knowledge added.

In Vermont, the Early Childhood and Family Mental Health competencies describe special knowledge and skills that overlap with and enhance the early childhood and afterschool core competencies. They apply to service providers working to support families with young children ages birth to eight, or to support early childhood professionals that serve this age range.

These competencies are organized into four levels: Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced, and Specialist. The Vermont Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Credential is based on the Intermediate level of these competencies. Professionals achieve the credential when they provide documented evidence that they meet these competencies.

The Vermont Competencies for Program Directors of Early Childhood and Afterschool Programs describe special knowledge and skills that overlap with and enhance the core competencies for early childhood and afterschool professionals. The Vermont Program Director Credential for early childhood and afterschool professionals is based on these program director competencies.

There are three steps to achieve the Credential: Steps 1, 2, and 3. Professionals achieve the credential at step 3, when they complete coursework and provide documented evidence that they meet these competencies.

Other specialty competencies are in development. The competency documents cited above and information about the specialized credentials can be found at the Northern Lights web site which is updated regularly: <http://northernlightscdc.org>



Child Development

CORE KNOWLEDGE AREA: CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Early childhood professionals have an understanding of how children develop and the factors that are involved in development. They use their understanding of child development combined with their knowledge of each child as an individual to support children's overall development.

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
A. How Children Develop	CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LEVEL I COMPETENCIES				
B. Influences on Child Development	CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LEVEL I COMPETENCIES				
C. Individual Variance	CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LEVEL I COMPETENCIES				

Child Development

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LEVEL II COMPETENCIES A. How Children Develop	18. Identifies major theories and theorists of child development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I often find that for activities such as play dough or water play, all the children can participate at whatever level they are.
	19. Identifies 3 – 4 main aspects of one's own personal philosophy about how children grow and learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that brain research talks about letting children repeat favorite activities, which helps them grow and learn.
	20. Explains how exploration and play is a driving force in children's development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been observing and jotting down notes so I can see how a toddler is interacting with the others.
	21. Explains how findings from brain development research apply to early care and education practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	22. Describes the sequence of communication development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	23. Describes the sequence of physical development, including gross and fine motor skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	24. Describes the sequence of cognitive development in children, including language and communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Influences on Child Development	25. Describes the sequence of social and emotional development in children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	26. Chooses observation strategies appropriate to observing and recording developmental changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	27. Describes different patterns of attachment and the ways that adult interactions support the development of healthy attachment relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment is the strong bond between the child and the adult. It lets Sally feel safe enough to leave my side to go off and play for a while.
	28. Identifies characteristics of people and environments that promote and support development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When I provide a safe space for children to play in and I am a warm, caring, responsive person, I know children will benefit from my care.
	29. Describes specific ways that environment factors influence development, including prenatal factors, media factors, pollutants and contaminants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I noticed after Jamie's grandfather died, he would sometimes be really quiet and sad and at other times he would be angry and run around a lot.
	30. Describes specific ways that stress due to trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty and other factors impacts children's development and behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	31. Explains the variety of ways children experience grief and loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Individual Variance	32. Considers temperament and other individual differences when explaining individual children's development and behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When Tim isn't his usual self - crying more often and wanting to be alone, his parents and I usually suspect an ear infection and are often correct.
	33. Identifies the needs of children based on observation, understanding individuals and their cues, signals and communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We have several books on child development with a chart of milestones that I use. If I suspect a delay, I talk with my supervisor.
	34. Describes factors influencing resiliency in children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	35. Identifies aspects of children's health status that impact behavior, interactions and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	36. Recognizes when to seek the help of others in understanding and addressing children's atypical development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	37. Identifies resources for acquiring information about atypical development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Child Development

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading		Competency		Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
CHILD DEVELOPMENT: LEVEL III COMPETENCIES							
			new	emerging	solid		
A. How Children Develop	38. Compares and contrasts major theories of child development, identifying underlying processes and sources of influence in different theories					The program has a statement in the handbook that talks about Jean Piaget’s theories about children learning through play; I think this makes sense.	
	39. Applies knowledge of the sequence of development (across all domains) to anticipate children’s interests and needs						
	40. Uses observation strategies to analyze children’s play, interests and actions and record developmental changes						
	41. Names a variety of practices that support brain development in Infants and toddlers and chooses appropriate practices within the program					I took a course on observing and recording and found many different ways to document the children’s play. In addition to daily notes, I can do running records, tallies or use the camera to capture their play on film.	
B. Influences on Child Development	42. Supports children in creating healthy attachment relationships with significant adults					In our infant/toddler area there is a particularly fussy 14 month old and we really try to let her snuggle with the adults as much as we can.	
	43. Employs strategies that support and optimize the healthy development of children					The contact with adults helps her feel better.	
	44. Considers the impact of stress (due to trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty and other factors) when addressing the needs of individual children						
	45. Identifies environment factors influencing development in individual children, including prenatal factors, media factors, pollutants and contaminants						
	46. Analyzes physical or behavior changes in children as possible indicators of the presence of stress and takes appropriate action						
	47. Responds appropriately to the variety of ways children experience grief and loss						
C. Individual Variance	48. Integrates information on child development with an understanding of individual children’s needs and interests to tailor the program to each child					The staff meet in the spring to discuss the individual children who will be moving on to the older group.	
	49. Monitors children’s health status and intervenes appropriately when it impacts their behavior, interactions and learning					We want to be sure the needs and interests of this year’s group of active boys will be addressed.	
	50. Incorporates practices that support children’s resiliency into the program					A toddler in my care didn’t feed himself independently like the other toddlers did. He waited to be fed.	
	51. Identifies strengths, needs, and interests of each child and develops strategies to support each child’s growth and development					I thought something was wrong, perhaps there was a delay. After talking to his family I realized this practice was typical in their culture.	
	52. Identifies and discusses issues in child development arising from differences in gender, race, culture, and class						
	53. Collaborates with parents in seeking the help of specialists in assessing, understanding and addressing their children’s atypical development						

CORE KNOWLEDGE AREA: FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

Early childhood professionals understand that children are members of a family and that both the family and the program are part of a community. They work in partnership with families by communicating respectfully and by sharing information and resources that support children and families.

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES: LEVEL I COMPETENCIES					
A. Relationships	1. Describes qualities of programs that are healthy, accessible, inclusive and welcoming for all families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When a new family comes to my group, I start by asking the parent what he likes best about his child.
	2. Describes why it is important to build strong relationships with families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I know that having a strong relationship with a family is important for me and it helps us talk about the child openly.
	3. Identifies strengths in family members and family units	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4. Describes what a strengths-based, family-centered practice means and identifies key practices in partnering with families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Communication	5. Identifies different ways to communicate with families (verbal, non-verbal, written, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I realize I feel comfortable talking to parents most of the time but I get flustered when something unexpected happens and I need to deal with it quickly.
	6. Describes effective, respectful strategies and techniques for communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7. Identifies and explores one's own personal beliefs, values and biases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8. Examines one's communication skills for cultural sensitivity and overall effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Community Involvement & Resources	9. Knows the family structure, values and traditions of each child in the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I participate in my local provider network and we often have speakers come in to talk about services and resources. I keep a list of their names handy and will call them if necessary.
	10. Identifies local community resources that support children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	11. Identifies state and national resources that support children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12. Establishes collaborative, positive working relationships with service providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES: LEVEL II COMPETENCIES					
A. Relationships	14. Partners with families to develop healthy behaviors and routines for their children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Many of the families come from different countries and I enjoy getting to know what their life was like before moving here. It helps me understand why the child does the things she does.
	15. Uses practices that value and build on family strengths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The parents and I meet at least twice a year about their child's progress and what they want to see before the child leaves my program. I also send notes home describing things their child accomplished this week.
	16. Supports families as active decision-makers and educators of their children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	17. Shares knowledge of child development and individual variances with families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	18. Informs parents about activities and events in the program and suggests ways for families to be involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	19. Recognizes signs of stress or changes in physical or mental health in parents and guardians and provides resources on request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Families & Communities

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
B. Communication	20. Uses a variety of methods to maintain communication with all families in the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I ask parents for input and feedback about what they like and don't like about the program in different ways, such as surveys and suggestion boxes.
	21. Applies a variety of communication strategies and techniques to support and build trusting relationships with children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents are often in a hurry at drop off and pick up time but I always try to let them know how the day went for their child.
C. Community Involvement & Resources	22. Utilizes a variety of strategies with families that encourage feedback, evaluation, and involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I know that Emily's mother likes notes home every day so she can share them with her partner and that Jonathan's dad would rather hear about his day directly from me.
	23. Describes and implements policies that foster respect and inclusion of all children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I decided to put up a place for parents to share their best snack ideas and now parents are also using it to ask each other for things – like where are good playgrounds.
FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES: LEVEL III COMPETENCIES					
A. Relationships	24. Utilizes community resources within the program that support children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A parent asked me about me about breastfeeding and I gave her a brochure about our local La Leche League chapter.
	25. Refers families to appropriate community resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	26. Assists families in making their own referrals and requests for services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	27. Employs strategies to build networks among families in the program and community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents get to know each other and see their child in a new light because the children put on plays during our potlucks.
	28. Fosters parents' abilities to notice and appreciate their child's development and individuality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a wide range of resources available for families to use, and sometimes I help parents make a connection to the ones they need.
	29. Creates opportunities for families to engage in the program and to interact with one another	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I listen to what is important to the parents when I talk with them about their child. I believe what matters to them, matters to me.
	30. Plans or participates in parent and community involvement activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	31. Monitors at-risk parents and assists parents in accessing appropriate resources as necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	32. Articulates and values a strengths-based, family-centered philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Families & Communities

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
B. Communication	33. Evaluates a variety of communication techniques and selects appropriate methods to support and build trusting relationships with each family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I work hard to have a good connection with the families and because they are all so different, I make sure that I am aware of what works best for each one.
	34. Integrates children's home cultures and languages into the program as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I schedule a meeting with each family twice a year. I prepare information I have collected about their child and I have questions for them as well.
	35. Monitors relationships with families and selects strategies that insure feedback, evaluation, and involvement with all families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I asked the public health nurse to help me find menus written in Chinese. We also have an interpreter come in for parent meetings.
	36. Uses a system of multiple communication techniques throughout the program to accommodate a wide range of families' needs or styles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I participate in the IEP meetings as often as I can. It really gives me a lot of information about the child as well as the resources available for other children.
C. Community Involvement & Resources	37. Participates in teams that are coordinating services for children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I use websites to research organizations and get information. Then I make phone calls to follow up and get my questions answered.
	38. Maintains a family-centered philosophy when working with others in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

CORE KNOWLEDGE AREA: TEACHING & LEARNING

Early childhood professionals understand that the substance of teaching and learning is a combination of interactions, routines, and experiences in children's daily lives.

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
A. Interactions	1. Demonstrates warm, positive, nurturing, and respectful interactions with children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Before picking the infants up, I talk to them and tell them what I am going to do.
	2. Understands the importance of trusting relationships with children where they feel safe, secure and valued	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I make it a point to greet each child in a way that they like. Some children like to be hugged and some like a pat on the back.
	3. Identifies a variety of positive guidance techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When I am sitting at the sandbox and the children are the "cooks," I pretend to eat the food they give me.
	4. Monitors children's relationships and is aware of their involvement with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5. Facilitates and participates in children's play without taking over the activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	6. Communicates with others in positive, respectful ways as a model for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7. Responds to children's initiations and request including the nonverbal cues of infants and toddlers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	8. Uses care-taking activities, such as diapering and dressing, as an opportunity to foster healthy development through positive adult/child interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

TEACHING & LEARNING

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
B. Learning Environment	9. Describes the elements of a welcoming, supportive, healthy and enriching learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The rooms are big and the children have many toys and materials to play with whenever they want to. In the parent agreement, it states that TV and computers are used infrequently and only 'educational' videos are used.
	10. Distinguishes between daily schedules and routines that are rigid, flexible, or random	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	11. Provides opportunities for children to explore their own interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12. Describes how to use television, videos, computers, video games and adaptive technologies in appropriate and meaningful ways (e.g., screen time is not appropriate for infants)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	13. Identifies key toys and materials necessary in programs for infants, for toddlers and for preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	14. Describes how environments support children's independence, exploration and positive behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Curriculum & Content	15. Identifies how routine activities (such as diapering, toileting or dressing) and daily transition times are important parts of the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A VELS poster is taped to the wall above the art sink and I read it as I wash out paint brushes. I understand that toddlers are doing math and science when they are playing and stacking the soft blocks.
	16. Recognizes the primary role that sensory experiences, free exploration and play have in children's growth and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	17. Identifies where sensory experiences, free exploration and play occur during the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	18. Demonstrates knowledge of the Vermont Early Learning Standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	19. Defines "curriculum" as it applies to programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	20. Identifies aspects of the program that support children's emergent literacy, language and communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	21. Reads to children and involves the children through questions and conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	22. Identifies the components of the content areas of math, science, social studies, the arts and literacy for infants, toddlers and preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	23. Encourages creative expression and identifies how the creative process supports children's growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	24. Identifies where children's interests and needs are incorporated into the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Assessment	25. Practices observing children to identify their interests and needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watching children gives me ideas about what they like to do so I write it down on the daily notes to parents. Each year our program has an in-service on confidentiality. It is a good reminder to be careful when and with whom I am discussing children's issues.
	26. Describes different ways to assess children and different purposes of assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	27. Describes different methods for observing and recording children's behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	28. Identifies several documentation strategies that provide evidence of children's development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	29. Understands that information regarding child assessments cannot be discussed or shared without parent permission (release of information)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Teaching & Learning

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
TEACHING AND LEARNING: LEVEL II COMPETENCIES A. Interactions	30. Uses a variety of positive guidance strategies that respect children and teach appropriate social skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occasionally when the children are playing in the dramatic play area the children won't want someone to play. I help them find a role for the child and ways to include that child. Instead of asking Ethan how was his day, I will ask him to "tell me about your day" -- that way he doesn't answer, "good" and stop talking.
	31. Provides opportunities for children to listen, interact, and communicate freely with other children and adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	32. Has reasonable expectations about children's needs, abilities, and interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	33. Promotes positive, pro-social relationships among children and helps each child feel accepted in the group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	34. Supports children in recognizing and expressing feelings in both themselves and others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	35. Guides children to resolve interpersonal conflicts and solve problems with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	36. Asks open-ended questions and encourages children to ask questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	37. Develops plans to transition children into and out of the program and involves families in the plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	38. Creates an environment – using the space, the materials and the routine – that encourages play, exploration and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	39. Follows a daily plan that balances individual, large and small group activities, child-directed and teacher-directed activities, and indoor and outdoor activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Learning Environment	40. Has a daily routine that is predictable yet allows flexibility to support children's interests and needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This week a child came in with a book on people who are blind and showed a booklet with words in Braille. We stopped what we were doing and spent time feeling the Braille letters.
	41. Provides key toys and materials necessary in programs for infants, for toddlers and for preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	42. Identifies characteristics of environments that have cultural, ethnic, racial and linguistic diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	43. Provides opportunities for children to engage in extended periods of free exploration and spontaneous play within the daily routine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	44. Uses television, videos, computers, video games and adaptive technologies in appropriate and meaningful ways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	45. Develops strategies for facilitating routine activities (diapering, dressing) and daily transition times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	46. Changes toys and materials to support and reflect children's changing needs and interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	47. Arranges materials and space so that it is organized and supports independence and positive behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Teaching & Learning

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
C. Curriculum & Content	48. Describes how children learn specific content (math, literacy, etc.) through their sensory experiences, play, exploration, interactions and inquiry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We have a restaurant theme in the dramatic play area and I am amazed at how this area includes math, science, social studies and literacy. They write out the food orders and the bill, they talk about different foods and how the waitresses and waiters should do their job. I wanted to do a unit on different foods around the world and used the VELS standards to get ideas about appropriate materials.
	49. Provides various sensory experiences and opportunities for play and exploration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	50. Creates learning experiences appropriate to the developmental level and interests of the children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	51. Uses Vermont Early Learning Standards in planning and evaluating programs for preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	52. Adapts the curriculum, the environment and the materials to meet the needs of individual children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	53. Makes a wide variety of engaging, age-appropriate books easily accessible to children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Assessment	54. Plans a program that supports learning in all the specific content areas (math, literacy, communication, science, social studies, health, etc.) and is appropriate for the developmental level of the children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I use sticky notes to jot down observations during the day, along with the date, so when I write in the children's notebooks each week, I can include that information.
	55. Collects and organizes information from parents and direct observation that provides evidence of the development of each child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	56. Identifies appropriate methods of documentation and assessment according to specific purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	57. Identifies appropriate methods of observing and recording according to specific purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	58. Collects documentation of children's activities and work as evidence of accomplishing curriculum goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	59. Maintains accurate records of observations and assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TEACHING AND LEARNING: LEVEL III COMPETENCIES	60. Communicates observations and interpretations with parents and, with parental consent, with colleagues and other professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer forgets to hang up her coat when she comes in and a simple reminder, "coat" works for her, yet Brenda responds better to "I need you to pick up your coat". By spring we have spent a lot of time using conflict resolution with the kids and they can talk with each other, discuss the problem and come to an agreement without much help from the adults.
	61. Encourages children to develop independence by providing physical and emotional security and opportunities for children to master new skills, experience success, and safely take risks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	62. Evaluates a variety of positive guidance techniques and selects appropriate methods for the specific situation or child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	63. Designs and implements behavior plans to guide children towards appropriate behavior in cooperation with parents and other involved adults as appropriate for individual children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	64. Effectively de-escalates emotional and behavioral situations with children in supportive ways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	65. Monitors the children's interactions and adjusts the program to support all children in listening, interacting, and communicating freely with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A. Interactions	66. Takes a role of facilitator or observer when supporting children in resolving conflicts with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	67. Uses a consistent procedure, in partnership with families, to transition children into and out of the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

TEACHING & LEARNING

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
B. Learning Environment	68. Plans and creates indoor and outdoor environments that are safe, stimulating, engaging, and intentionally designed to support curriculum goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We had noticed, through observations, that the block area wasn't being used very much by the children. We added some construction vehicles to the block area and interest has really picked up. We have families from many countries and so we asked everyone to bring in pictures, clothes, books and recipes from their family to share with our program. Having children get dressed to go outside is as important as the other things we do in a day -- it is just another way of learning.
	69. Observes the program, evaluates how the environment is meeting the needs and interests of the children and makes changes as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	70. Creates environments that have cultural, ethnic, racial and linguistic diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	71. Uses routine activities (diapering, dressing) and daily transition times to support curricular goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	72. Adjusts the routine and environment to provide numerous opportunities for children to engage in extended periods of free exploration and spontaneous play within the daily routine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	73. Observes the environment and makes adjustments to reduce behavior issues and maximize appropriate use of materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Curriculum & Content	74. Adjusts teaching practices based on individual children's developmental accomplishments and needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The children are interested in space. I asked them what they thought about space and listened to their questions. I used these to decide what to add about space in the room - aluminum foil in with the blocks to make space ships, books on space, and we used flashlights, boxes and black paper to explore stars and light. I like to be outside in nature and my interest spills over to the children's. I have scales, magnifying glasses, bug boxes, pencil, paper and clip boards and plastic containers. The children are always looking to see what they can explore. Each child has a folder with samples of their work - art work (paintings, drawings, etc.) and when we talk with parents they can see the differences as time goes on. The observations and other documentation are included in the child's folder and we share our findings with the parents. Each one is dated in order for parents to see how their child is progressing.
	75. Implements an integrated curriculum that addresses the various content areas (i.e., language arts, science, mathematics, social studies, the arts) and is based on children's needs and interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	76. Uses the Vermont Early Learning Standards in planning and evaluating curricula, learning environments, and materials for preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	77. Plans appropriate learning experiences based on observations and analyses of children's behaviors and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	78. Provides opportunities for children to raise questions about the world around them and to explore their questions using the scientific method	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	79. Provides open-ended activities that foster curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the children's developmental levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Assessment	80. Participates in implementing service plans and making accommodations for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each child has a folder with samples of their work - art work (paintings, drawings, etc.) and when we talk with parents they can see the differences as time goes on. The observations and other documentation are included in the child's folder and we share our findings with the parents. Each one is dated in order for parents to see how their child is progressing.
	81. Analyzes curriculum models along with their rationales and limitations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	82. Uses a variety of methods to systematically observe, document and monitor children's development, behavior and wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	83. Analyzes different methods of observation, documentation and assessment and selects appropriate techniques according to the desired purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	84. Routinely collects, organizes and interprets documentation of children's activities and work as evidence of accomplishing curriculum goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	85. Routinely shares observations and documentation with families to demonstrate children's development, interests, and achievement of curriculum goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

CORE KNOWLEDGE AREA: HEALTHY & SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Early childhood professionals use practices that protect children and promote health, including good nutrition and physical activity.

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
A. Healthy Environments & Health Needs	1. Understands minimum standards for healthy environments within the program licensing regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The regulations are tacked to the bulletin board for all of us to see and read.
	2. Follows universal precautions to avoid the spread of infectious blood-borne pathogens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Posters on diapering and hand washing are posted in the appropriate areas.
	3. Follows procedures that reduce contamination and the spread of infectious illnesses, such as in hand washing, diapering, toileting, washing tables, and cleaning toys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I make sure I wash my hands and the children's hands after coming inside.
	4. Identifies local health care professionals, health services, and health resources available to children and their families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The public health nurse visited the program and left her card for us to call her if we need anything.
	5. Practices appropriate health information documentation procedure according to the program and licensing regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Safe Environments	6. Has knowledge of CPR and is prepared to implement techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I practice fire drills every month and write it down on the calendar.
	7. Responds to injuries using appropriate first aid techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Every day after the children leave I look around the playground and pick up toys, throw away anything that is broken and make sure everything is safe.
	8. Monitors indoor and outdoor toys, materials and equipment and maintains them in safe condition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	9. Monitors children to prevent injuries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	10. Identifies environmental hazards and removes them, such as broken toys, choking hazards, poisonous plants and secondhand smoke.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	11. Identifies characteristics of safe environments for all ages of children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	12. Understands and follows emergency procedures as defined by the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Nutrition	13. Follows program licensing regulations intended to ensure good nutrition and safe food preparation and service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The enrollment form asks the family if the child has any special dietary needs.
	14. Recognizes and avoids health hazards in meals (choking, allergies, burns, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I use the guidelines from the Food Program and follow the suggested menus.
	15. Provides meals for children with special dietary needs as instructed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	16. Identifies community programs and federal nutrition benefits to supplement family food resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	17. Lists components of a healthy diet for infants, toddlers and preschoolers (Child and Adult Care Food Program meal patterns), including the nutritional superiority of breast milk for infants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	18. Follows individualized schedules for eating and resting with infants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	19. Understands that a healthy eating environment for infants includes responding appropriately to an infant's feeding cues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	20. Understands that a healthy eating environment for toddlers and preschoolers includes structured meal times, expectations of appropriate behavior and family style meals with a pleasant social atmosphere that includes adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	21. Recognizes that there is a division of responsibility in feeding – that adults are responsible for what and how food is presented and that children are responsible for whether and what they eat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

HEALTHY & SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading		Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
			new	emerging	solid	
D. Physical Activity	22. Recognizes the importance of, and provides time and space for, active play for all children					The children have at least 20 minutes of outdoor time every morning, weather permitting. If they can't go outside we often push back some furniture and turn on the dancing music. I watch to see when kids need to move more, and that is when I start a song like "Shake Rattle and Roll" and we all join in.
	23. Recognizes the long-term health risks of extended periods of screen media and other passive activities					
	24. Provides appropriate periods of rest and safe sleeping environments					
HEALTHY & SAFE ENVIRONMENTS: LEVEL II COMPETENCIES						
A. Healthy Environments & Health Needs	25. Recognizes potentially unhealthy practices and acts to correct them					We have a toothbrush for each child and help them brush after lunch. I help parents understand that it puts everyone at risk when they bring in a sick child. A parent in the program is a doctor and brings in information. I often mention to parents that new brochures are out in the hallway.
	26. Encourages routine hygiene practices (brushing teeth, combing hair, and washing hands)					
	27. Explains rationale behind policies regarding exclusion and readmission of sick children					
	28. Receives and shares information from health and mental health professionals about both healthy growth and development of children as well as current health risks					
	29. Provides information to families about the development of children's health needs (toileting, feeding, dental/doctor visits, immunizations, etc.)					
B. Safe Environments	30. Adapts the indoor and outdoor environment to the developmental needs and abilities of the children, including children with special needs					Parents were invited to a car seat check with the local health department. Each car seat was inspected and parents were there to see how to properly install the car seat. We installed soft lighting throughout the program to accommodate a child who was sensitive to harsh lights. It helped this child and it seemed to make all children and adults happier.
	31. Teaches simple safety precautions and rules to children and enforces rules consistently (including emergency procedures such as fire drills)					
	32. Conducts periodic safety assessments of the program and environment, and makes recommendations for appropriate modifications					
	33. Offers information to families about safety and injury prevention for children and adults (such as toy recalls, car seat usage, etc.)					

HEALTHY & SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading		Competency		Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
				new	emerging	solid	
C. Nutrition	34.	Provides space and options for breastfeeding in privacy or storage and preparation of pumped breast milk, as appropriate		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A few people were opposed to the idea of offering an extended snack time for the 3, 4 and 5 year olds but once it got going, it made snack time more peaceful, the children ate more and the children felt a sense of independence. When the children and I sit together for snack we often talk about the different food everyone brings in and it is a way for the children to notice foods that others bring in.
	35.	Provides meals and snacks that are appealing, nutritionally balanced, and developmentally appropriate		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	36.	Creates a healthy eating environment for infants where infants’ cues are responded to appropriately		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	37.	Creates a healthy eating environment for toddlers and preschoolers with structured, pleasant, family style meals where appropriate behavior is expected.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	38.	Uses appropriate foods to encourage the development of eating skills and social/emotional development		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Physical Activity	39.	Teaches children about healthy food choices		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The infants and toddlers are able to move around freely throughout the day with very little restriction. We have soft ramps to climb on, mirrors for them to look at and busy boxes secured on the wall. The daily schedule is designed for children to make choices of things to do all day. Some choices include table games or water play while others include ball games and woodworking.
	40.	Communicates with families about healthy food choices, while respecting cultural preferences		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	41.	Plans a variety of age appropriate ways that children can be physically active throughout the program day		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	42.	Provides information for families about children’s need for physical activity		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	43.	Limits children’s exposure to screen media and other passive activities		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
HEALTHY & SAFE ENVIRONMENTS: LEVEL III COMPETENCIES							
A. Healthy Environments & Health Needs	44.	Plans a variety of age appropriate ways that children can have adequate rest or quiet time throughout the program day		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	One child likes to have the book <i>It’s My Body</i> read to her. We have several books about healthy bodies to choose from. The program requires a current immunization form on file and I often remind parents, every fall, either in person or a note, to bring in updated records. Volunteers and parents assist with field trips to keep the number of children being watched by each adult small.
	45.	Documents illness and knows when to communicate with public health agencies about outbreaks of communicable disease		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	46.	Creates collaborative, cooperative relationships with parents regarding sick children		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	47.	Recognizes children’s interest in their bodies (healthy sexual development) and integrates this interest into the curriculum appropriately		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	48.	Provides opportunities for children to brush teeth, comb hair, wash hands and other practices that promote personal health		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Safe Environments	49.	Works with families to maintain accurate immunization records, health history, and emergency contact information		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteers and parents assist with field trips to keep the number of children being watched by each adult small.
	50.	Reviews emergency evacuation policies and procedures and makes recommendations for changes according to program’s needs or current standards		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	51.	Assesses safety and preparedness issues when planning field trips and uses appropriate practices on field trips		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	52.	Creates environments for children that are safe, yet support independence and accommodate the needs of the children		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	53.	Works with families to minimize the risk of injury and provide safe environments for their children in and out of the program		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
C. Nutrition	54. Partners with staff and parents to assist children in the progression of age-appropriate eating skills and the healthy social/emotional development that occurs during feeding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The children like to cut up fruits and vegetables for snack and often ask if they can do it again.
	55. Recognizes that successful feeding in children requires the coordination and normal development of many systems: neuro/muscular, sensory, and social/emotional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When visiting with a family, parents often ask about eating habits and if this is a problem. We discuss the ages and stages of each individual child and together decide what is typical for that age.
	56. Plans and evaluates menus that fulfill Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines to ensure they are nutritious, and recognizes when a child's extreme pickiness may endanger their health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	57. Involves children in menu planning and snack preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	58. Involves families in activities promoting good nutrition and oral hygiene routines and refers parents and staff to community resources and references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	59. Collaborates with parents and specialists to create individualized feeding plans for children with special health needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	60. Collaborates with parents in seeking the help of specialists in assessing, understanding and addressing their children's delays in feeding skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Physical Activity	61. Monitors physical activity of the children and provides a variety of materials and opportunity to engage all children in gross motor activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I use a "follow the leader" game with lots of movement and music during transition times like cleaning up.
	62. Engages in physical activities with the children throughout the program day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	63. Shares resources with families about physical activities appropriate for their children and opportunities in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

CORE KNOWLEDGE AREA: PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Early childhood professionals understand they have the responsibility to provide services that meet or exceed standards of practice and support positive outcomes for children, families and professionals, including themselves, staff and other colleagues.

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION: LEVEL I COMPETENCIES					
A. Professionalism	1. Demonstrates knowledge of ethical standards, specifically the NAEYC Code of Ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I know that it is important not to discuss children or family issues at drop off and pickup time since other people are around. I read the local newsletter from the Parent Child Center to find out what trainings are being offered. The policies state what clothing cannot be worn and I make sure that when I get ready for work, I don't wear those things.
	2. Defines and maintains rules of confidentiality related to children, families and colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3. Uses Release of Information protocol appropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	4. Practices self-reflection with support from supervisors, mentors and other experienced professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	5. Reflects on professional goals and creates an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) with support from a supervisor, mentor or other experienced professional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	6. Participates in learning opportunities (such as workshops, training, or classes) for professional and personal growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	7. Defines what it means to have a philosophy and the role it plays in early education, care, guidance and health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
A. Professionalism (cont.)	8. Articulates the steps to take when child abuse or neglect is suspected, as is necessary as a mandated reporter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	9. Reports or causes a report to be made when child abuse or neglect is suspected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Working with Staff & Colleagues	10. Exhibits a professional appearance as defined by program practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	11. Demonstrates good work habits as appropriate to program practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Program Organization & Administration	12. Identifies different communication strategies for use with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I took a communication workshop and as a result I have tried to listen first and talk second.
	13. Recognizes the characteristics of collaborative, cooperative working relationships with staff, colleagues and co-workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When I seem to be in conflict with another staff person, my supervisor helps me with ideas of how to work this out in a positive way.
	14. Interacts positively and professionally with staff, colleagues and co-workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	15. Establishes and participates in relationships with experienced colleagues such as supervisors, mentors and other professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	16. Follows state regulations appropriate to the program (licensed, registered, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are contracts and policies written specifically for the program and I let parents know why they are important.
	17. Completes required documentation (for employer, local, state, and federal government)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This program values serving children with special needs and I understand that this includes children who have been abused or neglected.
	18. Follows basic business or financial regulations with local, state and federal regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	19. Identifies the purpose of contracts and policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	20. Shows commitment to the program's goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	21. Describes program's philosophy and mission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	22. Identifies components of Specialized Child Care Services as defined by the Child Development Division	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION: LEVEL II COMPETENCIES					
A. Professionalism	23. Reflects on ethical standards, specifically the NAEYC Code of Ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a copy of the NAEYC code of ethics that I got from a recent training. I think I am confidential when I talk with others.
	24. Recognizes potentially unethical practices, including breaches of confidentiality, in early care, health, and education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When another teacher was hesitant to call the District Office to talk about a potential case of neglect I really encouraged her to talk to her supervisor and to call because it could hurt the child more if she didn't.
	25. Identifies key components of a personal philosophy in early education, care, guidance and health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I look over my IPDP every September and see what I want to work on this year based on what I have already done. Then I update it, and put in my calendar the dates I set to meet or check in on my goals.
	26. Reflects on and updates an Individual Professional Development Plan on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	27. Assesses one's own skills, knowledge and values as part of ongoing professional growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	28. Selects and pursues professional development opportunities based on the IPDP and designed to enhance knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	29. Promotes one's own health and well-being and uses strategies to avoid burn-out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	30. Advocates for the protection of children and the need to report when discussing issues of suspected abuse or neglect with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	31. Manages demands of personal and professional commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	32. Maintains personal and professional boundaries with children, families and service providers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	33. Identifies local, state and national organizations that advocate for children, families and professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Core Knowledge Area & Subheading	Competency	Assessment Tool			Example of What You Might See in Practice
		new	emerging	solid	
B. Working with Staff & Colleagues	34. Uses feedback from supervisors, mentors and other experienced colleagues as opportunities to expand knowledge and refine skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We work in a small area together and it makes it difficult when people don't get along. We try to work it out with each other and when that doesn't work we ask someone to facilitate a discussion. My supervisor and I look over the newsletters from the local Child Care Support Agency and the Parent Child Center to help me figure out which sessions would be interesting and most helpful. Together we also use the BFIS course calendar.
	35. Applies a variety of communication strategies and techniques to support and build professional relationships with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	36. Identifies essential qualities of the early childhood professional in infant, toddler, preschool and multi-age settings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	37. Establishes collaborative, cooperative working relationships with staff, colleagues and coworkers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	38. Demonstrates respect, equity and a commitment to conflict resolution in interactions with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	39. Demonstrates an awareness of resources for professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Program Organization & Administration	40. Identifies main sources of program income and main categories of expenses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I keep the adult/child ratio lower than allowed by regulations and although I don't have openings, many people call because they like the idea of smaller groups for their children. I adjusted my rates so that I could operate a sound business even though I might not be fully enrolled at all times. I always have a waiting list. One of the parents was willing to look over the updated handbook to see how other parents would respond to the new policies.
	41. Identifies key factors that impact programs' financial stability (things that effect income and expenses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	42. Names characteristics of the program that could be used in marketing and recruitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	43. Reflects on the program's practices and how they align with the program's mission statement or goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	44. Identifies a variety of program evaluation and assessment tools and understands their purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	45. Shows awareness of quality assessment and improvement programs such as national accreditation and STARS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	46. Explores a variety of resources for obtaining materials and equipment and evaluates choices for best value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	47. Describes and discusses the concept of reasonable accommodations for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	48. Presents program policies to parents and other adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	49. Monitors program for adherence to laws and regulations pertaining to early care, health, guidance and education and addresses noncompliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PROFESSIONALISM & PROGRAM ORGANIZATION: LEVEL III COMPETENCIES

		new			emerging			solid		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A. Professionalism	50. Acts to maintain ethical standards in oneself and others as defined by the NAEYC Code of Ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	51. Evaluates current trends and research in early care, health, and education and adjusts practice as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	52. Articulates a personal philosophy of early care, health, and education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	53. Incorporates program and personal philosophies into practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	54. Evaluates the benefits and challenges of mentoring and supervisory relationships for both parties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	55. Practices self-assessment and consulting with others (e.g., mentors, other professionals, technical assistance) to refine skills, knowledge and values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	56. Participates in advocacy activities that benefit children, families, and early childhood professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Working with Staff & Colleagues	57. Monitors children and maintains appropriate records to support reports of suspected child abuse or neglect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	58. Routinely reviews professional development resources and shares information with staff and other colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	59. Monitors relationships with other professionals and uses strategies to strengthen collaborative, cooperative working relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	60. Participates in reflection and problem solving to address ethical dilemmas with integrity and a humane attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	61. Participates in assessing one's self and other staff members using the program's processes and tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	62. Participates in and initiates problem solving and conflict resolution with staff and colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	63. Participates in job interviews – as an interviewer or in pursuing employment – in an appropriate, professional manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Program Organization & Administration	64. Demonstrates ability to create program policies and tools (such as handbooks, contracts and forms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	65. Maintains supplies, materials and equipment within one's program or group and replaces according to program practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	66. Demonstrates ability to develop and manage an annual budget within one's program or group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	67. Identifies resources for grants and other sources of program funding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	68. Initiates quality assessment and improvement programs such as national accreditation and STARS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	69. Participates in program evaluation and assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	70. Participates in creating, reviewing or revising program's mission statement, goals or program policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	71. Communicates effectively with advisory or governance boards as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	72. Employs strategies to maintain and uphold program contracts and policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A. Professionalism

B. Working with Staff & Colleagues

C. Program Organization & Administration

50. Acts to maintain ethical standards in oneself and others as defined by the NAEYC Code of Ethics
51. Evaluates current trends and research in early care, health, and education and adjusts practice as appropriate
52. Articulates a personal philosophy of early care, health, and education
53. Incorporates program and personal philosophies into practices
54. Evaluates the benefits and challenges of mentoring and supervisory relationships for both parties
55. Practices self-assessment and consulting with others (e.g., mentors, other professionals, technical assistance) to refine skills, knowledge and values
56. Participates in advocacy activities that benefit children, families, and early childhood professionals
57. Monitors children and maintains appropriate records to support reports of suspected child abuse or neglect.

58. Routinely reviews professional development resources and shares information with staff and other colleagues
59. Monitors relationships with other professionals and uses strategies to strengthen collaborative, cooperative working relationships
60. Participates in reflection and problem solving to address ethical dilemmas with integrity and a humane attitude
61. Participates in assessing one's self and other staff members using the program's processes and tools
62. Participates in and initiates problem solving and conflict resolution with staff and colleagues
63. Participates in job interviews – as an interviewer or in pursuing employment – in an appropriate, professional manner

64. Demonstrates ability to create program policies and tools (such as handbooks, contracts and forms)
65. Maintains supplies, materials and equipment within one's program or group and replaces according to program practices
66. Demonstrates ability to develop and manage an annual budget within one's program or group
67. Identifies resources for grants and other sources of program funding
68. Initiates quality assessment and improvement programs such as national accreditation and STARS
69. Participates in program evaluation and assessment
70. Participates in creating, reviewing or revising program's mission statement, goals or program policies
71. Communicates effectively with advisory or governance boards as appropriate
72. Employs strategies to maintain and uphold program contracts and policies

When a parent asked me about another child's behavior and how it was affecting his child Sal, I talked about Sal and didn't give information about the other child.

I have called both of my local legislators a few times and talked about the importance of continuing to fund the subsidy program and other benefits for providers and families that were at risk of being cut.

My mentor has really helped me put my personal philosophy into words. I always knew what I believed in but I just couldn't make it sound right.

I feel confident about mentioning confidentiality issues with other people when I feel like something is being discussed that shouldn't be. I wouldn't feel right otherwise.

Staff meetings are a good time to discuss problems we all seem to be facing. It helps me understand everyone else's point of view and we work to find a solution that works for all of us.

I feel really good about what I've learned about making and using puppets with children, so I shared my ideas and the results at my local network meeting. They said I should do a workshop for others.

We wanted to have food at a parent meeting and I applied to the local grocery store for a donation and we got it!

I was asked by my director to attend a community meeting to talk with potential new candidates for the board of directors.

Sometimes I will sit down with a parent and help them complete the forms that are required in order for the child to attend the program.

Alignment with the Vermont Agency of Education Teaching License

To become a licensed teacher in Vermont you must meet the requirements of the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE). To earn an educator license, the Agency of Education requires candidates to demonstrate the knowledge and performance standards of the endorsement. Each licensed teacher holds endorsement(s) that indicate what the teacher is eligible to teach.

There are two early childhood endorsements. Early Childhood Education (endorsement #36) includes age ranges birth to grade three or can be limited to cover only ages birth to six. The early childhood special educator endorsement (#80) covers work with children with special needs ages three through six.

There are a number of standards one must meet before being recommended for a teaching license. These are listed on the right hand side of the table on the next page. The left column shows how the

Northern Lights Core Knowledge Areas and subheadings align with the Agency of Education standards for an early childhood endorsement, birth through grade three.

Levels IV and V of the Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies are not detailed in this booklet because the competencies at these levels fully align with the Agency of Education standards.

For additional information about the paths to licensure in the state of Vermont and for downloadable resources, visit the Agency of Education website: <http://education.vermont.gov/>



Northern Lights Early Childhood Core Knowledge Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Subheading</i> 	Vermont Agency of Education Endorsement: Children birth through grade three
Child Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How children develop</i> • <i>Influences on child development</i> • <i>Individual variance</i> 	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progression of prenatal through middle childhood growth and development and ability to apply this knowledge to all aspects of Early Childhood practice • Biological, genetic, environmental, cultural, and familial factors in children's development and their impact on exceptionalities
Families and Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Relationships</i> • <i>Communication</i> • <i>Community involvement and resources</i> 	Knowledge of family systems theory and ability to implement family centered practice. Knowledge of and ability to incorporate and use community resources.
Teaching and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessment</i> • <i>Interactions</i> • <i>Learning Environment</i> • <i>Curriculum content</i> 	Knowledge of and ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately assess young children's learning and development • Implement Vermont Early Learning Standards • Develop and implement appropriate early childhood curriculum and instruction and learning environments • Integrate the arts and creative expression in the early childhood curriculum • Specific skills and techniques related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Arts • Mathematics • Social Studies • Science
Healthy and Safe Environments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Healthy environments and health needs</i> • <i>Safe environments</i> • <i>Nutrition</i> • <i>Physical activity</i> 	Knowledge of and ability to incorporate health and safety issues, procedures, and regulations
Professionalism and Program Organization	(none) see the Northern Lights Program Director Competencies for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals

Northern Lights Resources for Professional Development

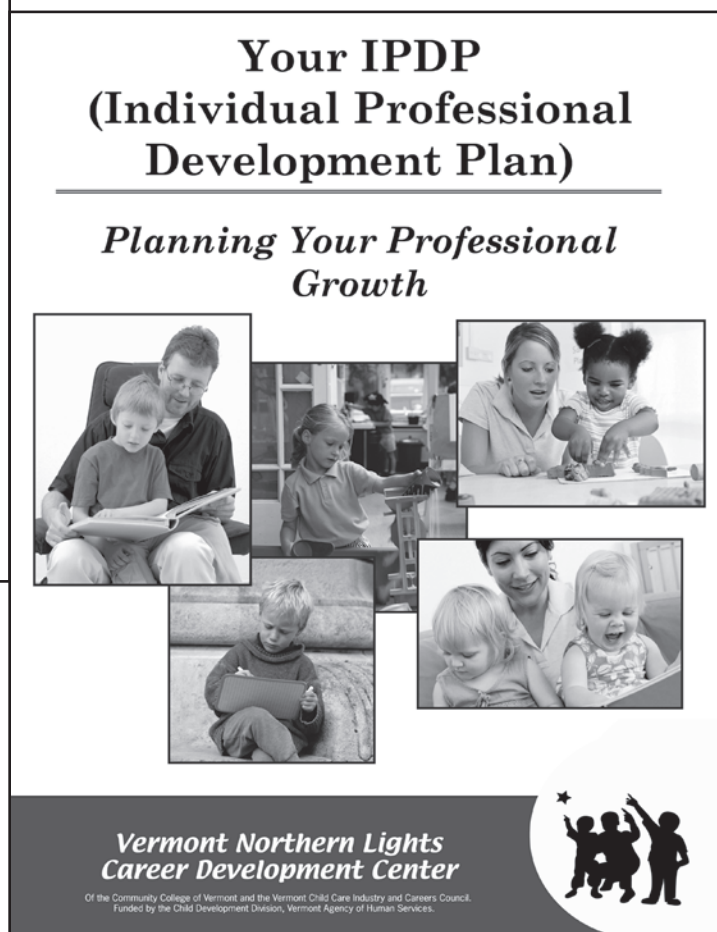
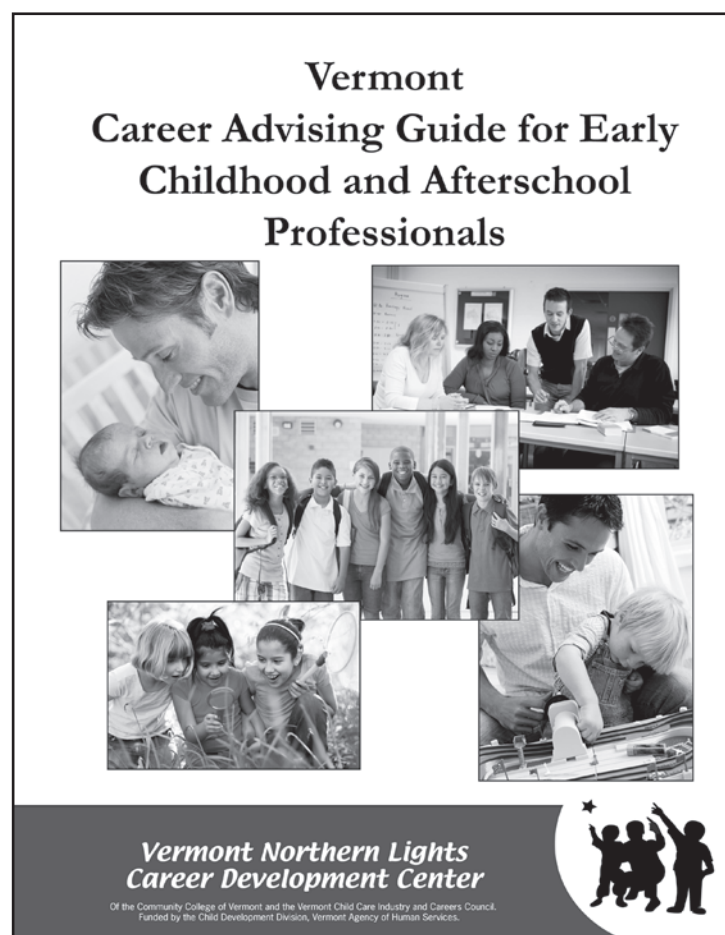
The Northern Lights Career Development Center website <http://northernlightscdc.org> has links to a large variety of professional development resources and activities throughout Vermont and beyond. The website includes all competency documents, credentials, career ladder and level information mentioned in this booklet. It also includes fillable versions of the competencies as well as guidance on their use.

The Northern Lights Career Development Center published two booklets, which are also on the website:

Vermont Career Advising Guide for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals

Your IPDP (Individual Professional Development Plan): Planning Your Professional Growth

These two documents contain a wealth of resource information. Hard copies can be obtained from the regional child care resource development specialists or from the Northern Lights Career Development Center.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q How do the core competencies fit into a system that is growing more complex by the minute? How will they improve the situation for everyone?

The core knowledge areas and competencies provide a foundation on which everything else rests. Without a strong and clear foundation, it is impossible to create a consistent and effective professional development system. In the short term, they help you consider what you know, what you need to know, and what you want to learn. They organize the knowledge in the field so you can see a direct connection between the workshop or the course offered and the areas of professional development. The examples in this booklet also help you recognize what you already know, and how you would apply new knowledge in your work. In the long term, competencies lay out progress along a professional development continuum towards credentials and degrees. They provide more meaningful and purposeful learning, so you can be a better teacher.

For planners and sponsors of professional development, they help you identify the content as needed to address the full range of knowledge and skills in the field of early childhood. For presenters and instructors the core competencies help you align instruction to ensure that your teaching directly applies to the skills, knowledge and attitudes practitioners need.

Q The CDA (Child Development Associate Credential) is a popular credential in our area. Are the competencies related to the CDA credential?

Yes. The core knowledge areas and competencies are a way to organize together various professional development and training programs that already exist. The core competencies are aligned with the CDA credential areas and the CDA credential is included in the Northern Lights Career Ladder. Those with a CDA credential have attained Level II of the career ladder (mastering Level I and Level II). So if you have a CDA credential, you can look at the Level III competencies to set goals for your professional growth.

There are a lot of competencies! Do I need to know all this to do my job?

Q Probably not. Core competencies are the foundation for all the knowledge and skills needed in early childhood, regardless of your work setting or job requirements. They are not a job description. For your job, you likely need many of the core competencies, but may not need all of them. You may also need other specific skills that only apply to your job, but are not in the list of core competencies. It is useful to seek to have as many of the core competencies as possible, so you have a strong foundation in the field of early childhood and possibly more options for different job responsibilities.



Core Competencies and Other Standards of Quality

By Nancy Sugarman

Standards are a way to measure if we are providing quality services to people. In a service system, standards give us a common way to talk about what we mean by quality and how we know when we reach it.

When we provide care and education to young children and their families, we are providing a service. There are three basic parts to any service system:

- the **program** that delivers the services,
- the **people who receive** the services, and
- the **people who provide** the services.

The standards of quality relate to these three parts, and like gears, these different standards need to connect in order to work.

The program that delivers the services is guided by **program standards**. At an ice cream store, for example, program standards could measure the cleanliness of the store, the freshness of the food, if the staff are ready for work, and if the store opens and closes on time.

In the world of early childhood, program standards measure things like the safety of the environment, the preparedness of the staff, if families are welcomed and involved in the program, and if the budget is balanced.

In Vermont, the Child Care Licensing Regulations, implemented by the Child Development Division set the foundation for child care programs in Vermont. There are additional program standards that build from the licensing regulations. These are set by national organizations including the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) and the Council on Accreditation, for Afterschool programs. In Vermont, we also use the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) which is Vermont's program quality and improvement system for regulated programs including afterschool, licensed and registered programs. These different

program standards are used to rate programs and recognize programs of quality. Programs themselves use these standards to assess themselves and improve their quality.



The people who receive the services are the consumers. In the ice cream store these standards might measure customer satisfaction, timeliness of service, and likeliness that customers will return.

In the world of early childhood, the customers are the children and their families. We refer to **learning standards** which measure how the children are doing and how responsive we are to meeting their needs. For example, early childhood learning standards measure if children are engaged in play that helps them develop skills and knowledge, if children use a variety of ways to express their own ideas, and how well children engage with others.

Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) are for young children. The Agency of Education also uses the Common Core standards for children in kindergarten through high school. Professionals use learning standards to guide curriculum, frame learning plans for individual children, and inform families and others about children's development.



Finally, we consider the *people who provide the services*. We call the standards that guide them **professional standards**. At the same ice cream store, professional standards help us measure knowledge, skills and attitudes of the staff including how well staff members follow the health requirements, if staff members scoop ice cream efficiently, and if they like their work and work well with others.

In the world of early childhood we also have **professional standards**. If you are a teacher, child care provider, home visitor or consultant, you are important in the lives of young children and have a major influence on their development and growth. Because of this responsibility, we consider all those who recognize the importance of their work with young children, and seek to keep learning how best to provide quality care and education to young children – professionals. Our professional standards help us measure the appropriateness of a teacher's expectations for children, awareness of community resources, knowledge and demonstration of engaging activities for children, and ability to work as a team with other adults.



What are the professional standards in early childhood? This booklet, the Northern Lights Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, is the foundation of professional standards for our field. They define the knowledge, skills and attitudes professionals in our field should develop. In Vermont, there are also professional standards set by the Agency of Education for licensed teachers, some of whom work with young children.



These three types of standards work together. Like gears, they are interdependent. Together they help define goals, identify a path to quality and measure how well we are doing.

I use the core knowledge and competencies to plan the course I am teaching college students, and I also know the Vermont Early Learning Standards and program standards – since I plan to teach about these to my students.

- a college instructor

I use program standards as a program assessment so my child care is a high quality program. I use professional standards to help my staff grow, and learning standards to plan the curriculum.

- a program director

History of Vermont's Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

Core knowledge areas and competencies are based on what the professional community and research indicate is the basic set of skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to work with young children and their families.

The Northern Lights Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals were originally researched and written by a work group of the state-wide Professional Preparation and Development Committee, which is currently a subcommittee of the Bright Futures State Council. The original committee consisted of representatives from child care support agencies, the Vermont Department of Education, the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Northern Lights Career Development Center and the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council.

The competencies workgroup developed a draft document and Northern Lights Career Development Center collected public feedback on the draft through the spring of 2005. The final revised document was released in August of 2005.

In the fall of 2007, a group of professionals reviewed the core knowledge areas and competencies document, concentrating on updating the core competencies and the booklet itself, based on current best practices in the field and feedback from users during the first two years of implementation of the competencies. The revised competencies and published document, released in April of 2008, incorporated revisions based on the above recommendations as well as feedback from Vermont experts in nutrition, home visiting and Department of Education teacher licensure. As with the original document, the Professional Preparation and Development committee made final recommendations for changes before the document was prepared by the Northern Lights Career Development Center.

The current edits, completed in 2013, bring the document up to date and include feedback from users in the field, but contain no changes to the core knowledge areas, subheadings and competencies.



Acknowledgements

The primary group of authors, 2005

Meg Baker, Success by Six, Franklin County
 Adam Deyo, Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center
 Manuela Fonseca, Early Childhood Education, Vermont Department of Education
 Kate Giusti, Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center
 Daphne Moritz, Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council
 Amethyst Peaslee, Mary Johnson Children's Center
 Janice Stockman, Head Start State Collaboration Office
 Kerrie Workman, Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center

The review group, 2007

Deborah Agnier, Addison Northwest Supervisory Union
 Carol Barbieri, Arlington Area Child Care, Bennington Quality Task Force
 Chuck Bayles, Learning Partners, Inc.
 Portia Cornell, Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger
 Marj Davis, Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union
 Eric Erwin, Orleans Essex North Supervisory Union
 Jodi Farashahi, Head Start
 Karen Fierer, Children's Integrated Services, Child Development Division
 Manuela Fonseca, Early Childhood Education, Vermont Department of Education
 Dawn Johnson, Washington County Mental Health, New Leaf Family Child Care
 Julie Mulroy, Northeast Kingdom Learning Services
 Betsy Rathbun-Gunn, United Counseling Services, Head Start
 Melissa Reigel-Garrett, VAEYC
 Rosanne Rembert, Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council
 Kate Ross, Essential Early Education, Vermont Department of Education
 Janice Stockman, Head Start State Collaboration Office
 Samn Stockwell, CDA Training, Family Center of Washington County
 Nancy Sugarman, Northern Lights Career Development Center
 Marie Sullivan, Kingdom Child Care Connection
 Maureen Young-McCarthy, Northern Lights Career Development Center

The review group 2013

Becky Raymond, Central Vermont Building Bright Futures Council
 Nancy Sugarman, Northern Lights Career Development Center
 Michelle Trayah, Northwestern Counseling and Support Services, Childcare Resource Development Specialist
 Maureen Young-McCarthy, Northern Lights Career Development Center
 Members of the Professional Preparation and Development Committee

Definitions of Core Knowledge Areas and Subheadings

Core Knowledge Area 1: Child Development

Early childhood professionals understand how children develop and the factors that are involved in development. They use their understanding of child development combined with their knowledge of each child as an individual to support children's overall development.

Child Development Subheadings

- A. How Children Develop addresses the principles and process of development, developmental norms and milestones, and the theoretical explanations of development.
- B. Influences on Development addresses the environmental factors that play a role in development, including the family, culture, and relationships.
- C. Individual Variance addresses the factors within the child that play a role in development, including temperament and resiliency.

Core Knowledge Area 2: Families and Communities

Early childhood professionals understand that children are members of a family and that both the family and the program are part of a community. They work in partnership with families by communicating respectfully and by sharing information and resources that support children and families.

Families and Communities Subheadings

- A. Relationships addresses the central role of the family and the importance of relationships with and between families that recognize family culture and family strengths.
- B. Communication addresses communication practices that build respectful relationships.
- C. Community Resources and Involvement addresses the role of the early childhood program in connecting the family with the community and its resources, within a team philosophy.

Core Knowledge Area 3: Teaching and Learning

Early childhood professionals understand that the substance of teaching and learning is a combination of interactions, routines, and experiences in children's daily lives.

Teaching and Learning Subheadings

- A. Interactions addresses the role of relationships with children as the foundation of their ability to explore, play and learn.
- B. Learning Environment addresses environments for children that are age appropriate, predictable, understandable and rich in materials that support growth and learning.
- C. Curriculum and Content addresses the strategies used to create programs for children that match each child's unique approach to learning and include the subject areas of early childhood education with age appropriate learning standards.
- D. Assessment addresses the use of observation and reflection to plan, develop, and assess curriculum and to assess children's growth and learning.

Core Knowledge Area 4: Healthy and Safe Environments

Early childhood professionals use practices that protect children and promote health, including good nutrition and physical activity.

Healthy and Safe Environments Subheadings

- A. Healthy Environments and Health Needs addresses strategies to create and maintain environments free from health hazards, knowledge of and collaboration with community health resources, and practices to meet the health needs and health issues of children and families.
- B. Safe Environments addresses strategies to create and maintain environments free from safety hazards with respect to the age and abilities of the children, knowledge of and collaboration with community safety resources, and practices to meet the safety needs of children.
- C. Nutrition addresses the development of eating skills, standards of nutritional needs and serving sizes for different ages, safe and age appropriate food service, and knowledge of and collaboration with community resources regarding food and nutrition.
- D. Physical Activity addresses the role of physical activity and rest in children's growth and learning, and collaborating with families to support children's physical needs.

Core Knowledge Area 5: Professionalism and Program Organization

Early childhood professionals understand they have the responsibility to provide services that meet or exceed standards of practice and support positive outcomes for children, families and professionals, including themselves, staff and other colleagues.

Professionalism and Program Organization Subheadings

- A. Professionalism addresses the policies and practices for ethical conduct, including confidentiality, reporting child abuse, professional demeanor, and reflective, thoughtful planning for professional growth.
- B. Working with Staff and Colleagues addresses strategies to create strong, professional relationships with colleagues and defining the variety of roles colleagues play with one another.
- C. Program Organization and Administration addresses the components of sound business practices such as regulatory compliance, budgeting, administration and program evaluation.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2011). *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs. 3rd edition*. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. Website: <http://nrckids.org>.

Chappel, M. and Nye, S. (2007). *Nevada's Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals*. Accessed from: https://dwss.nv.gov/pdf/CC_CoreComp030507.pdf

Child Care Aware of Kansas, OPEN Initiative, Missouri AfterSchool Network, Kansas Enrichment Network. (2011). *Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals: Kansas and Missouri*. Accessed from Child Care Aware of Kansas website: http://www.ks.childcareaware.org/PDFs/2011CoreComp_Eng.pdf

Colorado Office of Professional Development. (2008). *Colorado Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development*. Accessed from: <http://coloradoofficeofprofessionaldevelopment.org/redir.cfm?Redir=http://netnewsdesk.com/resources/375/File/ECC-OPD/PDF/about/CKSBook.pdf>

Connecticut Charts-a-Course. (n.d.). *The Connecticut Charts-a-Course Core Areas of Knowledge*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ctcharts.org/index.cfm?module=18&navID=nav71>

Council for Professional Recognition (2013). *CDA Competency Standards and Functional Areas*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdacouncil.org/the-cda-credential/about-the-cda/cda-competency-standards>

Division for Early Childhood. (n.d.). *Personnel Standards for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education*. Retrieved from: http://www.dec-sped.org/About_DEC/Personnel_Standards_for_Early_Intervention_and_Early_Childhood_Special_Education

Florida Steps to Success Early Learning Career Pathways. (2010). *Florida Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Practitioners*. Accessed from: <http://media.palmbeachstate.edu/podcasts/ecore/practitionercorecomptutorial/index.html>

Hyson, M. (Ed.). (2003). *Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC's Standards for Programs*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Lutton, A. (Ed.). (2012). *Advancing the Early Childhood Profession: NAEYC Standards and Guidelines for Professional Development*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Montana Early Childhood Project (2013). *Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base: A guide to professional early care and education practice*. Accessed from: <http://www.mtecp.org/pdfs/Knowledge%20Base%20Assessments/Knowledge%20Base%20Rev%2002%202013.pdf>

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2011). *Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Adult Education Glossary*. Accessed from: www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Adult%20Education%20Glossary.pdf

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2005). *NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment*. Accessed from: www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2009). *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs*. Accessed from: www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/ProfPrepStandards09.pdf

National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health and Georgetown University (2002). *Bright Futures Nutrition Family Fact Sheets*. Retrieved from the Bright Futures at Georgetown University website: <http://www.brightfutures.org/nutritionfamfact/>

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). *New Hampshire's Early Childhood Professional Development System*. Accessed from: www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/cdb/documents/earlychildhood.pdf

Ohio Professional Development Network. (2008). *Ohio's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies*. Accessed from: www.ohpdnetwork.org/documents/CoreKnowledge.pdf

Satter, E. (2000). *Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense*. Boulder: Bull Publishing Company.

Satter, E. (1987). *How to get your Child to Eat... But not too much*. Palo Alto: Bull Publishing Company.

Satter, E. (1986). The Feeding Relationship. *The American Dietetic Association*. Vol. 86: 352-356.

Standards, Monitoring & Technical Assistance Sub-Committee of the Vermont Early Childhood Work Group. (2003). *Vermont Early Learning Standards: Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten*. Accessed from Vermont Agency of Education website: http://education.vermont.gov/documents/vels_03.pdf

United States Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service (2013). *Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program-cacfp>

Vermont Agency of Human Services, Child Development Division. (2007). *Vermont Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals*. (2007). Accessed from Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org/career-pathways/professional-competencies-and-standards/core-competencies-for-afterschool-professionals/>

Vermont Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Practice Group. (2006). *Vermont Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Competencies*. Accessed from Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org/career-pathways/professional-competencies-and-standards/ecfmh-competencies/>

Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators. (n.d.). "Clustered" Competencies for Early Childhood Education. Retrieved from Vermont Agency of Education website: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/regulations_endorsements.html

Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families. (2006). *Healthy from the start: How feeding nurtures your young child's body, heart and mind*. Retrieved from: <http://www.zerotothree.org/about-us/funded-projects/parenting-resources/podcast/feeding-the-body-and-the-mind.html>

Northern Lights (NL) Early Childhood Career Ladder

as of July 2013

Level I: 1 year experience, a current Individual Professional Development Plan AND

1. Completion of Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals Course (45 hours) OR
2. NL approved Level I portfolio or other approved equivalence OR
3. NL approved 3 college credits in child development including early childhood + basic specialized care, introduction to licensing workshop and one approved observation of the applicant working with children

Level II: 2 years experience, a current Individual Professional Development Plan AND

1. Current Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential OR
2. NL approved Level II portfolio OR
3. NL approved 12 related college credits in at least 2 Vermont core knowledge areas and two approved observations of the applicant working with children

Level III: 2 years experience, a current Individual Professional Development Plan AND

Level III A

1. Completed Vermont Child Care Registered Apprentice OR
2. Community College of Vermont's Child Care Certificate OR
3. Highly Qualified Paraprofessional OR
4. NL approved equivalent: 21 related college credits in at least 3 of the Vermont core knowledge areas and two approved observations of the applicant working with children

Level III B

1. Associate's degree in early childhood education or related field OR
2. Associate's degree with 21 related college credits in at least 3 Vermont core knowledge areas

Level IV: 2 years experience, a current Individual Professional Development Plan AND

Level IV A

1. Bachelor's degree in early childhood education or related field OR
2. Bachelor's degree with NL approved 30 related college credits within at least 3 of the Vermont core knowledge areas

Level IV B

Above, with the Vermont Agency of Education teaching license with endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education, or elementary education (student teaching may count as work experience)

Level V : 2 years experience, a current Individual Professional Development Plan AND

Level VA: Master's degree in early childhood education or related field

Level VB: Above, with the Vermont Agency of Education teaching license with endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education, or elementary education (student teaching may count as work experience)

Level VI: 2 years experience, a current Individual Professional Development Plan AND

Doctorate degree in early childhood education or related field

Details available at <http://northernlightscdc.org>



Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center

Of the Community College of Vermont and the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council.
Funded by the Child Development Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services.

Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

Early Childhood Career Ladder

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
1. <u>Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals</u> course (45 hours) or 2. NL approved Level I <u>Portfolio</u> with documentation, 45 hours of verified professional development and one approved observation of the practitioner ⁴ or 3. NL approved <u>3 related college credits</u> ¹ in child development including early childhood + basic specialized care, introduction to licensing and one approved observation ⁴	1. <u>Current Child Development Associate (CDA)</u> Credential or 2. NL approved Level II <u>Portfolio</u> with documentation, 125 hours of verified professional development and two approved observations of the practitioner ⁴ or 3. NL approved <u>12 related college credits</u> ¹ in at least 2 VT Core Knowledge areas ³ and two approved observations of the practitioner ⁴	A) 1. Completed <u>Vermont Child Care Registered Apprentice</u> or 2. <u>CCV's Child Care Certificate program</u> or 3. <u>Highly Qualified Paraprofessional</u> ⁵ or 4. NL approved equivalent: <u>21 related college credits</u> ¹ in at least 3 of the VT Core Knowledge areas ³ and two approved observations of the practitioner ⁴ B) <u>Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field ¹ or Associate's degree with 21 related college credits ¹ in at least 3 VT Core Knowledge areas ³	A) 1. <u>Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field ¹ or 2. Bachelor's degree with NL approved <u>30 related college credits</u> ¹ within at least 3 of the VT Core Knowledge Areas ³ B) Above with <u>VT Department of Education teaching license</u> with endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education or elementary education	A) <u>Master Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field ¹ B) Above with <u>VT Department of Education teaching license</u> with endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education or elementary education	<u>Doctoral Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field ¹
Experience² : One year	2 years or more	2 years or more	2 years or more including student teaching	2 years or more	2 years or more

Applications: Those awarded Level Certificates may also be eligible for a Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division.

¹*Related fields/credits: All credits and degrees must be from an accredited, Northern Lights approved Institution of Higher Education.*

When a degree is required (Level IIIB, IV, V) then Related Fields refer to degrees with a major or concentration in one of the following areas:

- Early Childhood
- Child or Human Development
- Education (early childhood or elementary or special education)
- Child and Family Studies (including Home Economics)

Related Credits: When the individual's field of study is not one of the four areas above, or when college credits are an option to reach the Level, then credit-bearing

coursework in one or more of the following areas will be accepted.

- Child or human development
- Education, including special education
- Health, including nutrition and nursing
- Psychology/mental health/ child and family studies
- Sociology/human services/ social sciences/social services
- Business /administration (related to instruction on early childhood or afterschool program management)

²*Experience as an early childhood professional (not necessarily cumulative). Experience at Level I may be in any setting with groups of children who are not family members, at level II-VI must be in regulated child care setting.*

³*VT Core Knowledge areas include: Families and Communities, Child Development, Healthy and Safe Environments, Teaching and Learning, Professionalism and Program Organization*

⁴*Approved Observation of the Practitioner as approved and arranged between the regional Resource Development Specialist and Northern Lights Career Development Center*

⁵*Highly Qualified Paraprofessional is a national designation given by a public school to paraprofessionals who meet defined criteria under No Child Left Behind.*

Vermont Career Advising Guide for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals



***Vermont Northern Lights
Career Development Center***

Of the Community College of Vermont and the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council.
Funded by the Child Development Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services.



*I looked for a job with children
because I like kids and people said I was good with them.
I've been working with kids for a few years now and have taken a
lot of classes. I know a lot more than when I started. Mostly I've enjoyed this
work. It's interesting, even if it's not always easy. I'm starting to feel pretty confident
about what to do and how to do it, but there are still some challenging days. It's time
to update my IPDP again, which has me thinking about my direction for the
future. At first this was just a job, an income, for me. Now I'm wondering
what it would mean to make early childhood a real career.*

Working with children is inspiring, challenging and rewarding. We recognize the importance of this work and see what a difference it can make to individual children, to families and to you as an employee. We also recognize it is more than a job. It can be a career.

When you choose early childhood or afterschool care and education as a profession, then you are a professional.

A professional:

- is a member of a vocation founded upon specialized knowledge and skills
- is associated with specialized training related to that profession
- follows established standards of practice
- is responsible for following a code of ethical conduct

Goble, C.E., & Horn, D.M. 2010. *Take charge of your personal and professional development*. Young Children 65 (6): 87.

Where am I as a professional?

Where can I go next in my career?

How do I get there?

This booklet is about you. Discover the many options and resources available to you as you grow in your work with children, and in your role as a professional.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Professional Competencies	3
Career Levels and Pathways	5
Early Childhood Career Ladder	6
The Vermont Early Childhood Career Lattice	7
Career Pathways for Afterschool Professionals	9
Early Childhood Career Pathways	12
Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level I	13
Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level II	15
Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level III	17
Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level IV	21
Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level V & VI	25
Afterschool Pathways	28
Awareness Phase	29
Developing Phase	31
Achievement Phase	33
Certificates, Credentials, Degrees and Education Licensure	35
Instructors, Mentors, Coaches, and Consultants	36
Career Advising Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals	37
Resource Tools for Advisors	37
Standards of Quality	40
Program Quality and Professional Development	41
Resources	43
Resources Referenced in this Booklet	43
Learning Standards & Guidelines for Children and Youth	44
Program Standards and Accreditation	45
College and University Degrees and Coursework	45
Ethical Standards for Professionals	46
Selected Advocacy Organizations	47
Appendix	
College Course Work Alignment: Early Childhood and Afterschool Career Pathways	
Early Childhood Career Ladder and alignment with the Professional Recognition Bonus	

October 2011

Northern Lights Career Development Center

The entire document can be downloaded at no cost from the Northern Lights Career Development Center website: www.northernlightscdc.org - check this website for the most current information. This work is generously supported by the Child Development Division, Department of Children and Families, Vermont Agency of Human Services and United Children's Services of Bennington County (Head Start Bennington County).

Introduction

What is the Career Advising Guide?

The Career Advising Guide is a handbook that describes resources and options to help individuals reach each of the steps along the early childhood and afterschool career pathways in Vermont.

Who is the Career Advising Guide for?

It is for a wide range of people who have an interest in children's growth and well-being and the quality of care children receive. It's for people who work with children and those who are just considering it; for those that have years of experience, and those that have none. It covers many positions and work settings.

Positions, such as:

- Child care providers, teachers, youth workers
- Paraprofessionals and teaching assistants
- Home visitors and therapists
- Directors, managers and administrators
- Consultants and advisors
- Mentors and coaches
- Licensors
- Resource and referral specialists
- Instructors and faculty
- Advocates and policy makers

Work settings, such as:

- Afterschool or before school programs
- Family child care, licensed child care programs, and regulated care
- Head Start and Boys & Girls Clubs
- Public and private schools

Why do we need a Career Advising Guide?

Children deserve the very best we can provide for them. They deserve to be in the best possible environments, surrounded by opportunities and materials that support their optimal development. Most important, they need to be in relationships with caring, responsive and knowledgeable adults. The quality of children's experiences depends largely on the perspective, experience, skills and behavior of the people who work with them. Clear, accessible and rewarding career

pathways support quality because they acknowledge and help develop the professional abilities of those important adults in children's lives.

The similarities and differences between early childhood and afterschool programs and career pathways are reflected in this Guide. At times the pathways weave together and at other times they're parallel.

In Vermont, there are a variety of options for career development along the early childhood and afterschool pathways. These pathways overlap and have significant similarities, as well as differences. For example, most afterschool employees work part time, and most early childhood program staff work full time. There are many different degrees and credentials that can prepare you to work in an afterschool setting; Early childhood has specific degrees and credentials required to work with young children. Afterschool as a profession is relatively new compared to the field of early childhood.

However, both options recognize that professionals may start at any point along the career pathway – not just at the beginning. Both embrace professionals who have always worked in the field, as well as those who change careers to join the field. Both fields include related specialists such as artists, therapists, or naturalists.

Both early childhood and afterschool fields promote staff quality across five knowledge areas:

1. Child and youth development
2. Teaching and learning/curriculum and learning environments
3. Family and community partnerships
4. Professionalism and program organization
5. Safe and healthy environments

The core competencies for early childhood and afterschool professionals detail these five areas.

The early childhood and afterschool fields are evolving in exciting ways. There are many opportunities to make a difference for children and their families and for the future of the profession. Groups across the state are discussing and taking action on important issues including wages, program and teacher quality, integrating services for families, educating the public about the importance of child development, and many other issues.

How can you use the Career Advising Guide?

There are many different ways:

- Review it to expand your knowledge about the early childhood and afterschool fields in Vermont
- Find yourself in the Guide, and reflect on your next steps
- Share it with colleagues to learn more about who you are as professionals, and how to help each other
- Share it with your mentor, consultant or supervisor
- Use it when you are mentoring or consulting professionals
- Use it as a text in a class or workshop you are teaching

I refer to the Career Advising Guide when I meet with early childhood education students. They are excited to learn that completing coursework related to the Core Knowledge Areas will count towards a Level certificate while they are still in the process of earning their degree.



Professional development activities are “interactive developmental activities... [that] include but are not limited to workshop training sessions, course work, site visits to other programs, mentoring sessions, lectures, presentations, or acting as a member of an assessment team for compliance to regulations.”

~ 2001 CDD child care licensing regulations

Professional Competencies

It's up to you.

What are Competencies?

Competencies are the foundation of our early childhood and afterschool professional development system. Competencies refer to the observable, concrete skills and knowledge that define the development and delivery of high quality services and programs. They establish standards of practice that strengthen the early childhood and afterschool fields. Competencies are relevant to any position: teacher, assistant, coordinator, volunteer, provider, home-visitor, paraprofessional, and more. They are also relevant for any setting where early childhood and afterschool services take place: child care centers, schools, community-based organizations, homes, recreation centers, etc.

Vermont has defined 5 *core* competencies. They support high quality programming and services and are grouped by the following knowledge areas:

- Child and Youth Development
- Families and Communities
- Curriculum/ Teaching and Learning
- Healthy and Safe Environments
- Professionalism and Program Organization

Why do we have them?

When early childhood and afterschool professionals have and use well-defined competencies, it means there is agreement about the expectations of the professionals working with children and families.

The core competencies are used in many different ways: to assess individual learning needs, to develop education and training curriculum, to support supervision and mentoring, to develop job descriptions and performance evaluations, and to create individual professional development plans (IPDPs).

Where can I find them?

You can view and download all the competency documents on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website (see Resources). Hard copies are also available through your local child care resource and referral agencies. The Vermont competency documents are:

[Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals](#) defines the standards for professionals working with young children from birth to age 6.

[Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals](#) defines the standards for individuals working with children and youth, ages 5-18, during their out-of-school time.

[Competencies for Program Directors](#) working in early childhood or afterschool programs, based on the same core knowledge areas as the two competency documents above. This document specifically details what program directors need to know and do.

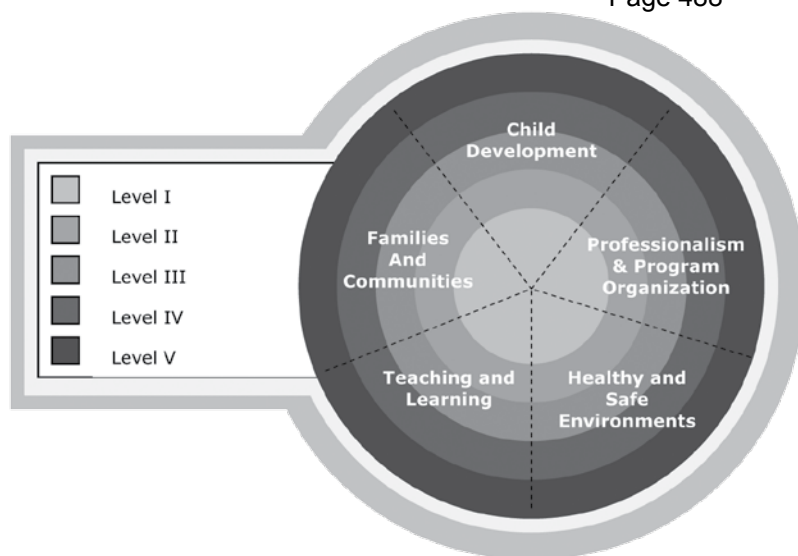
[Early Childhood Family Mental Health Competencies](#) detail what professionals with specialty knowledge in working with children ages birth to 8, and their families, need to know and do to support the social and emotional development of the child. These have six knowledge areas and four levels. They overlap but are not the same as the five knowledge areas cited above.

How are they organized?

Competencies are organized by levels. Early childhood competencies have six levels. Afterschool competencies have three phases. They both form a pathway that can be used to plan and guide your career growth.

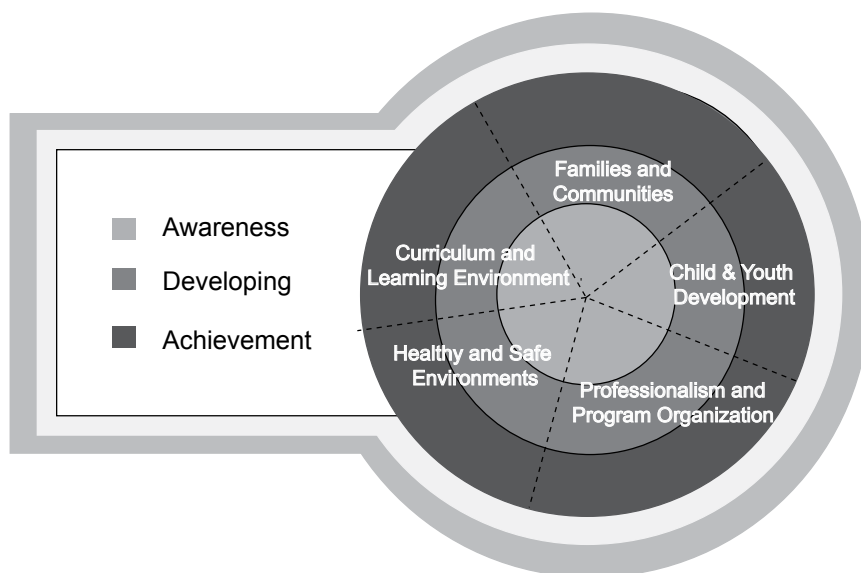
Early Childhood Career Ladder

Your knowledge and skills increase as you acquire the core competencies that are embedded into each level of the career ladder. Each level on the ladder includes a combination of education and experience. To apply for a Level certificate, you will need to have a current IPDP.



Afterschool Career Pathways

The core competencies for afterschool professionals are the foundation for afterschool career planning and professional development. There are a wide range of roles and settings in the afterschool field and the career pathways encompass them all.



I have been a family child care provider longer than I can remember. I started taking the Fundamentals course because I was encouraged to, but I wasn't planning on finishing it. Now that I have completed the course I can say I learned more than I ever thought I would. I was surprised that I have a lot in common with the people working in centers. Now I can get my level I certificate. I am thinking about getting my CDA and I really feel like a professional!

Career Levels and Pathways

In this section, the six early childhood career levels, and the three phases of the afterschool career path are described in detail.

The Early Childhood Career Ladder and the Afterschool Pathways help you to plan and track your professional growth. As the person who cares for and teaches children, your skills, knowledge and behavior has a critical impact on each child's development and learning. Clear, accessible and rewarding career pathways support quality because they acknowledge and foster the development of those important adults in children's lives.

Each step on the early childhood and afterschool career pathways is based on the core competencies and standards - what professionals need to know, understand, and do at different stages in their professional development. Each step builds on the earlier step, so that when you complete one step, you have already met some of the requirements for the next step.

To achieve a level or step along the pathway, individuals:

- Complete education
- Gain experience working with children and families
- Reflect on their accomplishments and future professional development plans in a current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

Some options along the pathway also require you to complete a portfolio documenting your knowledge and skills.

On the Early Childhood Career Ladder, you can apply for a certificate from the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center when you complete each level. You don't have to start at Level I. Apply for the level that best matches your professional experience and achievements- step I, II, III or higher. The applications and other information are on the interactive Career Ladder on the Northern Lights website.

Along the Afterschool Career Pathways, achievements are primarily recognized by credentials and certificates. The applications and other information about the Afterschool Pathways are also on the Northern Lights website.

In Vermont, completion of early childhood career levels, afterschool certificates and credentials are:

- Recognized by the Child Development Division to achieve a recognition bonus
- Aligned with the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality and improvement system
- Integrated with child care licensing regulations and Vermont Department of Education educator license and endorsements
- Aligned with many college courses and some other certificates and credentials

Professional Development is a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children, older children, youth and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of the professionals. Professional development encompasses *education, training, and technical assistance*.

~ Adapted from NAEYC NACCRRA Glossary 2011

Early Childhood Career Ladder

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
<p>1. <u>Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals</u> course (45 hours)</p> <p>or</p> <p>2. NL approved Level I <u>Portfolio</u> with documentation, 45 hours of verified professional development and one approved observation of the practitioner⁴</p> <p>or</p> <p>3. NL approved <u>3 related college credits</u>¹ in child development including early childhood + basic specialized care, introduction to licensing and one approved observation⁴</p>	<p>1. <u>Current Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential</u></p> <p>or</p> <p>2. NL approved Level II <u>Portfolio</u> with documentaiton, 125 hours of verified professional development and two approved observations of the practitioner⁴</p> <p>or</p> <p>3. NL approved <u>12 related college credits</u>¹ in at least 2 VT Core Knowledge areas³ and two approved observations of the practitioner⁴</p>	<p>A) 1. <u>Completed Vermont Child Care Registered Apprentice</u></p> <p>or</p> <p>2. <u>CCV's Child Care Certificate program</u></p> <p>or</p> <p>3. <u>Highly Qualified Paraprofessional</u>⁵</p> <p>or</p> <p>4. NL approved equivalent: <u>21 related college credits</u>¹ in at least 3 of the VT Core Knowledge areas³ and two approved observations of the practitioner⁴</p> <p>B) <u>Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field¹</p> <p>or</p> <p>Associate's degree with 21 related college credits¹ in at least 3 VT Core Knowledge areas³</p>	<p>A) 1. <u>Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field¹</p> <p>or</p> <p>2. Bachelor's degree with NL approved <u>30 related college credits</u>¹ within at least 3 of the VT Core Knowledge Areas³</p> <p>B) Above with <u>VT Department of Education teaching license</u> with endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education or elementary education</p>	<p>A) <u>Master Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field¹</p>	<p><u>Doctoral Degree in Early Childhood Education</u> or related field¹</p>
<p>Experience²:</p> <p>One year</p>	2 years or more	2 years or more	2 years or more including student teaching		2 years or more

Applications: Those awarded Level Certificates may also be eligible for a Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division.

¹Related fields/credits: All credits and degrees must be from an accredited, Northern Lights approved Institution of Higher Education.

When a degree is required (Level IIIB, IV, V) then Related Fields refer to degrees with a major or concentration in one of the following areas:

- Early Childhood
- Child or Human Development
- Education (early childhood or elementary or special education)
- Child and Family Studies (including Home Economics)

Related Credits: When the individual's field of study is not one of the four areas above, or when college credits are an option to reach the Level, then credit-bearing coursework in one or more of the following areas will be accepted.

- Child or human development
- Education, including special education
- Health, including nutrition and nursing
- Psychology/mental health/ child and family studies
- Sociology/human services/ social sciences/social services
- Business /administration (related to instruction on early childhood or afterschool program management)

²Experience as an early childhood professional (not necessarily cumulative). Experience at Level I may be in any setting with groups of children who are not family members, at level II-VI must be in regulated child care setting.

³VT Core Knowledge areas include: Families and Communities, Child Development, Healthy and Safe Environments, Teaching and Learning, Professionalism and Program Organization

⁴Approved Observation of the Practitioner as approved and arranged between the regional Resource Development Specialist and Northern Lights Career Development Center

⁵Highly Qualified Paraprofessional is a national designation given by a public school to paraprofessionals who meet defined criteria under No Child Left Behind.

The Vermont Early

The Career Lattice is a frame of reference to help you consider how levels on the Career Ladder generally connect to different

SETTINGS	LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
Home Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Family Child Care Provider Family Child Care Assistant Legally Exempt Child Care Provider Instructor Registry-Affiliate I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensed Family Child Care Home Registered Family Child Care Provider Legally Exempt Child Care Provider MATCH Network Instructor Registry-Affiliate I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensed Family Child Care Home Registered Family Child Care Provider Legally Exempt Child Care Provider MATCH Network Instructor Registry-Affiliate II
Licensed Early Childhood Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Associate Director (59 or fewer children) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Associate Director (59 or fewer children)
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Para-educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly Qualified Para-professional
Parent Child Center/ Family Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Childhood Special Education Aide
Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Classroom Aide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Assistant Home Visitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Home Visitor Family Services Worker
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Home Visitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Home Visitor Family Services Worker
Community Child Care Support Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA Food Program Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA Food Program Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Director
State Offices		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensing Technician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensing Field Specialist
Other Common Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playgroup Facilitator 		

Childhood Career Lattice

work settings. This is not a complete description. Please check actual job requirements for specific information.

LEVEL IV	LEVEL V	LEVEL VI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensed Family Child Care Home Registered Family Child Care Provider Legally Exempt Child Care Provider MATCH Network Instructor Registry-Certified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensed Family Child Care Home Registered Family Child Care Provider MATCH Network Instructor Registry-Master 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensed Family Child Care Home Registered Family Child Care Provider MATCH Network Instructor Registry-Master
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director PreK Teacher Early Childhood Special Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director PreK Teacher Early Childhood Special Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director PreK Teacher Early Childhood Special Educator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Early Childhood Special Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Special Services Coordinator Early Childhood Special Educator 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Coordinator Outreach Worker Parent Educator Teacher Associate Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director Early Childhood Special Educator 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Director Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Collaboration Coordinators 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Director Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Collaboration Coordinators 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director Program Director Resource Development Specialist Referral Specialist CIS Child Care Coordinator CCFAP Eligibility Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensing Supervisor USDA Food Program Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State (CDD and DOE) employee, administrator, or consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State (CDD and DOE) administrator or consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Health Nurse Early Interventionist BBF Regional Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College adjunct faculty Early Intervention related services Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty at colleges and universities

Phases & Related Professional

Afterschool professionals work mostly part-time within many contexts and program settings. Their job titles vary greatly according to their individual contexts. As a result, there is not a “typical” afterschool professional. Employment opportunities include home and community-

based child care settings, schools, youth centers, recreation programs, and 21st Century community learning centers, to name a few possibilities. Even though afterschool settings are diverse, there are three career tracts common to the field: (1) child care, (2) youth work, and (3) education. These

Awareness Phase	Developing Phase	
Focuses on building entry-level, basic skills and knowledge.	Extends basic skills and knowledge into practice and may include accumulation of college credits and specialty certification.	
Required Experience: Within the first two years of working as an afterschool professional.	Required Experience: Three years or more of working with school-age children; a minimum of 500 hours of direct work in a program.	
Professional Development Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate • Afterschool Essentials • On-the-Job Training Certificate* • Highly Qualified Paraprofessional Certificate • VT Program Director Credential, Step One 	Professional Development Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-the-Job Training Certificate * • Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential (VAPC)* • Highly Qualified Paraprofessional Certificate • VT Program Director Credential, Step One, Two • Teacher Licensure 	
Related Education: High school diploma/GED, college and vocational/technical students, associate's, bachelor's, master's degree	Related Education: College students, associate's, bachelor's, master's degree	

*Bonuses are available when additional requirements are completed.

Afterschool Career Pathways:

Vermont's afterschool professionals can support their work by pursuing the opportunities that are available

Glimpse 1: An Afterschool Professional

Evelyn started working as an aide in a licensed summer program for school age children. She then moved into a year-round, part-time position with a center-based afterschool program in her community. During her first year there, she received the Afterschool Foundations Certificate and was moved into a Group Leader position. She then enrolled in the college-level courses required for the Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential and continued to consolidate her training and workshop hours into a portfolio, as required for the Afterschool Credential and Step one of the Program Director Credential. Evelyn's long-term goal is to be a Site Director and to finish the coursework required for all steps of the Program Director Credential.

Glimpse 2: A Child Care Provider

Karen owns and operates a licensed family child care home. She has a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential and completed Step one of the Vermont Program Director Credential. The age-range of the children in Karen's care has changed from serving 2 to 4 year olds to 3 to 9 year olds. Karen wanted to build on her early education background and gain knowledge in school-age development. She contacted her local Resource Development Specialist, who recommended several trainings, including an online course, Introduction to Afterschool Education and Care. Karen successfully completed the course and applied for the Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate. She is now working towards the Afterschool Professional Development Credential as well as completing Step two of the Program Director Credential.

Afterschool Professionals: Development Opportunities

tracts as linked to the three phases of learning - awareness, developing, achievement. The information below provides a general career development framework for prospective and current afterschool professionals. The pathways grid

and supporting scenarios illustrate how professionals working within these career tracts might connect to the afterschool professional development opportunities.

Achievement Phase	
	Explores leadership, community, and administration.
	Required Experience: A minimum of three years working in the field as a program director or other leadership capacity.
	<p>Professional Development Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential (VAPC)* • Vermont Program Director Credential, Step Three* • Highly Qualified Paraprofessional Certificate • Teacher Licensure <p>Other related opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor, Northern Lights Instructor Registry • Mentors for Quality • Coaching: Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence
	Related Education: Associate's, bachelor's, master's degree

Glimpses from the Field

to them along their Career Pathways. Here are four professional development scenarios to consider:

Glimpse 3: A Youth Work Professional

David began as a volunteer tutor with an afterschool program after finishing high school. He went on to earn a Bachelor Degree in Physical Education while interning at a mental health center. After earning his B.A. he was hired as a Behavioral Health Specialist at the center, where he specializes in designing and running programs for youth ages 12 to 18 years old. He is currently completing the requirements for the Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential. His long term goal is to seek a Master Degree in Counseling Psychology and gain further experience as a Youth Case Manager and Mental Health Counselor with a continued focus on physical education.

Glimpse 4: An Educator

Sylvia has an associate's degree and is designated a highly qualified paraprofessional in her public school. For the past two and a half years, she has tutored math in several afterschool programs where she works primarily with fourth and fifth graders. Now she's pursuing her B.A. and simultaneously applying her college credits to meet the requirements for the Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential. She wants to enhance her career by formally recognizing her skills, experience, and familiarity with the afterschool setting. Her long-term goal is to become a licensed math teacher.

*By receiving the VAPC,
I'm one step closer to my goal as a
supervisor and I helped my program
earn STARS.*



*It took a lot of work to
get my CDA, but my mentor helped a
lot and so did the other folks who had gotten one.
Now I can be in charge of my own classroom at the
center, I have a national credential, I applied for
a Level II certificate and I think I'll get a
Recognition Bonus too.*

Early Childhood Career Pathways:

For individuals working with children ages birth to six in group settings

Individuals who work in the early childhood field, may work:

- Directly with children infancy to age six in groups or individually
- Work with families
- Work with other professionals

They work in a range of settings including family child care, licensed early childhood centers, children's homes, and other settings. Early childhood practitioners also work for a variety of employers such as:

- Head Start
- Parent Child Center or Family Center
- Private for-profit or not-for-profit early childhood program
- Public school system or private school
- Community agency or organization
- Are self-employed, or in another type of setting

Early childhood practitioners use professional *standards and competencies* to define what they should know and do. These are the basis for the early childhood career

levels.

- Level I, II, III: Early Childhood Core Competencies
- Level IV, V: Vermont Department of Education professional standards

Early childhood practitioners also use the Early Childhood Career Ladder, which is based on the competencies, standards and levels above. This pathway defines how to achieve each level, with multiple options to achieve each one. There are also classes and courses available statewide, which meet the education requirements for each level along the Career Ladder.

Some early childhood practitioners seek additional professional development and recognition by:

- Applying to the Vermont Instructor Registry and increasing their knowledge and skills instructing adults
- Seeking a Program Director Credential, Early Childhood Family Mental Health Credential or other specialty endorsement

Early childhood practitioners who work primarily with other professionals rather than children, such as program directors, instructors, advisors, consultants or managers, also need to be knowledgeable about these resources.

Last year I took a college course in child development that included birth to three years, because I was thinking about getting a degree some day. Now I realize when I complete the other requirements, I can send my transcript with my IPDP and application to Northern Lights and get my Level I certificate. This will help my program with our STARS application, and I will have a certificate to show my friends and family, and maybe get a Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division, too!

Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level I

Level I is based on the Level I Early Childhood core competencies. The application for Level I is on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website.

You may decide to seek a Level I certificate if you:

- Are beginning to work in the field of early childhood, or considering it
- Have taken child development courses in high school or a regional technical center
- Have worked in the early childhood field for a long time but have not applied for any level certificate

Level I in the Early Childhood Career Ladder (like the other levels), requires:

- Completed education or training
- Experience working with young children
- A current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

It also requires the applicant to:

- Observe children and reflect on what is seen
- Be observed while working with young children, and reflect with the observer on that experience

VT Early Childhood Career Lattice	
SETTINGS	LEVEL I
Home Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Family Child Care Provider • Family Child Care Assistant • Legally Exempt Child Care Provider • Instructor Registry-Affiliate I
Licensed Early Childhood Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Assistant
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer
Parent Child Center/ Family Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer
Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer • Classroom aide
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer
Community Child Care Support Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA Food Program Specialist
State Offices	
Other Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgroup Facilitator

VT Career Ladder Alignment Chart	
	Level I
Years experience needed to achieve level certificate	1 year experience
Professional Recognition Bonus from the VT Child Development Division	\$100
STARS- staff qualifications arena ¹	Score 1

¹ This refers to "Educational Attainment" score, which is one of three parts in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena; total score of all staff are converted to a single program STARS points for this arena

When you complete your Level I requirements, submit your documentation, your completed IPDP and a Level I application to Northern Lights Career Development Center. Successful applicants receive a certificate and pin. If your application also meets the basic screening requirements as described in the application, then it will also be forwarded to the Child Development Division to consider for a Professional Recognition Bonus.

LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III	LEVEL IV	LEVEL V	LEVEL VI
---------	----------	-----------	----------	---------	----------

There are three *education options* to reach a Level I certificate: Choose ONE.

Option 1: Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals

This is a 45-hour course based on the Level I Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals. It includes the requirements to achieve Level I certification. It is offered annually in each region of Vermont by the community child care support agencies. Course fees vary by region. It covers the following topics:

- Observation of children
- Health and safety
- Planning learning environments

- Professionalism and program organization
- Child development: infants to preschoolers
- Connecting to families and communities
- Child care regulations & Basic Specialized Care
- Including children with diverse needs

This course gives you a chance to reflect on your work with children, to apply what you learn in class to the children you care for, and meet and learn from other professionals.

Option 2: Northern Lights *approved portfolio*

This option is useful if you have not taken college courses, have collected many hours of training over the years, and like to write and organize your learning. You must contact Northern Lights before you plan to apply. The portfolio includes:

- Documentation that you have completed 45 hours of

training across the five core knowledge areas with at least 5 hours in each area

- Documents that show what you know and how you use the Level I core competencies
- Documentation of when you were observed teaching

The portfolio is then reviewed for approval.

Option 3. Complete an early childhood development college course (3 credits)

In addition to the course you are also required to:

- Complete Basic Specialized Care (6 hours)
- Complete Introduction to Child Care Licensing regulations workshop

- Be observed while working with children and reflect on your experience

Benefits of Achieving a Level I Certificate

- You feel pride in your accomplishment and post your certificate for families and other staff to see; your name will be listed in the Northern Lights newsletter
- You may also be granted a Professional Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division, gain points in the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality and improvement system: professional development arena, and meet licensing requirements for a teaching assistant
- You have completed 45 hours toward meeting the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) training requirements and are ready to take the next steps toward that credential.
- You have completed the training required to be considered as a Basic Specialized Care provider
- When you are enrolled in a college degree program at the Community College of Vermont, you can use Course Challenge to apply for three college credits for completing Fundamentals

Resources for Level I Applicants

- Northern Lights website – interactive Career Ladder includes detailed information, the Level I application, and guidance to develop your Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)
- Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) statewide course calendar to find the Fundamentals Course nearest you
- Local Resource Development Specialist offers the Fundamentals course, and can help you find approved observers
- Community College of Vermont (CCV) offers Child Development Courses. Course Challenge is also an option for enrolled students in a degree or certificate program
- Council for Professional Recognition – they award the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)

Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level II

Level II is based on the Level II Early Childhood Core Competencies. The application for Level II is on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website.

You may decide to seek a Level II certificate if you:

- Have experience working in the field of early childhood, and are committed to staying in the field for a while
- Have worked in the early childhood field for a long time, want to be recognized and are able to organize and document your knowledge and skills
- Have taken at least four college courses related to the field of early childhood, or completed the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, or 125 hours of professional development
- Have completed Early Childhood Level I requirements and are ready to move on

Level II in the Early Childhood Career Ladder (like the other levels) requires:

- Completed education or training
- Experience working with young children
- A current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

It also requires the applicant to observe children and reflect on what is seen, and to be observed while working with young children, and reflect with the observer on that experience.

SETTINGS	LEVEL II
Home Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Family Child Care Home • Registered Family Child Care Provider • Legally Exempt Child Care Provider • MATCH Network • Instructor Registry-Affiliate I
Licensed Early Childhood Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Associate • Director (59 or fewer children)
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para-educator
Parent Child Center/Family Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Assistant
Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Assistant • Home Visitor
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Home Visitor
Community Child Care Support Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA Food Program Specialist
State Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing Technician

VT Career Ladder Alignment Chart	
	Level II
Years experience needed to achieve level certificate	2 years experience
Professional Recognition Bonus from the VT Child Development Division	\$500 initial \$150 for first CDA renewal
STARS- staff qualifications arena ¹	Score 4

¹ This refers to "Educational Attainment" score, which is one of three parts in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena; total score of all staff are converted to a single program STARS points for this arena

When you complete your Level II requirements, submit your documentation and your completed IPDP with a Level II application to the Northern Lights Career Development Center. Successful applicants receive a certificate and pin. If your application also meets the basic screening requirements as described in the application, it will also be forwarded to the Child Development Division to consider for a Professional Recognition Bonus.

There are three *education options* to achieve a Level II certificate: Choose ONE

Option 1: Current Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential

This is a national credential that is awarded by the Council on Professional Recognition, based on achieving 13 functional competencies. The application components are:

- 120 hours of documented training hours covering eight subject areas (10 hours at least in each area)
- A resource file with specific information included
- Completed parent questionnaires about your work with their children

- A portfolio with your autobiography and examples of your knowledge and skills in the competency areas
- Recorded observation by an approved advisor, of your work with young children
- A completed application, payment of the application fee and written test and interview with the Council representative

The initial credential is for three years and it can be renewed every five years after that.

Option 2: Northern Lights approved Level II portfolio

This option is useful if you have not taken college courses, have collected many hours of training over the years, and like to write and organize your learning. You must contact Northern Lights before you plan to apply. The portfolio includes:

- Documentation that you have completed 120 hours of training across the five core knowledge areas

- Documents that show what you know and apply the level II core competencies, and
- Documentation of when you were observed teaching children

The portfolio is then reviewed and approved.

Option 3: Successfully complete four early childhood college courses (12 credits)

The four college courses must cover at least two of the five Core Knowledge areas (see the Core Competency section of this booklet). You are also required to be

observed while working with children and reflect on your experience.

Benefits of Achieving a Level II Certificate

- You feel pride in your accomplishment and supported as a professional; you can post your certificate for families and other staff to see; your name will be listed in the Northern Lights newsletter
- You may also be granted a Professional Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division, gain points in STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality and improvement system: professional development arena, and meet licensing requirements for a teaching associate in a licensed child care
- A Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) is recognized across the nation; the Child Development Division will pay your initial CDA application fee.
- The Child Development Division may issue a recognition bonus for the first renewal of a CDA.

Resources for Level II Applicants

- Northern Lights website – interactive Career Ladder includes detailed information, the application and guidance on to writing your Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)
- Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) state-wide course calendar to find the many different training modules offered nearest you
- Local Resource Development Specialist - they offer many of the training modules, can help connect you with a CDA mentor or advisor, and help you find approved observers for the other education options
- Community College of Vermont (CCV) - college courses related to the Early Childhood Core Knowledge areas
- Council for Professional Recognition – they award the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
- Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) - contracts with CCV to offer low cost college courses in the early childhood field, as part of the Child Care Apprenticeship Program

Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level III

Level III is based on the Level III Early Childhood Core Competencies and the requirements for an Associate Degree in Early Childhood at the Community College of Vermont. The application for Level III is on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website.

You may decide to seek a Level III certificate if you:

- Have experience working in the field of early childhood, and are committed to staying in the field for a while
- Have taken college coursework in early childhood
- Have completed early childhood level II requirements and are ready to move on, perhaps seeking an associate's or bachelor's degree

Level III in the Early Childhood Career Ladder requires:

- Completed college coursework
- Experience working with young children and
- A current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

It also requires the applicant to observe children and reflect on what is seen, and to be observed while working with young children, and reflect with the observer on that experience.

SETTINGS	LEVEL III
Home Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Family Child Care Home • Registered Family Child Care Provider • Legally Exempt Child Care Provider • MATCH Network • Instructor Registry-Affiliate II
Licensed Early Childhood Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Associate • Director (59 or fewer children)
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly Qualified Para-professional
Parent Child Center/Family Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Special Education Aide
Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Home Visitor • Family Services Worker
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Home Visitor • Family Services Worker
Community Child Care Support Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Director • USDA Food Program Specialist
State Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing Field Specialist

I had taken college courses a while ago, and after I started working in child care, I decided to continue my education and earn a degree in early childhood. I met with a college advisor and not only did some of my courses transfer to the college, but after taking a couple more courses, I can earn a Level IIIA certificate. Next I will earn a CCV child care certificate, and then on to my associate's degree! I'm going to apply for the scholarship from the Child Development Division too, to help me pay for the courses- and the certificates and diplomas I will hang on my wall!

There are two stages in the Level III Early Childhood Career Ladder: A and B

Level IIIA has *four education options*:

Option 1: Completed Vermont Child Care Registered Apprenticeship

This program is offered in partnership with the Vermont Department of Labor and combines 4,000 hours of on-the-job training (working with a mentor for guidance, observation and assessment) with formal training which includes 6 specific tuition-free college courses (18 college credits).

Option 2: Community College of Vermont's (CCV) Childcare Certificate Program

This 27 credit series of college courses are also a stepping stone to the CCV Associate Degree in Early Childhood.

Option 3: Designation as a Highly Qualified Paraprofessional from a public school

This is issued by the public school where the paraprofessional works. They determine how to meet the qualifications and award this certificate. The certificate is also recognized on the Afterschool Career Pathways.

Option 4: Twenty-one related college credits

Related college credits must be in at least three of the five Vermont Core Knowledge areas: Child Development, Teaching and Learning (curriculum), Healthy and Safe environments, Families and Communities, and Professionalism and Program Organization. The applicant also needs to be observed while working with children and reflect on the experience.

Level IIIB has *two education options*:

Option 1: Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education or related field

Related fields include: other education (elementary or special education); child or human development or child and family studies.

Option 2: Associate's degree with related college credits

Related college credits include: psychology, mental health, sociology, human services, social sciences, social services, or business administration (related to early childhood or afterschool program management) covering at least three Vermont Core Knowledge Areas (see IIIA).

VT Career Ladder Alignment Chart		
	Level IIIA	Level IIIB
Years experience needed to achieve level certificate	2 years experience	2 years experience
Professional Recognition Bonus from the VT Child Development Division	\$750	\$1000
STARS- staff qualifications arena ¹	Score 9	Score 12

¹ This refers to "Educational Attainment" score, which is one of three parts in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena; total score of all staff are converted to a single program STARS points for this arena

When you complete your Level III requirements, submit your documentation and your completed IPDP, with a Level III application to Northern Lights Career Development Center. Successful applicants receive a certificate and pin. If your application also meets the basic screening requirements as described in the application, then it will be forwarded to the Child Development Division to consider for a Professional Recognition Bonus.

Earning college credit

- You can earn college credit by taking a college course from an accredited institution. You will need to earn a C- or better and request a transcript issued by the college (either official or unofficial) to submit with your level certificate application
- If you already have a college degree in an unrelated field, you can still get a level certificate by completing college courses in a related field (21 credits or more). For level certificates, there is no time limit, so you may have earned some credit in your first degree that can still count toward your level certificate. You will need a transcript from the college, as documentation
- Other ways to earn college credit if you believe you already meet the learning objectives, include:
 - The CLEP (College Level Examination Program)* test: accepted at practically all colleges in Vermont. Pass one exam to earn credit for one course (see Resources)
 - Assessment of Prior Learning (APL)*: a way to earn many credits at once. If you have knowledge and skills based on in-depth and broad experiences you may document how you think you meet the learning objectives of college coursework and then request credit (see Resources)
 - Course Challenge*: useful if you are already in a degree or certificate program at the Community College of Vermont, and you think you have already met the learning objectives of a course in your program (see Resources)

Benefits of Achieving a Level III Certificate

- You feel pride in your accomplishment and supported as a professional; you can post your certificate for families and other staff to see; you will be listed in the Northern Lights newsletter for your accomplishment
- You may also be granted a Professional Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division (CDD), gain points in STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality and improvement system, and meet licensing requirements for a teaching associate in a licensed child care (Applicants may receive a recognition bonus for both level IIIA and level IIIB if eligible.)
- The Child Development Division has scholarships to pay for college courses, for staff working in regulated child care
- The Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) contracts with Community College of Vermont (CCV) to offer early childhood courses at low cost for those enrolled in the Child Care Apprenticeship Program, and to others as space allows
- An associate's degree is easily transferable to four-year colleges to help you earn a bachelor's degree

Completing the Apprenticeship program has given me the strength, drive, and confidence I needed to continue on with my education. Not only am I now working towards other degrees and certificates, but I have and am currently helping others work towards their goals, by becoming a mentor myself. Experiencing the process myself was uplifting, however witnessing and helping others as they endeavor this process is extremely rewarding.

Resources for Level III Applicants

- Northern Lights website: interactive Career Ladder includes detailed information and the application; also lists colleges in Vermont that offer course work in early childhood and details on the other options for earning college credit
- Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) statewide course calendar - find the upcoming courses that support the Child Care Apprenticeship program
- Local Resource Development Specialist - helps you find approved observers for the IIIA credit options and provides career advising
- Community College of Vermont (CCV) advisors - help you be sure the courses you are taking are going to build toward a future degree or certificate
- VT Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) offers a continuum of professional development opportunities including participation in the Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program and tuition-free college courses open to others as space allows



I had taken college courses a while ago, and after I started working in child care, I decided to continue my education and earn a degree in early childhood. I met with a college advisor and not only did some of my courses transfer to the college, but after taking a couple more courses, I can earn a Level IIIA certificate. Next I will earn a CCV child care certificate, and then on to my associate degree! I'm going to apply for the scholarship from the Child Development Division too, to help me pay for the courses- and the certificates and diplomas I will hang on my wall.

Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level IV

Level IV is based on the five Core Knowledge areas and the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) Professional Standards for licensed teachers with an Early Childhood endorsement. The application for Level IV is on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website.

You may decide to seek a Level IV certificate if you:

- Have experience working in the field of early childhood, and are committed to staying in the field
- Have completed college coursework in early childhood
- Have a bachelor's degree in early childhood or a related field, or a Vermont DOE Educator License with an Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education or Elementary Education Endorsement
- Have a bachelor's or master's degree in a field unrelated to early childhood but want to be recognized on the Early Childhood Career Ladder
- Have completed Early Childhood Level III requirements and are ready to move on to complete your bachelor's degree

Level IV in the Early Childhood Career Ladder requires:

- Completed college degree and specific coursework
- Experience working with young children
- A current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

The course work required includes observation of children and observation of the student.

VT Career Ladder Alignment Chart	
	Level IV
Years experience needed to achieve level certificate	2 years experience
Professional Recognition Bonus from the VT Child Development Division	\$1200 plus + \$500 for DOE teacher licensure
STARS- staff qualifications arena ¹	Score 16 score 20 with DOE licensure

¹ This refers to "Educational Attainment" score, which is one of three parts in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena; total score of all staff are converted to a single program STARS points for this arena

When you complete your Level IV requirements, submit your documentation and your completed IPDP with a Level IV application to Northern Lights Career Development Center. Successful applicants receive a certificate and pin. If your application also meets the basic screening requirements as described in the application, then it will be forwarded to the Child Development Division (CDD) to consider for a Professional Recognition Bonus for either Level A or B. CDD only gives a Bonus for initial educator license, for IVB certificate holders.

SETTINGS	LEVEL IV
Home Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensed Family Child Care Home Registered Family Child Care Provider Legally Exempt Child Care Provider MATCH Network Instructor Registry-Certified
Licensed Early Childhood Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director PreK Teacher Early Childhood Special Educator
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Early Childhood Special Educator
Parent Child Center/Family Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Coordinator Outreach Worker Parent Educator Teacher Associate Director
Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Director Manager
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Director Manager
Community Child Care Support Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Director Executive Director Program Director Resource Development Specialist Referral Specialist CIS Child Care Coordinator CCFAP Eligibility Specialist
State Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licensing Field Specialist
Other Common Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Health Nurse Early Interventionist BBF Regional Director

There are two parts in the Level IV Early Childhood Career Ladder, A and B. You may complete either or both (see side bar).

Level IVA includes *two education options*:

Option 1: Bachelor's degree in related field

Related fields are: early childhood, early childhood special education, elementary education, child or human development, and child & family studies

Option 2: Bachelor' degree in unrelated field with related credits

Bachelor's degree in an unrelated field, with 30 related college credits including: psychology, mental health, sociology, human services, social sciences, social services, or business administration (related to early childhood or afterschool program management) covering at least three Vermont Core Knowledge areas: Child Development, Teaching and Learning (curriculum), Healthy and Safe Environments, Families and Communities, and Professionalism and Program Organization

Level IVB

Bachelor's degree with Vermont Department of Education (DOE) educator license with an endorsement in Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education or Elementary Education

I was so proud to get my educator license through peer review, even though it was a ton of work. Now I have many more options for jobs, because many Early Childhood programs are partnering with the public schools and need to hire a teacher with a DOE license.

Earning a college degree, college credits and educator licensure (see Resources)

Your academic degree and other college courses must be from a college or university that is accredited by the federal Department of Education and CHEA (the college and university accrediting approval institution). Northern Lights website has information to help you check this on line. You will need to earn a C- or better for approval of any college courses.

- You should request a transcript issued by the college (either official or unofficial) to submit with your Level certificate application
- If you have an academic degree in an unrelated field, you can still get a Level IV certificate by taking additional courses in a related field. First, check to see if any of the courses in your degree program could count toward the 30 related credits required
- There is no time limit, so you may receive a Level certificate even if your degree or credits are from a long time ago. To receive a recognition bonus from the Child Development Division, your last credit or diploma must have been completed in the last two years
- Other ways to earn college credit if you believe you already meet the learning objectives of a course are:
 - *The CLEP (College Level Examination Program)* test: accepted at practically all colleges in Vermont. Pass one exam to earn credit for one course (see Resources)
 - *Assessment of Prior Learning (APL)*: a way

to earn many credits at once. If you have knowledge and skills based on in-depth and broad experiences you may document how you think you meet college coursework learning objectives and then request credit (see Resources)

- *Course Challenge*: useful if you are already in a degree or certificate program at the Community College of Vermont, and you think you have already met the learning objectives of a course in your program (see Resources)
- *Educator licensure*: awarded by the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) in three ways:
 1. You can apply for educator licensure after you have earned a liberal arts degree from a college or university that is approved for recommending teacher licensure, or
 2. If you have a license from another state, apply to Vermont DOE to have it accepted here, or
 3. Another option is to complete a peer review process. Document how your years of experience and education enable you to meet the DOE educator license professional standards. Then, submit your portfolio to the peer review committee at the Vermont DOE; they determine if you receive a license

I got my degree but then I ended up working in Early Childhood, which I really love. Now I want to have a Level certificate to show that this is the profession I belong in. I can count many of my human services and health courses I took for my degree, and I am taking curriculum courses to round out my education and complete the 30 related credits for the Level certificate. I really like taking on line classes because I can do it in my pajamas!

Benefits of Achieving a Level IV Certificate

- You feel pride in your accomplishment and recognized as a professional; you can post your certificate for families and other staff to see; you will be listed in the Northern Lights newsletter for your accomplishment
- You may also be granted a Professional Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division, gain points in the STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) professional development arena, and meet licensing requirements for a head teacher or possibly a director in a licensed child care program
- An early childhood program with staff that have Vermont Department of Education (DOE) Educator Licensure with Early Childhood endorsement, can participate in early childhood school partnerships under Act 62. Programs in these partnerships can access public school funding to support children in their care
- The Child Development Division has scholarships to pay for college courses, for staff and consultants working in regulated childcare

Resources for Level IV Applicants

- Northern Lights website: interactive Career Ladder includes detailed information and the Level application; also lists Vermont colleges that offer course work in early childhood and details the options for earning college credit, degrees and educator licensure through the Department of Education
- Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) statewide course calendar (find select college courses)
- College and University websites, catalogues and advisors
- Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)
- Vermont Department of Education website: information about educator licensure and peer review



LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III	LEVEL IV	LEVEL V	LEVEL VI
---------	----------	-----------	----------	---------	----------

Early Childhood Career Ladder: Level V & VI

Level V and VI are based on the five core knowledge areas and the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) Professional Standards for licensed teachers with an early childhood endorsement. The application for Level V and Level VI is on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website.

You may decide to seek a Level V or VI certificate if you:

- Have significant experience working in the field of early childhood, and are committed to staying in the field
- Have a master's or doctorate degree in early childhood or a related field, with or without a Vermont DOE educator license
- Have completed Early Childhood Level IV requirements and are ready to move on to complete your master's degree or higher

Level V and VI in the Early Childhood Career Ladder require:

- Completed college degree and specific coursework
- Experience working with young children
- A current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

The coursework to complete the credential requires the applicant to observe children and reflect on what is seen, and to be observed while working with children.

SETTINGS	LEVEL V	LEVEL VI
Home Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Family Child Care Home • Registered Family Child Care Provider • MATCH Network • Instructor Registry-Master 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed Family Child Care Home • Registered Family Child Care Provider • MATCH Network • Instructor Registry-Master
Licensed Early Childhood Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • PreK Teacher • Early Childhood Special Educator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • PreK Teacher • Early Childhood Special Educator
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Special Services Coordinator • Early Childhood Special Educator 	
Parent Child Center/ Family Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • Early Childhood Special Educator • Teacher • Associate Director 	
Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Collaboration Coordinator 	
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Collaboration Coordinator 	
Community Child Care Support Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director 	
State Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State (CDD and DOE) employee, administrator or consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State (CDD and DOE) employee, administrator or consultant
Other Common Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College adjunct faculty • Early Intervention related services • Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty at colleges and universities

LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III	LEVEL IV	LEVEL V	LEVEL VI
---------	----------	-----------	----------	---------	----------

Level V

There are two parts in the Level V Early Childhood Career Ladder, A and B. You may complete *either or both*.

- **Level VA:** Master Degree in Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education, Elementary Education, Child or Human Development, Child and Family Studies, or other field specific to early childhood such as administration
- **Level VB:** Master's degree with Vermont Department of Education (DOE) Educator License with an endorsement in Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education or Elementary Education

Level VI

Level VI is a Doctorate in a field with content in early childhood development or programs.

VT Career Ladder Alignment Chart		
	Level V	Level VI
Years experience needed to achieve level certificate	2 years experience (can include student teaching)	2 years experience (can include student teaching)
Professional Recognition Bonus from the VT Child Development Division	\$1200 plus + \$500 for DOE teacher licensure	
STARS- staff qualifications arena ¹	score 25	score 25

¹ This refers to "Educational Attainment" score, which is one of three parts in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena; total score of all staff are converted to a single program STARS points for this arena

Earning a college degree, college credits and educator licensure

Your academic degree and other college courses must be from a college or university that is accredited by the federal Department of Education and CHEA (the college and university accrediting approval institution). Northern Lights website has information to help you check this on line.

- You should request a transcript issued by the college (either official or unofficial) to submit with your Level certificate application.
- There is no time limit, so you may receive a Level certificate even if your degree or credits are from a long time ago. To receive a Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division, your last credit or diploma must have been completed in the last two years
- Educator licensure is awarded by the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) in three ways (see Resources)
 - You can apply for educator licensure after you have earned a liberal arts degree from a college or university that is approved to recommend for teacher licensure, or
 - If you have a license from another state, apply to Vermont DOE to have it accepted here, or
 - Another option is to complete a peer review process. You document how your years of experience and education meet the DOE educator license professional standards. Then, you submit your portfolio to the peer review committee at the Vermont DOE, and they determine if you receive a license

When you complete your Level V or VI requirements, submit your documentation and your completed IPDP with your Level application to Northern Lights Career Development Center. Successful applicants receive a certificate and pin. If their application also meets the basic screening requirements as described in the application, then it will be forwarded to the Child Development Division to consider for a Professional Recognition Bonus for either level. The Recognition Bonus for VB is awarded for initial educator license only.

Benefits of Achieving a Level V or VI Certificate

- You feel pride in your accomplishment and recognized as a professional; you can post your certificate for families and other staff to see; you will be listed in the Northern Lights newsletter for your accomplishment
- You may also be granted a Professional Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division, gain points in STARS professional development arena, and meet licensing requirements for a Master Teacher in a licensed child care program.
- An Early Childhood program with staff that have Vermont DOE educator licensure with Early Childhood endorsement, can participate in Early Childhood school partnerships under Act 62. Programs in these partnerships can access public school funding to support children in their care
- The Child Development Division has scholarships for staff and consultants working in regulated childcare, to pay for college courses

Resources for Level V or VI Applicants (See Resources)

- BFIS course calendar - find select college coursework
- College and University websites, catalogues and advisors
- Northern Lights website – interactive Career Ladder includes detailed information and the Level application; also lists Vermont colleges that offer course work in Early Childhood and details the options for earning college credit, degrees and educator licensure through the Department of Education
- Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)
- Vermont Department of Education website - information about educator licensure and peer review
- Higher Education Collaborative- weekend master's degree program through Lyndon State College, with DOE educator licensure in early childhood or early childhood special education

I finally achieved my dream of earning a Master Degree. Getting a Level certificate was icing on the cake. On top of people seeing my name in the Northern Lights newsletter, I got a Recognition Bonus from the Child Development Division.



Afterschool Pathways

Afterschool is a nationally recognized term for programs that supervise school-age children and youth between the ages of five and 18 years, outside of school hours. Afterschool programs are varied, and can include home child care providers, community-based centers, schools, youth centers, recreation programs, 21st Century community learning programs, and others.

Afterschool professionals are individuals working with school age children and youth in afterschool programs. In Vermont, the afterschool field is made-up of diverse professionals. They come into the field with many different professional and educational experiences, both formal and informal, so the professional development needs of the afterschool field vary.

Afterschool professional pathways and opportunities are flexible - some can be completed quickly and others over several years. It all depends on your circumstances, experiences, and professional goals.

The Vermont Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals are the basis of the professional development system. They provide a framework for individual assessment and for the credentials. They link to professional development opportunities in the afterschool field in three overlapping phases.

The three phases: *Awareness, Developing and Achievement*, define an evolving process of learning related to working in the field and growing as a professional. They form pathways that provide individualized opportunities for training, reflection, professional growth, and recognition.

1) Awareness Phase: Individuals are usually in this phase during the first two years of employment in the field. This time period focuses on building essential entry-level skills and knowledge. Opportunities in this phase offer a formal start to afterschool professionals.

- Afterschool Essentials and the Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate
- On the Job Training Certificate
- Program Director: Step One Certificate
- Highly Qualified Paraprofessional

2) Developing Phase: This phase extends basic skills and knowledge of the profession. Professional development opportunities may include college credits, credentials or special status. Often professionals in this phase are beginning to develop leadership skills.

- On the Job Training Certificate
- Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential
- Highly Qualified Paraprofessional
- Program Director: Step Two Certificate
- Educator Licensure

3) Achievement Phase: Afterschool professionals in this phase are often in leadership roles. They are refining their skills in community relations and program administration. Often they are instructing adults, and coaching or mentoring colleagues and others.

- Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential
- Program Director: Step Three Credential
- Highly Qualified Paraprofessional
- Educator Licensure

Other related opportunities

- Instructor Registry
- Coaching: Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence
- Mentors for Quality

The following pages will help you determine which pathways are right for you.



Afterschool Professional Pathways

Awareness Phase

Developing Phase

Achievement Phase

Awareness Phase

Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate (VAFC)

The VAFC recognizes professionals within the first two years of their employment in the afterschool field. To be eligible, candidates must complete and document a total of 16 hours of training, from each core competency area as noted below:

Core Competency Area	Hours
Child & Youth Development	2 hours
Curriculum & Learning Environment	2 hours
Families & Communities	2 hours
Healthy & Safe Environments	4 hours
Professionalism & Program Organization	2 hours
Electives	4 hours
Total Hours	16 hours

The Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate application is on the Northern Lights website. The Afterschool Essentials curricula prepare individuals to achieve the Afterschool Foundations Certificate.

Afterschool Essentials

This course is designed to meet the needs of the new professional with little experience in the afterschool setting. The course includes 29 hours of relevant workshops covering the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals, plus 10 hours of workshops in a concentration area of choice. Learning is then documented through a portfolio.

The course meets the requirements for staff training as outlined in the Afterschool Licensing Regulations. Those who complete the course will also receive a Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate (VAFC). Information is on the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence website and the Northern Lights Website (see Resources).

On-the-Job Training (OJT) Certificate

This certificate is earned through a specialized program available through the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) and the Vermont Department of Labor. OJT allows afterschool professionals in regulated settings to combine their work and learning experiences. Participants in OJT:

- Accumulate and document 1,000 hours of work experience
- Have a current CPR & First Aid card
- Document 45 hours of community-based and/or college level training related to the Afterschool Core Competencies.

It typically takes one to three years to complete the program, depending on the individual. Participants receive financial incentives along the way. For more information, contact VCCICC (see Resources).

Vermont Program Director Credential for Afterschool and Early Education Professionals: Step One Certificate

This credential process has three steps, requiring college coursework and a portfolio to achieve the credential. A certificate is issued for completion of the first two steps. The Step One Certificate requires nine college credits in the following topic areas:

College Coursework Focus	Credits
Child and Youth Development	3 credits
Curriculum Development	3 credits
Program Management	3 credits

Information about the Program Director Credential is on the Northern Lights website (see Resources).

Highly Qualified Paraprofessional

This designation is given by the public schools to paraprofessionals who work for them. In general, schools require an associate degree in a related field, but each school district determines how their staff can meet the requirements for this designation. Paraprofessionals work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher. They provide instructional support, one-on-one tutoring, and other functions in the school. Information is on the Northern Lights website (see Resources) and at your local public school.

Benefits and incentives of professional development in the Awareness Phase:

- Feel pride in your accomplishment as a professional in Vermont's afterschool field
- Meet child care licensing regulations
- Support your professional growth
- Build a foundation for continued professional growth. When you complete any of the activities in the Awareness Phase, you have already begun to meet the requirements for the next phases
- Apply for scholarships for staff working in programs regulated by the Child Development Division (CDD) to take college coursework
- Attend low cost college courses (required for the Program Director Credential) that are contracted by the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC)
- Benefit from a financial incentive for individuals who are working on the OJT Certificate, and a recognition bonus (from the Child Development Division) for those who complete the Afterschool Foundation Certificate and work in a regulated child care program

The Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate looks good on my resume.

The trainings I did for the Foundations Certificate helped me feel more competent in my work. I better understand my skills in each competency area, and now I'm applying all of the learning I did to the next step - to meeting the requirements for the Vermont After school Professional Credential (VAPC).

The OJT Program made me more aware of my everyday interactions with children. Some days you leave work and don't remember what you did because it was such a whirlwind. OJT made me stop the whirlwind and really pay attention to what I was doing. I'm glad I had the experience of doing the Program. I learned a lot from my role models.

OJT was the best thing that could have happened to help me in my learning! I learned not only from my teachers but also learned a lot from the children I work with everyday. Working side by side with my mentors gave me hands-on learning, information, and they modeled the behaviors for me. As a student at CCV, I was able to use my work experience with the children for my classes.

Developing Phase

On-the-Job Training (OJT) Certificate

This certificate is earned through a specialized program available through the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) and the Vermont Department of Labor. OJT allows afterschool professionals in regulated settings to combine their work and learning experiences. Participants in OJT:

- Accumulate and document 1,000 hours of work experience
- Have a current CPR & First Aid card
- Document 45 hours of community-based and/or college level training related to the Afterschool Core Competencies.

It typically takes one to three years to complete the program, depending on the individual. Participants receive financial incentives along the way. For more information, contact VCCICC (see Resources).

Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential (VAPC)

This credential based on the Vermont Afterschool Core Competencies, is for afterschool professionals, who have at least 500 hours of work experience in a program with school age children.

Applicants for the VAPC must complete the following:

- Two, three-credit, on-line higher education courses (available through CCV): Introduction to Afterschool Education & Care and Development of the School-Age Child
- A professional portfolio
- Additional training in the Afterschool Core Competency areas totaling 46-hours as outlined below:

The Core Competencies validated what I was doing in my job and applying for the credential helped me to be more focused on the possibilities in my work.

Training	Hours
Curriculum & Learning Environment	16 hours
Families & Community	6 hours
Healthy & Safe Environments	6 hours
Professionalism & Program Organization	6 hours
Electives	Candidate chooses 12 hours across all Core Competency areas

Individuals who are awarded the credential have demonstrated the knowledge and skills to:

- Maintain a safe and healthy environment for school age children
- Incorporate educational experiences into the out-of-school hours
- Support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance
- Establish positive relationships with families and the community
- Ensure a well-run, purposeful program that is responsive to the needs of the participants
- Maintain a commitment to professionalism

For more information see the Northern Lights website (see Resources) or contact Kerrie Workman, kwork23@yahoo.com or 802-434-5046.

The Child Development Division may award a recognition bonus for individuals who are awarded the VAPC.

Highly Qualified Paraprofessional

This designation is given by the public schools to paraprofessionals who work for them. In general, schools require an associate's degree in a related field, but each school district determines how their staff can meet the requirements for this designation. Paraprofessionals work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher. They provide instructional support, one-on-one tutoring, and other functions in the school. Information is on the Northern Lights website (see Resources) and at your local public school.

Awareness Phase**Developing Phase****Achievement Phase**

Vermont Program Director Credential for Afterschool and Early Education Professionals: Step Two Certificate

This credential process has three steps, requiring college coursework and a portfolio to achieve the credential.

The first two steps of the credential process are awarded as a certificate. Step One requires nine college credits as described in the **Awareness Phase** above. Step Two requires additional courses in the following topic areas:

College Coursework Focus	Credits
Leadership, Mentoring, and Supervision for Practitioners	3 credits
Legal and Financial Issues	3 credits
Human Resources Management	3 credits
Total credits	9 credits

Information about the Program Director Credential is on the Northern Lights website (see Resources).

Educator Licensure

The Vermont Department of Education (DOE) confers educator licensure to qualified professionals. Professionals can earn this license either by completing the requirements through a) graduating from a college or university that is designated to recommend for Vermont Department of Education (DOE) educator licensure, b) Vermont DOE approval of an educator license from another state, or c) approval through DOE peer review process. Current Vermont educator licensure requires students to have liberal arts major in addition to taking education coursework.

For detailed information go to the Vermont Department of Education or the Northern Lights websites (see Resources).

Benefits and incentives of professional development in the Developing Phase:

- Feel pride in your accomplishment as a professional in Vermont's afterschool field
- Support your professional growth and expand your

professional options. Completed college courses may also contribute to an academic degree or certificate program

- Distinguish yourself as a leader in the field with the Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential and Program Director Credential
- Build a foundation for continued professional growth. When you complete activities in the Developing Phase, you have already begun to meet the requirements for the Achievement phase
- Meet program regulations or requirements for staff. The Afterschool Professional Credential is also recognized in Vermont's STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality and improvement system
- Scholarships are available from the Child Development Division (CDD) for staff or consultants working in regulated child care programs to take college courses related to their work (see Resources)
- Coursework that is required for the credentials is available at low cost. Two CCV college courses specifically for afterschool professionals meet the Afterschool Professional and Program Director Credential requirements. Some of the college courses required for the Program Director credential, are also contracted by the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) at a reduced cost to students. Northern Lights offers scholarships to professionals taking specific coursework for the Program Director Credential (see Resources)
- There is a Recognition Bonus (from the Child Development Division) awarded to those who complete the Afterschool Professional Credential and work in a regulated child care program

Achievement Phase

Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential (VAPC)

This credential based on the Vermont Afterschool Core Competencies, is for afterschool professionals who have at least 500 hours of work experience in a program with school age children.

Applicants for the VAPC must complete the following:

- Two, three-credit, on-line higher education courses (available through CCV): Introduction to Afterschool Education & Care and Development of the School-Age Child
- A professional portfolio
- Additional training in the After School Core Competency areas totaling 46-hours as outlined below:

Training	Hours
Curriculum & Learning Environment	16 hours
Families & Community	6 hours
Healthy & Safe Environments	6 hours
Professionalism & Program Organization	6 hours
Electives	Candidate chooses 12 hours across all Core Competency areas
Total Hours	46

Individuals who are awarded the credential have demonstrated the knowledge and skills to:

- Maintain a safe and healthy environment for school age children
- Incorporate educational experiences into the out-of-school hours
- Support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance
- Establish positive relationships with families and the community
- Ensure a well-run, purposeful program that is

responsive to the needs of the participants

- Maintain a commitment to professionalism

For more information see the Northern Lights website (see Resources) or contact Kerrie Workman, kwork23@yahoo.com or 802-434-5046.

The Child Development Division may award a recognition bonus for individuals who are awarded the VAPC.

Vermont Program Director Credential for Afterschool and Early Education Professionals

This credential process has three steps, requiring college coursework and a portfolio to achieve the credential. Steps One and Two each require nine college credits for a total of 18 credits (see **Awareness and Developing Phases**). The final step requires completion of the three-credit culminating seminar and the professional portfolio. Information about the Program Director Credential is on the Northern Lights website (see Resources).

Educator Licensure

The Vermont Department of Education (DOE) confers educator licensure to qualified professionals. Professionals can earn this license either by meeting the requirements through a) graduating from a college or university that is designated to recommend for Vermont Department of Education (DOE) educator licensure, b) approval by Vermont DOE of an educator license from another state, or c) approval through peer review. Current Vermont educator licensure requires students to have a liberal arts major in addition to taking education coursework. For detailed information go to the Vermont Department of Education website or the Northern Lights website (see Resources).

Helping other afterschool programs work on best practices has been more rewarding than I envisioned.

Awareness Phase**Developing Phase****Achievement Phase****Other related opportunities in the Achievement Phase:****Instructor Registry**

The Northern Lights Instructor Registry supports and promotes quality instruction of adults working in early childhood and afterschool programs in Vermont. Applicants apply online, through the Northern Lights website. The Northern Lights Instructor Registry approval panel reviews the applicant's experience teaching adults, formal education in adult learning, and completed education in the content areas they teach. Instructor levels recognize and support new instructors, proficient instructors and specialists with specific content knowledge. The Instructor Registry identifies and promotes qualified instructors, helps training sponsors search for instructors, establishes a pathway for developing instructors, and provides instructor resources.

Information is on the Northern Lights website (see Resources).

Coaching for Program Directors

The Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence (VCAE) hosts ongoing facilitated learning modules across the state, on topics such as financial management, video production, global learning, literacy, etc. for afterschool program directors. The goal of this coaching model is to strengthen directors' administrative, program planning, and evaluation skills.

See the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence website for more information (see Resources).

Mentors for Quality

The Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence offers seasoned professionals opportunities to mentor afterschool programs through the "Mentors for Quality" program. Professionals are trained to be mentors, providing technical assistance to qualified afterschool programs that want to increase their quality.

See the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence website for more information (see Resources).

Benefits and incentives of professional development in the Achievement Phase:

- Pride in your accomplishment as a professional in Vermont's afterschool field
- Recognition as a leader in the field and in the community. Colleagues turn to you for mentoring, coaching or instruction
- Knowledge that your work strengthens your ongoing professional development, the field and the quality of programs for Vermont's children and youth
- Adherence to program regulations or requirements for staff
- Membership in the Instructor Registry that includes professional support. The workshop: "Orientation to Teaching Adults" is offered around the state at low cost, by the Resource Development Specialists (see Resources). Inexperienced instructors can work with certified or master level instructors as they develop their skills
- Credentials (both Program Director and Afterschool Professional) that are recognized in Vermont's STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality and improvement system: staff qualifications and professional development arena
- Scholarships from the Child Development Division (CDD) for staff and consultants working in regulated child care programs to take college courses related to their work (see Resources)
- Low-cost coursework required for these credentials. Some of the college courses required for the Program Director Credential are also contracted by the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC), at a reduced cost to students. Northern Lights offers scholarships to professionals taking specific coursework for the Program Director Credential (see Resources)
- A recognition bonus to professionals who complete the Program Director Credential and work in a regulated child care program, awarded by the Child Development Division

Certificates, Credentials, Degrees and Educator Licensure

Certificates, credentials, academic degrees and educator licensure can be obtained separately, or in conjunction with the completion of an Early Childhood Career Level or Afterschool Phase.

Within Vermont's professional development system, a **certificate** is defined as recognition of completion of a program of study or training. A certificate recognizes an individual's participation or performance based on a defined set of knowledge and skills.

Vermont Early Childhood and Afterschool Certificates

- Early Childhood Level Certificates
- Afterschool Foundations Certificate
- Program Director Steps One and Two Certificates
- Certificate of Completion: Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program
- Child Care Professional Certificate
- CCV Child Care Certificate
- Instructor Registry Certificate
- Certificates of Attendance

A **credential** is defined as recognition of competency, based on established professional standards set by a recognized institution or professional organization. Credentials often require a portfolio or observation to document achievement.

Vermont Early Childhood and Afterschool Credentials

- Afterschool Professional Credential
- Program Director Credential (completion of Steps One-Three)
- Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential (National)
- Vermont Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Credential
- National Afterschool Credential (pending)
- Infant/Toddler Credential (pending)

An **academic degree** is a position or title awarded by an accredited college or university. It recognizes that the individual has completed a prescribed course of study or scholarly body of work that is worthy of a degree.

Vermont recognizes both related degrees and/or related coursework in meeting the educational requirements associated with career levels and pathways.

Academic Degrees

- Associate (60 credits)
- Bachelor (120 credits)
- Master (30 or more credits after Bachelor Degree)
- Doctorate (after Master Degree)

Educator Licensure

The Vermont Department of Education's Licensing office administers regulations and procedures for educator licensing. Most individuals who become licensed as teachers or administrators have graduated from state approved preparation programs and received a recommendation for licensure from their college or university. Licensed educators also receive endorsements that define the age range and/or topics they are licensed to teach. Vermont also recognizes Peer Review, as an alternative route to licensure, for those individuals with a bachelor's degree who want to also have educator licensure, but have not completed an approved preparation program. The Peer Review process requires individuals to show documentation of coursework and experiences that show they have acquired the knowledge and skills needed to meet the 16 Principles for Vermont Educators and the competencies and requirements for the endorsements they seek.

Additional information is on the Department of Education and Northern Lights websites (see Resources).

Instructors, Mentors, Coaches, and Consultants

Some experienced professionals achieve their Early Childhood Level Certificate, Program Director Credential or Afterschool Professional Credential and then think, *now what?* If they are interested in advancing their skills by working in more depth with other professionals in the field, there are a number of professional and career options available.

Vermont Instructor Registry

The Instructor Registry is found on the Northern Lights website (see Resources). Adult instruction is a skill separate from teaching children, working with families or supervising staff. The purpose of the Instructor Registry is to:

- Identify instructors who have met established criteria for high quality instruction of adults
- Establish a clear pathway for instructor development
- Be a resource for those who seek to hire instructors
- Act as a promotional marketing tool for instructors
- Provide networking, foster collegiality and support instructors of adults

The online application considers an applicant's a) education and credentials, b) current experience teaching adults, and c) formal instruction in adult learning principles and practices. The accepted application also serves as a profile that sponsors of professional development may use to choose an instructor.

The Instructor Registry has six different levels.

- Affiliate I and Affiliate II: for those developing skills and experience in instructing adults skills
- Specialist I and II: for those with limited, specialty knowledge such as medical or legal knowledge
- Certified Level
- Master Level

Affiliate I, II and Specialist I Instructors, receive support from Certified and Master Instructors.

Instructors in the Registry are regularly sought out by sponsors of professional development activities, to provide trainings, workshops and courses. Higher education faculty can use a streamlined process to apply to the Instructor Registry.

Mentoring, Advising, Teaching, Coaching, Consultation, Help (MATCH)

Professionals provide these services to early childhood and afterschool staff and programs all over the state.

Many management jobs in the early childhood and afterschool fields already require these skills. Some individuals provide these services informally to their colleagues and peers.

Research and experience have clearly shown that quality, professional skills and knowledge develop faster when effective, individualized support is provided based on a clear plan of action for change. That support must be tailored to the individual and responsive to the context in which that person works. We know that MATCH professionals must be skilled and knowledgeable in order to provide this individualized and responsive support.

Vermont is developing MATCH as a formal system to enhance the development and quality of early childhood and afterschool staff and programs. It will ensure that mentors, coaches, consultants and advisors are consistently available to provide skilled, informed, quality services to early childhood and afterschool professionals and to the programs in which they work. MATCH will be part of the professional development system in Vermont. It will include the following components:

- Competencies describing the skills, knowledge and beliefs that MATCH professionals need to have
- Training for MATCH professionals to support their development and attainment of the competencies
- A searchable, online registry of MATCH professionals

Contact Northern Lights Career Development Center to learn more about the development of MATCH.

Mentors for Quality

The Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence offers seasoned professionals opportunities to mentor afterschool programs through the "Mentors for Quality" program. Professionals are trained to be mentors, providing technical assistance to qualified afterschool programs that want to increase their quality.

See the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence website for more information (see Resources).

Career Advising Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals

An advisor is a person who has information, resources and skills to help adults in their professional development. For Early Childhood and Afterschool advisors, information and resources are found in many different places and are continually changing. Advisors need to maintain their professional networks and updated information in order to continue to be helpful.

Some of the people who have advising skills and knowledge are:

- Supervisors and program directors
- Starting point leaders and colleagues
- Mentors and consultants
- Instructors
- College advisors and coordinators
- Resource Development Specialists (at 12 regional Community Child Care Support agencies)
- Northern Lights Career Development Center staff
- Child Development Division staff
- Vermont Department of Education staff
- Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence staff
- Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (Apprenticeship program) staff
- Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VAEYC) staff and board members
- Vermont Child Care Providers Association (VC-CPA) board members
- Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) staff

The Resources section of this document lists websites for all of these organizations.

Resource Tools for Advisors

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

Most early childhood and afterschool professionals are required to have a current IPDP. An IPDP has four sections:

1. Self-assessment
2. Goals
3. Strategies and resources to meet the goals
4. Timeline

This outline is also a useful guide for career planning. The Northern Lights website and booklet *IPDP - Planning your Professional Growth*, are tools for the advisor, the student or the practitioner seeking guidance.

My advisor lives in a different town but I can reach her by email or phone easily, and sometimes we set up a time to skype, which I really like.

MATCH (mentoring, advising, teaching, coaching, consulting, help)

Vermont is integrating professionals with MATCH skills into the statewide professional development system. Once this project is implemented, individuals and programs will be able to search a directory of qualified MATCH professionals, including career advisors. There will also be a common set of competencies for those who provide MATCH services.

Full information will be on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website.

As an advisor, I am always checking websites to make sure I have the current information and learn what else is out there. When I am stuck I ask my network of colleagues. When I learn of a new resource tool I always add it to my resource file.

Financial Resources (see also Resources)

There are many different financial resources available in Vermont for college credit and non college credit professional development activities. Many professional development workshops and classes are free of charge or low cost to participants. Check with the sponsor of the activity. Some, but not all of the resources below require the applicant to be working in regulated child care.

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)

www.vsac.org: This statewide organization has advisors with the latest information on college loans, grants, loan forgiveness, scholarships, and college planning. They are also the source for:

- Non-degree grants to pay for courses that will improve employability or encourage further study
- Vermont Incentive Grants for Vermonters accepted or enrolled in an undergraduate degree or certificate program, will be attending college full-time, and don't already have a bachelor's degree
- Federal Student Assistance Grants are available to qualified students that are enrolled in a degree program. For an application go to www.fafsa.ed.gov and fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Information or applications can also be found at your college or university's student aid office
- Private education loans - for further assistance, if grants, scholarships and federal loans don't cover all education costs or if a student's family does not qualify for a PLUS loan
- Scholarships - information on more than 150 scholarships for Vermont residents

College course work and degrees: other financial support:

- Vermont Child Development Division provides grants to Vermont residents taking a college course related to working with children or youth. Applicants must be working in or consulting to regulated child care programs in Vermont. (see Resources)
- Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC): Six undergraduate level courses are contracted by VCCICC from the Community College of Vermont. These six courses are tuition-free to staff working in regulated child care, and are offered in different regions of Vermont. Child

care professionals that are NOT in the Child Care Apprenticeship Program, may also take the courses, as room allows. The six courses are:

1. Communication in the Early Childhood and Afterschool Workplace
2. Infant Toddler Development and Care
3. Development of the Young Child: Ages Three to Eight
4. Curriculum Development for Early Childhood Education
5. Program Management for Early Childhood Education
6. Leadership, Mentoring and Supervision for Early Childhood and Afterschool Practitioners

These courses may also be offered directly by CCV, in which case students are responsible for CCV tuition and fees.

College or university financial support: Some colleges and universities have grants, loans or scholarships. It is important to ask the financial aid office at your school about any grants or scholarships. See the list of colleges and universities in Vermont and nearby states on the Northern Lights website

Community-based scholarships: civic organizations, churches, businesses, and other community-based groups offer scholarships for degree programs. Ask in your local community or see the scholarship booklet from VSAC

Federal tax credit: The IRS offers credits for your federal taxes called the Hope and Life Time Learning Educational Credits. You may be able to deduct certain expenses related to tuition and fees. Learn more at <http://www.irs.gov>

Financial Assistance for specific courses leading to a Credential:

Program Director Credential Courses: Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center (see Resources). There are seven courses (or equivalent) required to meet the education requirement for this credential. These courses may have been completed at any time. Five of the courses that may meet the requirements are offered by the VCCICC including:

1. Infant Toddler Development and Care
2. Development of the Young Child: Ages Three to Eight

3. Curriculum Development for Early Childhood Education
4. Program Management for Early Childhood Education
5. Leadership, Mentoring and Supervision for Early Childhood and Afterschool Practitioners

Contact Northern Lights for more information about scholarships available to program director applicants for the other three required courses:

- Human Resources
- Legal and Financial Issues in Early Childhood and Afterschool Programs
- Culminating Seminar of the Program Director Credential

Afterschool Professional Credential: There are two online contracted Community College of Vermont courses offered for free or low cost to those seeking this credential and working in regulated child care

1. Introduction to Afterschool Education & Care
2. Special Topics in Education: Development of the School Age Child, Ages 5-12

Vermont Higher Education Collaborative (VT-HEC) www.VTHEC.org VT-HEC is a network of graduate programs that can lead to endorsement or degrees for educators, administrators, and specialists. Coursework can lead to educator licensure with an endorsement in Early Childhood or Early Childhood Special Education and other areas. Courses are offered at a reduced rate and some scholarships are available. You do not have to be seeking educator licensure to access this coursework.

In addition to the resources listed above, specific options such as Assessment of Prior Learning, Course Challenge, CLEP tests and transfer credit options provide college credit to the successful applicant for less than it would cost to enroll in traditional college courses.

See the sections Level III and IV in this Career Advising Guide as well as the Resources section.

Other Financial Supports for professional development:

Vermont Child Development Division (see Resources)

The Child Development Division provides specific grants as listed below and also contracts with sponsors of professional development, which helps increase opportunities and subsidizes professional development classes and workshops

- College course tuition scholarship to individuals working in regulated child care programs.
- Professional development tuition costs to consultants working with regulated child care
- Professional Recognition Bonus to individuals who achieve a step on the Early Childhood Career Ladder or Afterschool Pathway or gain a credential (see also Alignment grid)
- Statewide and regional collaborative grants to sponsors of professional development activities
- Grants to pay application fees
 - Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) application fee
 - Peer Review Assessment Fee (partial) for those applying to earn Vermont Department of Education educator licensure with Early Childhood endorsement, through peer review
 - Child Care Professional Credential application fee

Place of employment: If your employer requires you to attend training in order to maintain your employment (as stated in a written contract), then the employer must also support you to take the training. Employers, including school districts, often have funds to support professional development of staff. It never hurts to ask!

The 12 regional community child care support agencies, provide free or low cost professional development for Early Childhood and afterschool professionals in their region (see Resources for complete contact information)

Standards of Quality

Advisors and those they support need to recognize the frameworks that define quality for the early childhood and afterschool fields. These are the standards or guidelines for these fields. They are used to build curriculum for children, plan courses for adults, frame self-assessment by students and professionals, design strategic plans, and more. They are the foundational structures that all professionals should know and use. Because the early childhood and afterschool fields cross many disciplines and settings, there are many different standards and guidelines, determined in part by the related regulatory body or institution.

Standards for professionals, for programs and guidelines for children all connect to provide the foundation of quality in the early childhood and afterschool fields. Like gears, these three standards interconnect.



Standards for professionals who work in early childhood and afterschool settings include:

- Competencies for early childhood and for afterschool professionals (as outlined earlier in this booklet)
- Vermont Department of Education Professional Standards
- Professional standards for related specialists such as social work, nursing, physical therapy, etc.

Standards or Guidelines for children who attend the early childhood and afterschool programs:

These inform the professional, the families and the programs that serve the children. They are not a curriculum or an assessment but they may guide both of these activities.

- Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) for three to five year olds
- First Steps - guidelines for infants and toddlers (pending)
- VT Department of Education Common Core and Grade Level Expectations

Standards for programs that serve young, school age and older children in regulated settings:

These define the components of a quality program. The foundation standards are set in law by Vermont child care licensing. Vermont STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS), national accreditation, and Head Start program monitoring build from this foundation. Standards are measured by program self-assessment, documentation and outside evaluation by observation. Staff qualifications and professional development are a component of program standards.

The next page lists various program standards and how they relate to staff professional development.



One measure of program quality is the quality of the staff that works in the program. All program quality measures require staff to meet specified standards of education and/or experience. Career advisors need to know about measures of program quality as well as professional development pathways in order to provide complete and accurate guidance. Websites with the updated and detailed requirements for each of these programs are in the Resources section.

Measures of Program Quality in Vermont

Measure	Program Setting	Reviewing Agency	Notes on Professional Development Criteria
Child care licensing regulations (Vermont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered family child care homes Licensed child care centers and homes Licensed afterschool programs Licensed non-recurring care (often in ski industry businesses) 	Child Development Division (CDD)	<p>These are the foundation requirements for all child care programs, their staff and administrators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements include completed education and annual professional development hours Public School Early Childhood programs are also required to be licensed by the Child Development Division Not all Afterschool programs are licensed by CDD
STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered family child care homes Licensed child care centers and homes Licensed afterschool programs Licensed non-recurring care (often in ski industry businesses) 	STARS administrators (Vermont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 1 to 5 star level is awarded based on the total number of points earned across all arenas. One arena is Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development. Being in compliance with child care licensing regulations is a minimum requirement Licensed Early Childhood programs funded by public schools must have a minimum of four stars with a minimum of 2 points in each arena, or three Stars with an approved plan to achieve four stars within three years. Aligns with Northern Lights Career Ladder and credentials
National Association for the Education of Young Children) Accreditation (NAEYC)	Licensed Early Childhood programs	NAEYC Accreditation of Programs for Young Children (national accreditation)	<p>Streamlined Alignment process with 5 STARS</p> <p>See website for annual professional development, academic degrees and program director requirements</p>
National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation (NAFCC)	Registered or Licensed family child care home	NAFCC (national accreditation)	<p>Streamlined Alignment process with STARS</p> <p>See website for annual professional development, academic degrees and experience requirements</p>
Council on Accreditation (COA)	Afterschool programs	Council on Accreditation (national accreditation)	<p>Streamlined alignment process with five STARS</p> <p>See website for professional development requirements</p>
Head Start: Office of Head Start Monitoring Protocol or Triennial Review based on the Head Start Performance Standards and CLASS scores	<p>Head Start programs</p> <p>Licensed Early Childhood centers and family child care partners</p>	<p>Office of Head Start (federal review)</p> <p>Administration for Children and Families</p>	<p>Streamlined alignment process with STARS</p> <p>See Head Start standards for in-service and academic degree requirements</p>

Supports to meet Program Quality and Recognition
(see Resources for contact information)

- STARS administrators, and regional Resource Development Specialists provide technical assistance to programs applying for STARS
- The Child Development Division (CDD) offers *Program Quality Grants* to defray the cost of applying for program accreditation. Applications are available on the CDD website: <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd>
- Mentors for Quality at the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence provide support to afterschool programs seeking STARS or national accreditation
- Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VAEYC) provides technical assistance and other supports to programs applying for NAEYC Accreditation
- Vermont Child Care Providers Association provides technical assistance to programs applying for the National Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation



Resources

Please visit the Northern Lights Career Development Center website www.northernlightscdc.org to view and download this booklet.

The website has the most current information including:

- Live links to all of the resources below
- Links to the regional Resource Development Specialists, financial assistance, professional organizations, and more
- Career ladder and pathways information for early childhood and afterschool professionals, including competency documents, information about credentials, academic degrees, and educator licensure
- Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) forms, samples and guidance

Other Resources Referenced in this Booklet

<p>Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) <u>Help Desk:</u> Get a username, password or change your log-in to your own Quality and Credential account</p> <p><u>BFIS Website:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Login on and view your private Quality and Credential Account (under RESUME), create your online IPDP • Search the statewide course calendar 	<p>http://bfishelp.ahs.state.vt.us</p> <p>http://brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us</p>
<p>Council for Professional Recognition Award the national Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)</p>	<p>http://www.cdacouncil.org</p>
<p>Vermont Child Development Division</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under “professional development” find grants and scholarship applications • Links to other resources 	<p>http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd</p>
<p>Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence Professional development, certificates, credentials and resource information for afterschool programs and professionals in Vermont</p>	<p>http://vermontafterschool.org</p>
<p>Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VAEYC) Professional, member organization; an affiliate of the National AEYC</p>	<p>http://www.vaeyc.org</p>

Vermont Department of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional standards for educators Educator licensure and endorsements Peer review process for licensure IPDP requirements for educators 	http://education.vermont.gov
Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program and courses On the Job Training 	http://www.vermontchildcareindustry.org
Vermont Child Care Providers Association (VCCPA) Support for CDA, STARS and NAFCC program accreditation	http://vccpa.org
Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide and regional advisors with the latest information on college loans, grants, loan forgiveness, scholarships, and college planning. The source for non-degree grants, Vermont Incentive Grants, Federal Student Assistance, private education loans and scholarships 	www.vsac.org
Vermont Career and Technical Centers	http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_teched/programs.html

Learning Standards & Guidelines for Children and Youth

Vermont Early Learning Standards - ages three to six	www.dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/pdf/cdd/care/2006-03-29-VELS_booklet.pdf
Vermont Department of Education Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities PreK-12	http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pubs/framework.pdf

Program Standards and Accreditation

Center on Accreditation (COA) National afterschool program accreditation agency	http://www.coastandards.org/
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National center-based early childhood program accreditation Professional organization for early educators 	www.naeyc.org
National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National family child care program accreditation Professional organization for family child care providers 	www.nafcc.org
National Early Childhood Program Accreditation National child care program accreditation for small programs	http://www.necpa.net/index.php
Vermont STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermont program quality recognition and improvement system Includes early childhood, afterschool and family child care programs 	http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars/
National Head Start Association (NHSA) Nationally program standards and resources for regional Head Start programs	www.nhsa.org

College and University Degrees and Coursework

Vermont Colleges and Universities	http://education.vermont.gov/
Vermont Higher Education Collaborative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate coursework toward degrees and educator licensure Through Lyndon State College 	www.VTHEC.org

CLEP (College Level Examination Program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33 different national computer exams on topics such as human growth and development, college composition (English), math, and business courses. • Community College of VT and some other colleges monitor the exam in Vermont • Passing the exam equates to a college credit course 	http://clep.collegeboard.org/ www.ccv.edu
Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document learning gained through work or other experiences and submit for college credit • May earn many credits at once • Vermont State College Office of External Programs offers an APL course that prepares you to request the credits • Once awarded, the credits may transfer to other colleges • Some colleges assess prior learning to award transfer or waived credit to incoming students 	http://www.vsc.edu/Pages/Special-Programs.aspx
Course Challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students already in a degree or certificate program at the Community College of Vermont • Request an assessment to determine if you have already met the learning objectives for a specific course • May be awarded credit for that course 	http://www.vsc.edu/Pages/Special-Programs.aspx

Ethical Standards for Professionals

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct	http://faculty.weber.edu/tlday/2610/code05.pdf
NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct Supplement for Administrators	http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PS-ETH05_supp.pdf
Vermont Department of Education: Code of Professional Ethics and Rules of Professional Conduct for Vermont Educators	http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgmprostandards/vsbpe/rules/educ_550_0_licensing_ethics_code.pdf

Selected Advocacy Organizations

Voices for Vermont Children	http://www.voicesforvtkids.org/
Kids are Priority One Coalition	http://www.kidsarepriorityone.org/
National Education Association	http://www.nea.org/
American Federation of Teachers	http://www.aft.org/

Appendix

College Course Work Alignment: Early Childhood and Afterschool Career Pathways

October 2011

This chart shows how an individual course can be used to achieve different certificates, credentials and degrees.

College Courses Offered by CCV, VSC and Other Colleges # offered through Union Institute and University (x) an elective	Level I	Level II and III	Level IIIA	Level IIIA	Level IIIA	After school and Early Childhood Program Director Credential			Afterschool Credential	Level IIIB Associate Degree 60 credits
	3 credits	12 or 21 credits	Child Care Apprenticeship: VCCICC Sponsored	CCV Child Care Certificate 27 credits	Step One	Step Two	Step Three			
Fundamentals for the Early Childhood Professional	X	X								
Introduction to Early Childhood Education	X	X		X						
Communication in the Early Childhood Workplace		X	X	X						X
Infant Toddler Child Development	X	X	X	One of these X	One of these X					(X)
Child Development ages 3-8	X	X	X							(X)
Child Development birth to adolescent	X	X								X
Special Topics in Afterschool- Development of the School Age Child		X						X		
Curriculum ages 3-8		X	X	(X)	X					(X)
Introduction to Afterschool Services		X						X		
Program Management		X	X	(X)	X					(X)
Leadership, Mentoring and Supervision		X	X	(X)		X				(X)
Human Resources		X		(X)		X				(X)
# Legal and Financial Issues in early childhood and after school settings		X		(X)		X				
# Culminating Seminar: Program Director Credential		X		(X)			X			
Additional college courses				X						X

Early Childhood Career Ladder and alignment with the Professional Recognition Bonus (Oct. 1, 2009) and STARS (January 2010)

	Level I	Level II	Level IIIA	Level IIIB	Level IV (A & B)	Level V (A & B)
Northern Lights Career Ladder Levels	Each Level requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience - A current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) and - Education. See the Northern Lights Career Ladder for details of options for each level 					
	1 year experience	2 years experience	2 years experience	2 years experience	2 years experience (can include student teaching)	
Professional Recognition Bonus from CDD *	\$100	\$500 initial \$150 for first CDA renewal	\$750	\$1000	\$1200 plus + \$500 for DOE teacher licensure	
STARS- staff qualifications arena ¹	Score 1	Score 4	Score 9	Score 12	Score 16 Score 20 with DOE licensure	Score 25

* CDD Recognition Bonus is awarded based on Career ladder level or credential attainment AND additional criteria

Points and recognition for other credentials

Program Director Credential – step 3 :

\$500 Professional Recognition Bonus

STARS - score 12 in the Educational Attainment portion of Teaching Staff Qualifications;

Afterschool Professional Credential

\$500 Professional Recognition Bonus

STARS – score 6 in the Educational Attainment part of Teaching Staff Qualifications

¹ This refers to “Educational Attainment” score, which is one of three parts in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena; total score of all staff are converted to a single program STARS points for this arena

Acknowledgements

Vermont Career Advising Guide for Early Childhood Professionals was originally created and printed in 1998 by the Professional Preparation and Development Committee of the Vermont Early Childhood Workgroup. Revised in 2006 by Northern Lights Career Development Center, the booklet was also edited and reprinted in 2008. In 2010 the Professional Preparation and Development Committee (a workgroup of the Vermont Building Bright Futures Council) reviewed and made recommendations for changes to the document. Northern Lights Career Development Center used these recommendations to work with a small committee to make the current version of the Vermont Career Advising Guide for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals. This 2011 edition is the first to include both early childhood and afterschool fields.

Northern Lights Career Development staff wish to thank the Professional Preparation and Development Committee for their valuable review and recommendations, as well as Heather Mattison, Sue Ryan, Kerrie Workman, Marie Sullivan, Maureen Young- McCarthy and Nancy Sugarman for their many hours of work on this document. We also want to thank and acknowledge the many early childhood and afterschool professionals who provided perspective, questions and quotes that serve as the foundation for this work.



Ready Kindergartners Survey 2012-2013

Dear Teacher,

This year the results of the Kindergartners Readiness Survey will be used as the first statewide data point in our longitudinal data system. In order to accomplish this goal, we ask that you identify your school, yourself, and the students whom you are assessing through this secure online survey. We will also email you a class report within days of your submitting your class surveys so that you may consider and make use of these data in your planning and instruction.

*Please note that all of the information you provide is secure and confidential.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Click on "next" to begin. First, complete the Teacher Information page. Your date of birth is required for identification purposes. Your email address is needed in order to send you your class profile. When all teacher questions are answered, click on "next" to begin the student surveys.

2. Complete one Kindergartners Survey for each kindergarten student in your class; you move from survey to survey by clicking on "Next". There are 25 blank surveys; complete as many surveys as you have kindergarten students. If you have more than 25 students in a class or teach more than one class of kindergartners, please contact us at the email or phone number below.

3. Use your thoughtful and insightful observations of the student during the first four-six weeks of school as you rate his or her knowledge and skills. Rate this student's level of readiness for each item, using the following guidelines. Please note that all questions with an asterisk require a response.

BEGINNING

Frequently requires adult guidance in this area.

Skills are observed rarely.

PRACTICING

Sometimes requires adult guidance in this area.

Skills are observed frequently, but may be inconsistent.

PERFORMING INDEPENDENTLY

Rarely requires adult guidance.

Skills are observed frequently and are consistent.

Child initiates appropriate behaviors.

DON'T KNOW

No opportunity to observe this behavior.

4. After you complete the survey for Student 1, click on "Next Student" to start the survey for Student 2, and so forth.

5. If you need to stop after completing a few surveys and resume later, first click "Next" to save the survey you just finished, and then click on "Done" at the upper right hand corner. You will see a message that reads, "The webpage you are viewing is trying to close the window. Do you want to close this window?" Click on "Yes". When you open the survey again USING THE SAME COMPUTER, you will be able to get back into your survey and pick up where you left off.

6. Once you have completed surveys for ALL of your kindergarten students, click on the "Completed All Students" at the bottom of the last survey you completed. A thank you message will be displayed. Click on "Exit" to leave the survey.

Need help, teach two kindergarten classes, or have more than 25 kindergarten students in your class?

Contact:

Shirley Rawson at 828-5128 shirley.rawson@state.vt.us

Manuela Fonseca at 828-3850 manuela.fonseca@state.vt.us

Teacher Information

Teacher Name:

*1. First Name:

*2. Last Name:

*3. Teacher Email Address:

*4. Teacher Date of Birth

Month

Day

Year

Please enter your date of birth

*5. Name of School:

Name of School

Choose from drop down

Student 1***1. First Name:*****2. Last Name:*****3. Date of Birth:**

Month

Day

Year

Please enter student's date of birth

4. Student's Gender:**☐ Female☐ Male**5. Check if this student receives...**☐ Special Education Services☐ EST Services☐ 504 Services☐ English Language Instruction (is an English Language Learner)☐ Title I Services6. Prior to kindergarten, did this child attend an early childhood program?**☐ Yes☐ No☐ Don't Know

***7. Please identify the type of early childhood program this child attended:**

- ☐ Head Start
- ☐ School-based publicly funded prekindergarten program
- ☐ Community-based publicly funded prekindergarten program
- ☐ Private Preschool Program
- ☐ Family-based Child Care Program
- ☐ Center-Based Child Care Program
- ☐ Did not attend any early childhood program
- ☐ Don't know

***8. Social-Emotional Development:**

	Beginning	Practicing	Performing Independently	Don't Know
Plays cooperatively with different children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Separates easily from parent/caregiver	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uses problem solving skills in social situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appropriately expresses feelings and needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adapts to transitions within the school day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interacts positively with adults in the classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***9. Approaches to Learning:**

	Beginning	Practicing	Performing Independently	Don't know
Can persist in a self-directed activity for at least 15 minutes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appears enthusiastic and interested in classroom activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uses a variety of learning strategies in the classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is able to pay attention during teacher-directed group activities for approximately 15 minutes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knows when and how to use adults as a resource	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initiates activities in classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shows curiosity (asks questions, probes, tries new things, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***10. Communication**

	Beginning	Practicing	Performing independently	Don't know
Follows simple classroom rules and instructions with reminders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicates needs, wants, or thoughts in his/her primary language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engages in conversation (e.g. complete sentences, turn-taking etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understands simple directions, requests, and information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***11. Cognitive Development - General Knowledge:**

	Beginning	Practicing	Performing independently	Don't know
Shows awareness of how books are organized and used	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can recall and explain a sequence of events (e.g. can tell about a recent activity, can retell a story)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recognizes his/her most commonly used name in print	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engages in imaginative play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shows ability to discriminate and identify speech sounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recognizes 10 or more letters of the alphabet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uses scribbles, symbols or letters to write or represent words or ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shows the ability to count 5 or more objects using one-to-one coorespondence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can identify several basic geometric shapes (e.g. circle, square, rectangle, triangle)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***12. Physical Health & Development:**

	Beginning	Practicing	Performing independently	Don't know
Demonstrates age appropriate self-help skills (e.g. dressing, toileting, wiping nose, washing hands)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***13. This student's ability to learn appears to be inhibited by:**

	No	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Illness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fatigue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hunger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***14. Is this your last student? If no, click on "next student". If yes, click on "Completed All Students"**

☐ Next Student

☐ Completed All Students

Vermont's Statewide Report on Kindergarten Readiness 2012-2013

Introduction

Since 2000, Vermont has gathered information on the readiness of children entering kindergarten by surveying kindergarten teachers about their students' knowledge and skills within the first six to ten weeks of school. The effort to measure school readiness is a collaborative project of the Vermont Agency of Education, the Department for Children and Families, and the Department of Health.

There are many interpretations of what constitutes "readiness". Vermont's concept of children's readiness is multidimensional; it includes social and emotional development, communication, physical health, as well as cognitive development, knowledge, and approaches to learning (e.g., enthusiasm for learning, persistence, curiosity). Vermont's concept also reflects the belief that "school readiness" is interactional: children need to be ready for schools, and schools need to be ready to accommodate the diverse needs of children. Since 2000, surveys for assessing schools' readiness have been conducted several times. The Ready Schools survey asks principals and teachers to report on the school's transition practices, connection to families of young children and the community, and other related issues. Despite the importance of this information, the Ready Schools survey has not been conducted for several years.

Methodology

In the 2012-2013 academic year, kindergarten teachers from around the state were asked to complete a Ready Kindergartners Survey for each of their students. This survey is not a direct assessment of children; rather it relies on the accumulated observational knowledge the teacher has developed about the child during the first few weeks of kindergarten.

The kindergarten readiness data were collected through a secure online survey using Survey Monkey. Kindergarten teachers completed one survey for each child in his or her class. The Kindergartners Readiness Survey consists of 27 items across the domains of "Social and Emotional Development," "Approaches to Learning," "Communication," "Cognitive Development and General Knowledge," and "Physical Health and Development." These items are aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards.

Characteristics of the sample

The Ready Kindergartners Survey is intended to include all children entering kindergarten in all of Vermont's public schools. This goal was not achieved. Child-level data were submitted online for 5,325 kindergartners. There are 6,507 children enrolled in kindergarten in 2012-2013; hence, the surveys received represent 81.8% of all kindergarteners.

Teachers were asked to indicate on each Ready Kindergartners Survey the child's gender and if the child was eligible for specialized services such as special education or 504¹ services. They were also asked to identify if the child was an English Language Learner. Of the total 5,325 surveys received, teachers identified 2,707 or 50.8% as boys and 2,618 or 49.2% as girls. A total of 1,228 (or 23.1%) of the children surveyed were eligible for specialized services.² Based on teachers' responses, 585 (11.0%) qualified for special education, 298 (5.6%) qualified for EST services, 51 (1.0%) qualified

¹ Children who are determined to have a significant disability but who are not eligible for special education services, receive 504 supports in order to access learning.

² Note that some children were eligible for more than one type of specialized service.

for 504 support services, and 243 (4.6%) were eligible for Title I services. A total of 128 (2.4%) were English Language Learners.

The Ready Kindergartners Survey also asked teachers to indicate whether the child attended an early childhood program. Based on teachers' reports, a large majority of children surveyed (4,316 or 81.1%) attended some type of early childhood program before coming to kindergarten. Teachers reported that only 488 (or 9.2%) had not attended any type of early childhood program prior to kindergarten. Some teachers either didn't know if children attended a program (511 or 9.6%), or entered an ambiguous response (10 or 0.2%).

Amongst the children who did attend an early childhood program prior to kindergarten, teachers reported that 1,704 (32.0%) attended a school-based publicly funded prekindergarten program, 421 (7.9%) attended a community-based publicly funded prekindergarten program, 972 (18.3%) attended a private preschool program, 255 (4.8%) attended a family-based child care program, 509 (9.6%) attended a center-based child care program, and 390 (7.3%) attended Head Start. Some children were reported to have attended more than one type of prekindergarten program. The accuracy of these reports is questionable since these data were not independently verified. Additionally, these reported numbers are not consistent with information from other sources regarding Head Start participation and the number of children in child care programs across the state.

Findings for 2012-2013

The tables that follow summarize the findings from the 2012-2013 Ready Kindergartners Survey. **Table 1** includes the number and percentage of children rated for each ability level by survey item. **Table 2** presents the number and percentages of children by domain level.

At the item level, the operational definition of "ready" is when a child is rated at a "practicing" or "performing independently" level for that item. Ratings of "Beginning" are considered "not ready". In the case of the last set of items relating to illness, fatigue and hunger, "No" and "Seldom" were considered conducive to readiness and rated positively, whereas "Sometimes" and "Often" were considered to negatively affect readiness and rated as such.

At the domain level, the operational definition of "ready" is that a child is rated as "practicing" or "performing independently" on **all** of the items within that domain. If the child is rated as "Beginning" on any of the items within the domain, the child was considered "not ready" in that particular domain.

It is important to note that in previous years' analyses of the Ready Kindergartners Survey data, "don't know" responses were considered to indicate "not ready" and were included in the denominator. In the analysis of the 2012-2013 survey data, the "don't know" responses were treated as missing data and excluded from the denominator when calculating percent "ready". Therefore, 2012-2013 results are a less conservative estimate of the percent of children who are "Ready" than the alternative approach used in previous years when the "Don't know" responses were **included** in the denominator. This change means that the survey results for 2012-2013 are not directly comparable to previous years.

TABLE 1: Item Level Responses (*continued*)

Social-Emotional Development	Beginning % (N)	Practicing % (N)	Performing independently % (N)	Don't Know (N)
Plays cooperatively with different children	9.0% (478)	31.1% (1,653)	60.0% (3,190)	(4)
Separates easily from parent/caregiver	4.4% (234)	14.6% (770)	81.0% (4,272)	(49)
Uses problem solving skills in social situations	14.3% (760)	40.8% (2,167)	44.9% (2,389)	(9)
Appropriately expresses feelings and needs	13.9% (741)	32.8% (1,747)	53.2% (2,832)	(5)
Adapts to transitions within the school day	7.4% (396)	22.7% (1,208)	69.8% (3,715)	(6)
Interacts positively with adults in the classroom	4.8% (253)	20.7% (1,101)	74.5% (3,959)	(12)
Approaches to Learning	Beginning % (N)	Practicing % (N)	Performing independently % (N)	Don't Know (N)
Can persist in a self-directed activity for at least 15 minutes	10.0% (530)	23.9% (1,270)	66.2 (3,520)	(5)
Appears enthusiastic and interested in classroom activities	6.1% (323)	21.0% (1,117)	72.9% (3,881)	(4)
Uses a variety of learning strategies in the classroom	11.5% (611)	31.7% (1,686)	56.8% (3,014)	(14)
Is able to pay attention during teacher-directed group activities for approximately 15 minutes	13.7% (731)	29.2% (1,551)	57.1% (3,037)	(6)
Knows when and how to use adults as a resource	9.5% (506)	30.0% (1,595)	60.5% (3,215)	(9)
Initiates activities in classroom	9.4% (501)	25.1% (1,337)	65.4% (3,479)	(8)
Shows curiosity (asks questions, probes, tries new things, etc.)	7.8% (414)	22.1% (1,173)	70.1% (3,729)	(9)
Communication	Beginning % (N)	Practicing % (N)	Performing independently % (N)	Don't Know (N)
Follows simple classroom rules and instructions with reminders	9.8% (524)	27.1% (1,442)	63.0 (3,354)	(5)
Communicates needs, wants, or thoughts in his/her primary language	8.0% (423)	20.0% (1,064)	72.0% (3,826)	(12)

TABLE 1: Item Level Responses (continued)

Communication	Beginning % (N)	Practicing % (N)	Performing independently % (N)	Don't Know (N)
Engages in conversation (e.g. complete sentences, turn-taking, etc.)	8.6% (458)	20.0% (1,064)	71.4% (3,796)	(7)
Understands simple directions, requests and information	6.9% (367)	18.6% (988)	74.5% (3,960)	(10)
Cognitive Development	Beginning % (N)	Practicing % (N)	Performing independently % (N)	Don't Know (N)
Shows awareness of how books are organized and used	7.6% (402)	19.6% (1,041)	72.9% (3,874)	(8)
Can recall and explain a sequence of events (e.g. can tell about a recent activity, can retell a story)	11.6% (613)	28.8% (1,529)	59.6% (3,163)	(20)
Recognizes his/her most commonly used name in print	5.6% (296)	11.7% (623)	82.7% (4,400)	(6)
Engages in imaginative play	4.5% (238)	16.0% (851)	79.5% (4,221)	(15)
Shows ability to discriminate and identify speech sounds	15.9% (846)	25.9% (1,376)	58.2% (3,090)	(13)
Recognizes 10 or more letters of the alphabet	14.5% (773)	15.5% (824)	70.0% (3,719)	(9)
Uses scribbles, symbols or letters to write or represent words or ideas	15.0% (799)	22.0% (1,168)	63.0% (3,345)	(13)
Shows the ability to count 5 or more objects using one-to-one correspondence	8.1% (428)	13.7% (729)	78.2% (4,158)	(10)
Can identify several basic geometric shapes (e.g. circle, square, rectangle, triangle)	8.0% (418)	18.8% (980)	73.2% (3,825)	(102)
Physical Health & Development	Beginning	Practicing	Performing independently	Don't Know (N)
Demonstrates age appropriate self-help skills (e.g. dressing, toileting, wiping nose, washing hands)	2.7% (146)	10.8% (575)	86.4% (4,597)	(7)

TABLE 1: Item Level Responses (*continued*)

This child's ability to learn appears to be inhibited by:					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Don't Know (N)
Illness	90.0% (4,790)	5.0% (264)	4.2% (222)	0.9% (49)	n/a
Fatigue	83.3% (4,436)	6.4% (339)	8.4% (447)	1.9% (103)	n/a
Hunger	91.2% (4,855)	4.2% (225)	3.6% (194)	1.0% (51)	n/a

N.B. Row totals may not add exactly to 100% due to rounding.

Observations:

- At least 85% or more of all children were rated as either “practicing” or “performing independently” (i.e., they were considered “ready”) on all survey items except for:
Shows ability to discriminate and identify speech sounds (combined total of 84.1%)
- There was only one item in which fewer than 50% of kindergartners were rated as “performing independently”:
• Uses problem solving skills in social situations (44.9%)
- While it should be remembered that 11.0% of the children in this sample are receiving special education services, the data suggest that most children had achieved some competencies by the time they entered kindergarten.
- There were four items in which a large percentage of children (95% or more) were rated at the “ready” level. These items are as follows:
 - Separates easily from parent/caregiver (95.6%)
 - Interacts positively with adults in the classroom (95.2%)
 - Engages in imaginative play (95.5%)
 - Demonstrates age appropriate self-help skills (97.2%)

Results by Domain

Items on the “Ready Kindergartners’ Survey” are clustered into five domains:

- Social-Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Communication
- Cognitive Development
- Wellness³

The percentage of children who were rated as “practicing” or “performing independently” (i.e. “Ready”) on all of the items within a domain are presented in the chart below. As with the item level responses, the calculation of percent “Ready” excludes “Don’t know” responses.

³ Wellness includes children who demonstrate age appropriate self-help skills **and** who seldom or never appear to be inhibited by illness, fatigue or hunger.

TABLE 2: Results by Domain – Percent “Practicing” or “Performing independently”

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Number “Ready”</i>	<i>Valid Responses</i>	<i>Percent “Ready”</i>
Social-Emotional Development	4,235	5,263	80.5%
Approaches to Learning	4,236	5,304	79.9%
Communication	4,516	5,306	85.1%
Cognitive Development	3,988	5,202	76.7%
Wellness	4,538	5,318	85.3%

Summary

Overall, well over half (62.0%) of the children included in the 2012-2013 survey were rated as “ready for kindergarten” in all five domains of the survey. Readiness is defined here as “practicing” or “performing independently” in all areas and “seldom” or “never” in the illness, fatigue or hunger responses.

Year-to-year comparisons are not valid since over the years, items in domains have changed, participation rates have varied, and different data collection and analysis methodologies were used (e.g., including or excluding “Don’t Know” responses in the denominator). In keeping with this assertion, comparisons of domain percentages of the statewide results from 2001-2002 to the present, as was customarily made, are not provided.



A.D. Henderson Foundation, Inc. PROPOSAL 2/6/13

Introduction

The Building Bright Futures (BBF) State Council is submitting a request for \$99,395 to support the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Project (KRA-P). The overall goal of this project is to develop and pilot a valid, reliable statewide measure of children's readiness when they enter kindergarten. These results will not only benefit the kindergartners, but they will be useful to identify which initiatives and policies for children prior to kindergarten produce the best outcomes. The KRA-P directly impacts kindergartners and has ripple effects for children 0-5 years of age. On an annual basis, approximately 6,000 kindergartners will be assessed using the new Kindergarten Readiness Survey.

Background:

Building Bright Futures (BBF) State Council was established in 2010 by Vermont Statute, ACT 104. The Council is comprised of Government Leaders, legislators, and early care, health, and education representatives of various stakeholder groups. It monitors and reports on the quality of services for families and young children through an integrated system for planning, coordinating, and developing of early childhood programs, as well as advising of good policies, data, and resources at the State and regional levels. The BBF serves a dual role as the State Early Childhood Advisory Council and the umbrella organization for 12 regional councils who endeavor to monitor and improve their local systems of service delivery.

Need:

Since 2000, Vermont has gathered information on the readiness of children entering kindergarten by surveying kindergarten teachers about the "readiness" of their students within the first six to ten weeks of school. Despite the fact that the Agency of Education (AOE) and the Agency of Human Services (AHS) have collaboratively implemented the Kindergartners Readiness Survey (KRS) statewide each of the past twelve years, concerns about this assessment tool persist. One area of concern is the reliability of the measure since the KRS is a teacher-reported assessment. Do all kindergarten teachers who complete a survey for each child in their classrooms have a clear and consistent understanding of the survey's 28 items? Do they have a common understanding of what the ratings mean? Another area of concern is the validity of the KRS and its appropriateness for use with diverse populations of children (i.e., children with disabilities; English language learners).

The Building Bright Futures State Council, which includes both Secretary Vilaseca of AOE and Secretary Racine of AHS, recognizes the need for Vermont to critically evaluate its readiness measure, improve the current assessment tool, and provide the professional development needed to ensure the readiness data submitted accurately reflect the state of children's readiness.

Program/Project

Goal: Vermont has valid and reliable data about children's readiness upon their entry to kindergarten. The kindergarten readiness assessment is a part of a coordinated assessment system that provides data on children's progress over time, from birth to grade 12 and beyond, and is designed to address practices before and during kindergarten, as well as answer questions of policy and accountability. The specific objectives for the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Project are:

- An Expert Review of the current Kindergartners Readiness Assessment is conducted to determine: (1) its construct validity (i.e., how well the individual items on the current KRS measure a particular construct), (2) internal consistency (i.e., the correlations among the items within a particular construct), and (3) the alignment of the KRS to the Vermont Early Learning Standards and the Common Core Standards. These analyses will indicate needed revisions of the assessment items and identify changes to the processes used to analyze the KRS results.
- Verified information on kindergartners (e.g., poverty, race, dual language learners, disabilities, early education experiences) is gathered in order to identify sub-groups within the general population and to determine if and to what extent these factors affect children's readiness.
- Unique identifiers are used to associate survey results to a particular child and track the child's experiences and progress before and after kindergarten.
- After engaging in professional development activities, kindergarten teachers will submit information on children's readiness in an accurate and reliable manner.

Project Design:

The major Year 1 activities of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Project (KRA-P) are listed below:

Activity	Key Roles	Deliverables	Start Date	Completion Date
1. Analyze the current KRS assessment items, its construct validity and internal consistency, data collection processes, and how data are now analyzed and reported.	National expert(s) in kindergarten assessment tools and measures	Report specifying the results of the analysis and recommended improvements	July 2013	Oct. 2013
2. Convene a group of kindergarten teachers, representatives from a cross-section of early education and care programs, and school administrators to review the experts' recommendations and determine which changes will be made.	Lead staff from BBF, AOE, AHS, and DOH convene group with assistance from national expert(s)	A detailed plan for improving the KRS is produced	Oct. 2013	Dec. 2013
3. Create an application for secure, online data collection with the ability to extract KRS data in such a way that they may become part of the AOE's longitudinal data system	Developer working in close consultation with the AOE data manager	An online application for KRS data collection is completed	Oct. 2013	April 2014
4. Recruit 50 kindergarten teachers to pilot the new KRS after completing initial professional developmental activities	Lead staff from AOE	Kindergarten teachers willing to pilot new KRS	April 2014	April 2014

5. Develop professional development activities on the new KRS	Lead staff from BBF, AOE, AHS, and DOH	Professional development activity on new KRS	March 2014	April 2014
6. Pilot the new Kindergarten Readiness Survey and include a survey for kindergarten teachers about the online survey (content and process)	Sample of kindergarten teachers from different regions of the state	KRS data from the pilot sites are collected, as well as data on its implementation	Beginning of May 2014	End of May 2014
7. Conduct an inter-rater reliability study with the pilot data	Lead staff from BBF, AOE, AHS, and DOH with assistance from national expert(s)	Results of inter-rater reliability study	Beginning of June 2014	End of June 2014
8. Make any needed adjustments to the assessment tool and/or process after analysis of the survey's pilot results, and the inter-rater reliability study	Lead staff from BBF, AOE, AHS, and DOH with assistance from national expert(s)	An revised, online KRS is created and ready for use	Beginning of June 2014	End of July 2014

- **Collaborative Partners:** Building Bright Futures is a natural host and hub for this project since the key agencies engaged in and/or responsible for determining the kindergarten readiness of Vermont's children are members of the BBF State Council. The secretaries for the Agency of Education and the Agency of Human Services are on the Council, as well as the Commissioners of the Department for Children and Families, and the Health Department all share in the need to gather accurate kindergarten readiness data and use the results to inform their work. These partners have and will continue to be engaged in determining the readiness of kindergartners; they will contribute expertise and resources to this work throughout the project's development and implementation and for many years beyond the Foundation's support.

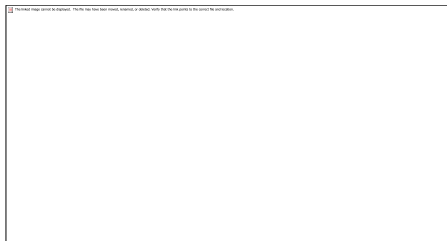
Outcome

Data-driven decisions about policies, the effects of interventions and enrichment activities, and the efficacy of different types of early childhood experiences are only as good as the data upon which they are built. The Vermont Kindergartners Readiness Survey results are used to make decisions about many programs and services that affect young children and their families. But how do we know that we have made sound decisions when there are doubts about the data? Although the KRS Project doesn't directly touch children, children are the ultimate beneficiaries when we invest our limited resources in what is effective.

Funding

The funding we are seeking from the Foundation is to enhance and accelerate the work that the Agency of Education, the Agency of Human Services, and the Department of Health are already engaged in and are committed to accomplishing. The Foundation's funding will complement rather than supplant the state agencies' resources. In these tight financial times, finding "extra" funding to contract for an Expert Review of the KRS, conducting an inter-rater reliability study, and hiring a developer to build a secure online application for data collection are virtually impossible. It is for these activities that we are seeking support from the Foundation. If only part of the requested funding can be secured, we would try to find other resources to conduct an inter-rater reliability study.

The current KRS has been implemented annually for nearly 13 years. The agencies are committed to implementing the new and improved KRS for at least that long. PROJECT BUDGET: July 2013-June2014	
INCOME	
I. Secured	0
II. Pending	0
Henderson Proposal	\$99,395
III. In-Kind Contributions	
Prepare 2000-2013 Implementation Evaluation Summary Report for Expert Panel Review (BBF: 80 hrs @ \$50/hr)	\$4,000
Project Oversight and Advisory: J. Coffey, B. Allen, M. Fonseca (90 hrs/mo @\$50/hrs)	\$4,500
Project Oversight Advisory - BBF Data and Evaluation Committee: KEA Workgroup (2 hrs/q x 6 members @\$50/hr)	\$2,400
Pilot implementation: 3 person team (program manager, IT specialist and admin support) contributing 200 hours (80 hrs for program manager and admin support and 40 hrs for IT specialist)@ project team hourly rate of \$125 (2 professionals * \$50 + 1 para professional * \$25)	\$25,000
BBF Indirect Admin (7% of BBF's indirect rate -10%)	\$6,755
TOTAL INCOME	\$142,050
EXPENSES	
Henderson Proposal	
Contractual – Review of KRS by national expert panel that includes construct validity psychometric analysis	\$34,500
Contractual - Developer to create secure online data collection application such that KRS data can be linked to AOE K-12 Longitudinal Data System	\$25,000
Contractual – Develop and test professional development activities (e.g., online tutorials, face-to-face workshops, guides, webinars) for the new KRS implementation pilot	\$34,500
Incentives for 50 Kdg Teachers to participate in the pilot (\$50/teacher * 50)	\$2,500
Sub-Total Expenses with no admin - Henderson Proposal	\$96,500
BBF Indirect Admin of 3% (Phone, Copying, Meeting Space, Mailing, Admin Support)	\$2,895
Sub-Total Expenses with admin - Henderson Proposal	\$99,395
Non-Henderson Income Sources	
Prepare 2000-2013 Implementation Evaluation Summary Report for national Expert Review Panel (BBF: 80 hrs @ \$50/hr)	\$4,000
Project Oversight and Advisory: J. Coffey, B. Allen, M. Fonseca (90 hrs/mo @\$50/hrs)	\$4,500
Project Oversight Advisory - BBF Data and Evaluation Committee: KEA Workgroup (2 hrs/quarter x 6 members @\$50/hr)	\$2,400
Pilot implementation: 3 person team (program manager, IT specialist and admin support) contributing 200 hours (80 hrs for program manager and admin support and 40 hrs for IT specialist)@ project team hourly rate of \$125 (2 professionals * \$50 + 1 para professional * \$25)	\$25,000
BBF Indirect Admin (7% of BBF's indirect rate -10%)	\$6,755
Total Project Expenses	\$142,050



Fall 2003
Volume 5 Number 2



Discriminant Validity of a Community-Level Measure of Children's Readiness for School

David A. Murphey

State of Vermont, Agency of Human Services

Abstract

Discriminant validity of a measure of children's readiness for school was assessed by testing whether it distinguished between groups of children hypothesized to differ, on the basis of demographic characteristics, in their school readiness. The volunteer sample consisted of 3,370 kindergartners in Vermont public schools. Previous group care experience, identified learning-related disabilities, and a community-level measure of poverty were used as independent measures in analyses of children's readiness scores in four conceptual domains. Statistically significant relationships were found between prior group care experience and readiness in each of the domains, and between disability status and readiness in each of the domains. In addition, there were significant negative correlations between community-level poverty and community-level readiness in three of the domains. Results are discussed in terms of their value in establishing credibility for a school readiness measure that can serve to inform a community's efforts to address improvements in the early care and education of children.

Introduction

Assessing young children's readiness to enter school "ready to learn" has become a priority for nearly every state and for many local education jurisdictions. However, the specific forms these assessments take vary widely, from brief "screening" tests to comprehensive, in-depth child studies (Mehaffie & McCall, 2002; Meisels & Atkins-Burnett, 2000). Likewise, the results of assessments may be used to identify individual children as "ready" or "not ready" and thus eligible for particular supports or services; or they may serve as indicators, at an aggregate level, of the success of collaborative community efforts to ensure that all children receive high-

quality early care and education ([Murphey & Burns, 2002](#)).

In any case, a challenge for those developing and using "readiness" assessments is to demonstrate that such measures are in fact valid indices—that they measure what they purport to measure. Content validity is perhaps of prime importance here, and any "readiness" measure should pass the critical review of early childhood professionals, kindergarten teachers, and parents. In addition, the measure should address the five readiness domains around which there is now broad consensus (National Education Goals Panel, 1992). Establishing other forms of validity can be more problematic. In particular, predictive validity is inappropriate in this context because of the rapid and uneven development typical of young children.

Discriminant validity, however, is a reasonable aim for school readiness instruments. Discriminant validity refers to a measure's ability to distinguish among groups that theory claims ought to be so distinguished. Thus, discriminant validity of a readiness-for-school measure would be supported if the measure distinguished between groups hypothesized to be more or less "ready" than others.

Although the construct of "school readiness" is still fairly new in the literature, there is considerable empirical research to suggest the individual characteristics and the family and community resources and experiences for young children with which it should be associated. All other things being equal:

- Children living in poor families are likely to be less "ready" than children living in non-poor families (Resnick et al., 1999; West, Denton, & Germino-Hausken, 2000).
- Children who have had experience prior to kindergarten in formal, group care (child care center, family day care home, Head Start, etc.), assuming it was of good quality, are likely to be more "ready" than those who had not had such experience (Barnett, 1995; Xiang & Schweinhart, 2002).
- Children who have significant learning-related disabilities are likely to be less "ready" than those who do not.

The validity of school readiness measures that fail to make such distinctions could be considered suspect.

The present study used data from Vermont's "School Readiness Initiative"—specifically, data from its "Ready Kindergartners" component—to examine these relationships. In doing so, its aim was also to provide further validation for this brief, teacher-reported assessment of children's readiness.

Method

Ready Kindergartners Instrument

The "Ready Kindergartners" instrument is a 24-item questionnaire completed by kindergarten teachers 4 to 6 weeks after the beginning of the school year, for each student. The items cover four readiness domains: (1) social and emotional development, (2) approaches to learning, (3) communication, and (4) cognitive development and general knowledge (the fifth domain, physical health and well-being, is only partly assessed by this instrument; school nurses provide additional information). On the basis of their interactions since the start of school, teachers are instructed to rate children on each item as "beginning," "practicing," "performing independently," or "not observed."

Items were selected based on extensive review of the kindergarten readiness literature, including examples of measures in use in other states. They were further refined by an expert group that included public health, education, mental health, and human services policy makers, in addition to providers of early childhood services and researchers from the University of Vermont's Department of Psychology.

Relying on kindergarten teachers as informants on children's school readiness of course has its limitations. Although teachers have a great deal of expert knowledge of, and experience with, young children, their ratings may be unreliable, particularly on a relatively unstructured assessment. To mitigate these concerns, the teacher rating instrument was the subject of extensive pilot testing with kindergarten teachers, along with focus group input from kindergarten teachers. However, the measure is not intended to have validity at an individual child level but to provide an indicator of kindergarten readiness at a community level. More detailed information on the instrument, including its basic psychometric properties and internal reliability, has been previously published ([Murphey & Burns, 2002](#)).

For purposes of the present study, children were considered "ready" on a domain if teachers rated their performance on each item within that domain as "practicing" or "performing independently."

Children's experience in child care prior to kindergarten was assessed by asking kindergarten teachers to indicate for each child whether prior to kindergarten this student was in a regulated early childhood program. (Regulated was defined as licensed centers, registered family day care homes, Head Start, or other preschool). Teachers could respond with "yes," "no," or "don't know." Teachers were not asked to report on the source of this information.

Children's disability status was assessed by asking teachers to indicate for each

child whether he or she qualified for special education or Section 504 services.

No family income information was available. However, community poverty-level was estimated as the percentage of enrolled public elementary school students receiving free or reduced-price school meals, by school supervisory union, as reported by the state department of education.

Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of all valid records on children ($N = 3,730$) submitted by kindergarten teachers in the fall of 2001. Two hundred fifty teachers (63% of those contacted) responded, representing each of Vermont's 60 supervisory unions. [Table 1](#) shows detailed characteristics of the responding teachers and of the children on whom they reported.

Table 1
Sample Characteristics

Respondents	Characteristics
Kindergarten teachers*	
Mean length of experience with kindergarten teaching	10.4 years, $sd = 7.3$
Mean length experience with teaching (total)	17 years, $sd = 8.8$
Have elementary education license	1.6%
Have early childhood endorsement	34.4%
Teach half-day program	46.4%
Teach full-day, 5 days/week program	37.1%
Teach full-day, partial-week program	12.9%
Kindergarten children (kindergarten teacher report)**	
Qualifies for special education services	11.1%
Qualifies for ESL/bilingual services	1.8%

Qualifies for Sec. 504 services	1.5%
Teacher reports on child's experience prior to kindergarten	
Was in regulated early childhood program	69.2%
Was not in regulated early childhood program	16.6%
"Don't know"	11.8%
Missing response	2.3%
*250 Responding out of 396 estimated possible respondents; 63.1%.	
**3,730 Responding out of 6,289 estimated possible respondents; 59.3%.	

A follow-up study of a random sample of non-respondents ($N = 40$) showed minor differences between teachers who returned child assessments and those who did not. The two groups of teachers were alike on years of experience in the teaching profession, on years as kindergarten teachers specifically, and on the proportion of their students who had attended pre-kindergarten programs. Non-responders had slightly larger classes (median = 16, vs. 15, $p < .05$) and a greater proportion of classes where one or more children qualified for special services other than special education (Section 504 services: 47% vs. 15%, $p < .05$; ESL/bilingual services: 34% vs. 16%, $p < .05$). Non-responders were less likely to hold an early childhood endorsement (8% vs. 34%, $p < .05$) and were more likely to teach a class that was something other than a 5-day-per-week half-day or full-day program (37% vs. 13%, $p < .05$).

Results

Relationship of Kindergarten Readiness to Prior Experience in an Early Childhood Program

Chi-square tests were used to examine, for each of the four readiness domains, any differences between children who were or were not in an early childhood program (records for children where teachers did not know their child care history were excluded from the analysis). As shown in [Table 2](#), there were significant differences in favor of children with child care experience in each domain. The largest difference was in *cognitive development and general knowledge*, where 70% of children with child care experience were performing at criterion on all items, compared with 56% of children without child care experience. In an

additional test (ANOVA), where the number of domains (0-4) in which a child failed to meet criterion was the dependent measure, and child care experience the independent measure, there was also a significant difference: the mean number of domains in which children did not meet criterion was 1.22 for those with child care experience and 1.63 for those without ($F = 37.47, p < .01$).

Table 2
School Readiness (Four Domains) by Children's Prior Early Education Experience

	Percent "Practicing" or "Performing Independently" on All Items		
Readiness Domain	No Early Education Experience Indicated	Early Education Experience Indicated	Chi-Square
Social and emotional development	54.4	63.5	17.18*
Approaches to learning	51.1	60.5	18.15*
Communication	74.6	83.1	23.95*
Cognitive development and general knowledge	56.4	70.4	44.71*
* $p < .01$.			

Relationship of Kindergarten Readiness to Receipt of Special Education or Section 504 Services

Chi-square tests were used to examine, for each of the four readiness domains, any differences between children who were or were not receiving special education or Section 504 services. As shown in [Table 3](#), there were significant differences in favor of children not receiving services in each domain. The magnitude of differences (all greater than 30 percentage points) was fairly consistent across the four domains. In an additional test (ANOVA), where the number of domains (0-4) in which a child failed to meet criterion was the dependent measure, and service receipt status was the independent measure, there was also a significant difference: the mean number of domains in which children did not meet criterion was 2.54 for those receiving services, and 1.16 for those without such designation ($F = 370.20, p < .01$).

Table 3
School Readiness (Four Domains) by Children's Receipt of Special Education or
Section 504 Services

	Percent "Practicing" or "Performing Independently" on All Items		
Readiness Domain	Does Not Qualify for Special Education or Section 504	Qualifies for Special Education or Section 504	Chi- Square
Social and emotional development	64.8	31.9	184.11*
Approaches to learning	62.3	26.9	208.27*
Communication	85.3	49.8	331.03*
Cognitive development and general knowledge	71.2	37.1	213.84*
* $p < .01$.			

Relationship of Community-Level Kindergarten Readiness to Community-Level Poverty Status

By supervisory union, the percentage of kindergartners reaching criterion on each of the four readiness domains was calculated. Pearson correlations (one-tailed) were computed between these community-level scores and the percentage of elementary school children qualifying for free or reduced-price school meals. As shown in [Table 4](#), correlations were significant in two domains (*communication* and *cognitive development and general knowledge*), approached significance in another (*approaches to learning*), and were nonsignificant for *social and emotional development*. In all cases of significance or near significance, higher poverty was associated with lower readiness scores.

Table 4
Correlations (One-Tailed) between Community Poverty* and Community-Level
School Readiness (Four Domains)

Readiness Domain	
Social and emotional	-.121

development	(ns)
Approaches to learning	-.215**
Communication	-.223***
Cognitive development and general knowledge	-.330****
* Measured by percent of enrolled public elementary school students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. ** $p < .06$. *** $p < .05$. **** $p < .01$.	

Discussion

Assessment of school readiness (like any assessment) carries potential for misuse (Shepard, Kagan, & Wurtz, 1998). Perhaps the most fundamental such threat is failing to demonstrate plausible relationships to other recognized measures of children's experiences. Establishing the credibility of school readiness measures is essential to gaining the engagement of the stakeholders—early child care providers, school personnel, parents, and other community members—recognized as critical to improving the well-being of children in this arena.

The present study shows that a carefully constructed, brief measure of readiness for kindergarten can be related meaningfully (and plausibly) to what we know about some of the individual-level and community-level correlates of early success in school; however, some limitations of the study should be noted.

Although the sampling frame included all Vermont public school kindergarten teachers, there was a degree of self-selection bias in the sample of teachers who responded. In particular, the sample under-represented classrooms with children receiving Section 504 and some other special services. In addition, the sample over-represented teachers with an early childhood endorsement; Chi-square analyses (not shown here) showed that teachers with that credential are more likely than those without to rate children as "ready." However, it is not clear how including the non-responders would have altered these findings.

For information on children's participation in early child care, we relied upon teachers' reports. It is possible that teachers are not reliable providers of this information, and for 12% of students, teachers acknowledged that they did not know the children's child care history. Moreover, no information was available on the timing, duration, frequency, stability, or (perhaps most important) quality of the

child care experience. Teachers' knowledge of children's child care experience and of their status with respect to special services introduces the possibility of halo effects; however, it is difficult to imagine an assessment relying on teachers who have no such knowledge of their students.

In the community-level analysis, the relationship between poverty and school readiness is probably attenuated, because individual differences on both constructs are not reflected. However, the social-ecological perspective argues that community-level effects can make important contributions to individual well-being.

The predictive validity of the readiness assessment remains to be established, although as argued previously, there are good reasons to believe such relationships may be weak. Although ruled out in the present study by concerns about privacy, in the future, including student identifiers on the readiness assessment will allow direct tests of association between these scores and later student academic assessments.

Despite certain limitations, however, this study's results provide an important degree of external validity for a brief, teacher-reported measure of children's readiness for kindergarten. In a time when schools are under pressure to administer numerous student-based assessments, use of a brief readiness measure has some advantages, particularly if it can be shown to relate meaningfully to known predictors of early school success and to concurrent and subsequent measures of school achievement. In addition, the assessment strategy described here can function as a "ready for school" accountability measure at a community/systems level, while avoiding the potentially negative implications that may attend "high stakes" child-based measures.

Acknowledgments

The author is grateful to the Vermont Research Partnership (including the State of Vermont Agency of Human Services and Department of Education and the University of Vermont) for supporting this work.

References

- Barnett, W. Steven. (1995). Long-term effects of early childhood programs on cognitive and school outcomes. *Future of Children*, 5(3), 25-50. [EJ 523 962](#).
- Mehaffie, Kelly E., & McCall, Robert B. (2002, June). *Kindergarten readiness: An overview of issues and assessment* (Special Report). Pittsburgh, PA: University of

Pittsburgh Office of Child Development.

Meisels, Samuel J., & Atkins-Burnett, Sally. (2000). The elements of early childhood assessment. In Jack P. Shonkoff & Samuel J. Meisels (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood intervention* (2nd ed., pp. 231-257). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Murphey, David A., & Burns, Catherine E. (2002). Development of a comprehensive community assessment of school readiness. *Early Childhood Research & Practice* [Online], 4(2). Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v4n2/murphey.html> [2003, July 1].

National Education Goals Panel. (1992). *Resolutions of the National Education Goals Panel: Assessing progress: Goal 1*. Washington, DC: Author.

Resnick, Michael B.; Gueorguieva, Ralitz V.; Carter, Randy L.; Ariet, Mario; Sun, Yuanshan; Roth, Jeffrey; Bucciarelli, Richard L.; Curran, John S.; & Mahan, Charles S. (1999). The impact of low birth weight, perinatal conditions, and sociodemographic factors on educational outcome in kindergarten. *Pediatrics*, 104(6), e74-e84.

Shepard, Lorrie; Kagan, Sharon Lynn; & Wurtz, Emily (Eds.). (1998). *Principles and recommendations for early childhood assessments*. Washington, DC: National Education Goals Panel. [ED 416 033](#).

West, Jerry; Denton, Kristin; & Germino-Hausken, Elvie. (2000). *America's kindergartners: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, kindergarten class of 1998-99, fall 1998*. (Report No. NCES 2000-070). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. [ED 438 089](#).

Xiang, Zongping, & Schweinhart, Lawrence J. (2002). *Effects five years later: The Michigan School Readiness Program evaluation through age 10*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

Author Information

David Murphey is senior policy analyst in the Planning Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services. He holds a Ph.D. in developmental psychology and a master's degree in education, both from the University of Michigan. His professional interests led to work in early childhood education, child development and social policy, and lifespan development. Moving to Vermont in 1992, Dr. Murphey worked for the Department of Health before coming to his present position with the Agency. At the Agency, Dr. Murphey is responsible for managing the collection and reporting on social indicators statewide, and for preparing Vermont's *Community Profiles*—local reports on social indicators for the state's 60 school districts. He has also coordinated production of the

Agency's *What Works* publications, summaries of effective prevention practices. In addition, Dr. Murphey provides data support, analysis, and technical assistance to the Office of the Secretary of the Agency, and to a variety of community partners.

David Murphey, Ph.D.
Senior Policy Analyst
State of Vermont, Agency of Human Services
Planning Division
103 S. Main St.
Waterbury, VT 05671
Telephone: 802-241-2238
Fax: 802-241-4461
Email: davidm@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us



VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

[insert picture of baby, toddler, preschooler, K-3 child]

**Guiding the Development and Learning of Children
from Infancy Through Grade 3**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	
– Need to revise 2003 VELs	
– Rationale underlining the new VELs	
– Process for revising the VELs	
Guiding Principles.....	
How Children Develop and Learn.....	
– Overview of development	
– Meeting the unique needs of underrepresented children	
○ Culturally responsive	
○ Children who are dual language learners	
○ Children with special needs	
Uses of the Vermont Early Learning Standards.....	
Overview of the Vermont Early Learning Standards.....	
VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS BY DOMAIN	
I. Belonging, Social and Emotional Development and Learning.....	
II. Communication.....	
Language.....	
Literacy.....	
Creative Expression.....	

III. Learning About the World.....

Mathematics.....

Science.....

Social Studies.....

IV. Growing, Moving and Being Healthy.....

Alignment of VELs.....

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.....

Common Core State Standards.....

New Generation Science Standards.....

Glossary.....

References.....

Resources.....

Acknowledgements.....

Guiding Principles

We believe that

- Every child has promise.
- Every child develops through loving and nurturing relationships with adults and other children.
- Every child learns trust and respect through responsive and predictable relationships.
- Every child forms ideas of how the world works and her place in the world through active interactions with the world and through positive relationships with others.
- Every child has a unique life-story written by the family, community, and culture of which she is a member. These unique differences enhance us all.
- Every child learns and develops best when her physical and emotional needs are met, and when she feels safe and valued.

We believe that

- Families are a child's first, consistent, and most important teachers.
- Families are to be respected and supported as partners and decision makers in the education of their child.
- Families' home language and culture are part of the entire families' identity; they are to be valued and maintained.

We further believe that

- Children from infancy through third grade learn through play, exploration, inquiry, engagement, asking questions, and communicating with adults and other children.
- Children's learning opportunities are best when they are relevant, integrated across content areas, based on children's interests, and built on children's current knowledge and abilities.
- All early childhood educators - those caring for infants, teaching in a Head Start program, or teaching third grade – need to have and use a deep understanding of child development in their practices.
- Curricula and educator practices in children's first eight years need to be aligned, accumulative, and appropriate to the child's developmental level.
- Education viewed and implemented as a continuous, seamless process across the Birth through Grade 3 continuum diminishes the challenges of transitions and the "Fade Out" effect seen in K-3, especially among the most at-risk groups of children.

[LEAVE BLANK PAGE]

Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning and Development

“The foundations of social competence that are developed in the first five years are linked to emotional well-being and affect a child’s later ability to functionally adapt in school and to form successful relationships throughout life.” -National Scientific Council on the Developing Child

From the time infants first respond to our smiles, to when they are negotiating with us for just five more minutes of play, to when they begin to understand how to work on a team, our children are navigating the construct of our social world. Social and emotional skills are the “bricks and mortar” of all areas of development, according to Jack Shonkoff, Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (Epstein, 2009). The Head Start Outcomes synthesize the importance of this area by noting that positive social emotional development in the early years provides the basis for life-long learning, relates to later academic success, and prevents future behavior difficulties and is more effective than remedial practices in later school years (Head Start Bureau, 2007).

This learning area includes how children interact with adults, children, familiar people, strangers, and at home, in school, church, or other community settings. They learn about the groups to which they belong (family, classroom, religion, clubs, sports) and about those in which they may not be a participant. They display a wide range of emotions that they can identify, talk about, recognize in others, and learn to manage them appropriately. Social-Emotional skills eventually lead to children being able to work cooperatively with others, recognize and respect individuals similarities and differences, and generally get along with others in their world. When they are infants, they are looking to trust adults to listen to their cries and meet their needs. As they mature and their capacity for communication grows, they make demands, learn new expectations of behavior, ask why things are, and begin to try things on their own. Later, they work with friends to solve problems and become more skilled in leading, following and working out differences with others. As they grow and develop more competence in the social domain, they will have periods of challenging and testing in order to understand where the limits are. By the time our children are leaving the third grade, they will likely have had best friends, as well as some enemies, successfully play complex games with rules, be able to delay gratification for longer term goals and begin to show empathy for others from their experiences with managing and understanding their own feelings and impulses.

There are a myriad of influences on a child’s social development including family culture, individual temperament, opportunities for practicing their growing social skills with a variety of children and adults, access to different community activities, and the quality of their early care and education. Recent research from the Center for the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) stresses that adults can shape and teach social emotional skills by using positive behavior supports and that children learn these skills more effectively when they have consistent expectations and opportunities to practice their newly found skills in a supportive, trusting environment.

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Relationships

Goal: Children develop healthy positive relationships with adults, peers and within a group.

Some of the indicators of young children learning to develop positive relationships are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Form a sense of trust and attachment with adult</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate interactions with adults by smiling, gesturing or vocalizing 2. Look toward familiar adults and seek comfort when feeling uncertain 3. Form bond with primary caregiver 4. Enjoy playing with and helping an adult 5. Imitate adult behavior 6. Follow adult pointing or gaze <p>Begin to develop a positive relationship with peers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate interactions with children by smiling, gesturing or vocalizing 2. Smile and show they like being close to familiar children 3. Demonstrate concern or interest when others are distressed 4. Watch and listen to other children 5. Copy other toddlers; laughs when others laugh. 	<p>Maintain a positive relationship with adults</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spontaneously show their work to others 2. Tell others about family members and events 3. Enjoy simple turn taking games with adults and may direct adults in their role <p>Begin to develop play relationships</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play side by side with another child 2. Remember and use the names of familiar peers 3. Need adult coaching to get along well with others 4. Join in simple group games, but may not follow rules 5. Notice similarities and differences in others 6. Notice or comments when another is hurt or distressed 	<p>Refine play relationships with peers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in a variety of individual and group play experiences 2. Explore and understand new experiences and differences among people 3. Enter into play situations and play cooperatively with one or more children 4. Develop friendships with peers 5. Demonstrate sympathy and caring for others 6. Develop the ability to take turns in activities 7. Begin to participate in resolving conflicts and disagreements with others 8. Play a simple game with another child 9. Re-establish a relationship with others after a conflict 10. Cooperate in both large group and small group activities facilitated by adults <p>Maintain attachments with adults</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate affection for familiar adults through hugs, kisses, making gifts 2. Separate from important adults in a familiar setting with minimal distress 3. Show preference for one adult over another when more than one is present

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Relationships

Some of the indicators of young children learning to develop positive relationships are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Build trust with adult</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solicit help from adults to accomplish challenging tasks 2. Respond to and question adult directives for greater understanding 3. Engage in reciprocal conversation with familiar adults 4. Trust familiar adults and close peers 5. Seek adults' acceptance and friendship 6. Seek help, clarification, and permission from familiar adults <p>Develop a social identity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in cooperative learning activities to complete a task 2. Play cooperatively with 3 or 4 others for sustained periods of time 3. Express themselves in new settings 4. Engage in games and activities that require adherence to rules 5. Initiate sharing and turn taking when appropriate 6. Respect and others' differences in comparison to self 7. Recognize positive qualities in others 8. Invite others to join a group 9. Identify close friends on the basis of proximity and frequency of interaction 	<p>Interactions with peers and others</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflect upon how their behavior affects others 2. Seek help from peers and adults when needed 3. Identify ways to work and play well with peers 4. Demonstrate positive social entry skills 5. Respect the feelings, rights and belongings of others 6. Show increasing ability to constructively resolve conflicts with peers 7. Cooperate in small and large group activities 8. Recognize positive qualities in themselves and others 9. Show consideration, respect and compassion for others 	<p>Interactions with peers and social behavior</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish and maintain positive relationships with peers 2. Identify the positive characteristics of friendship 3. Apply social norms to connect and interact with others 4. Recognize a connection between personal behavior and social communication 5. Paraphrase ways to stay safe from strangers 6. Listen to others and begins to understand their perspective 7. Begin to advocate for self and others 8. Speak up about an injustice they see and take action with peers 9. Consider the best approach to a problem before reacting 10. Develop a conscience and moral standards 	<p>Refining social behaviors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize that social norms and safety considerations guide behavior 2. Recognize there are differences in skill and ability among peers 3. Discriminate different points of view among peers and others 4. Demonstrate respect for personal space and belongings 5. Help themselves and others make socially acceptable choices and responsible decisions 6. Dramatize ways to stay safe from strangers 7. Describe appropriate responses to harassment, bullying intimidations and abuse 8. Analyze more complex problems to help identify the type of solution needed 9. Choose friends based on personalities rather than liking the same toys/activities

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Emotions

Goal: Children develop the ability to identify, understand, and express emotions in a healthy way.

Some of the indicators of young children learning to identify, understand, and express emotions are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Smile at interesting sensory stimulation or familiar faces 2. Cry when in physical or emotional distress 3. Express fear 4. Resist engagement with unfamiliar others; may cry or demonstrate fear 5. Express pleasure with smiles, coos, belly laughs; is predominantly happy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Express a range of emotions 2. Begin to show remorse 3. Show affection 4. Demonstrate concern when caregiver is distressed 5. Demonstrate a growing sense of humor 6. Express anger and sometimes tantrums 7. Show frustration when unable to express self 8. Demonstrate understanding of another's distress and attempt to comfort the other 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Express a range of emotions appropriately, including excitement, happiness, sadness, and fear 2. Use and understand a variety of words to describe feelings 3. Begin to demonstrate empathy 4. Recognize and label different emotional expressions 5. Recognize feelings in themselves and others 6. Learn to calm themselves after brief periods of distress or excitement 7. Begin to learn to control anger 8. Use pretend play to practice a variety of emotional situations (e.g., scary monsters, superheroes)

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Emotions

Some of the indicators of young children learning to identify, understand, and express emotions are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Label various feelings and emotions 2. Recognize how emotions are linked to behavior 3. Display emotions appropriately and according to the situation 4. Respond with sensitivity and sympathy when social partners express feelings 5. Demonstrate empathy by using words or actions when concerned about what others are feeling 6. Continues to require adult assistance to control emotional distress 7. Employ some problem-solving skills to manage strong feelings in themselves and with others 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize how the body and face show different emotions 2. Identify more complex feelings and emotions 3. Modify intensity of emotional reaction to the situation 4. Acknowledge when their feelings are hurt 5. Express emotional distress when their feelings are hurt 6. Use pretend play to practice a variety of emotional situations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe various emotions and the circumstances that cause them. 2. Discriminate between more complex feelings and emotions 3. Provide physical and emotional comfort as an expression of empathy 4. Recognize that emotional variations may occur in relative increments, not in an all or nothing manner. 5. Examine why their feelings are hurt 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate the ability to identify the causes and consequences of various emotions 2. Interpret instances of empathy 3. Interpret to others why feelings are hurt 4. Recognize that a specific feeling does not always correlate with taking a specific action 5. Describe thoughts, feelings and emotions based on prior experiences or recent situations

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Self-Regulation

Goal: Children learn to manage their strong feelings, behaviors, states of arousal, and focused attention. They use their growing abilities of self-regulation to sustain or return to a frame of mind that fosters learning, engagement, and positive relationships.

Some of the indicators of young children learning self-regulation are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cry or vocalize for assistance 2. Reference caregivers for reassurance 3. Respond positively to adult's attempts at soothing 4. Apply calming and self-soothing methods for brief periods 5. Manipulate objects to calm self 6. Seek attention 7. Distinguish change in the tone of voice of others 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display distress when routine is changed 2. Seek out adults for comfort 3. Attempt to cope with feelings through verbal, physical, or social means 4. Request help from others 5. Follow single-step directions 6. Display interest in play with others 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in pretend play 2. Abide by another person's ideas or wishes 3. Wait for short periods of time to satisfy a desire. 4. Follow simple rules, routines, and directions 5. Moderate actions and responses to others with minimal directions from adults 6. Start or stop activity based on external cues 7. Take turns during activities with others 8. Focus attention for brief periods during a self-selected activity 9. Shift attention and manage transitions with minimal direction from adults

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Self-Regulation

Goal: Children learn to manage their strong feelings, behaviors, states of arousal, and focused attention. They use their growing abilities of self-regulation to sustain or return to a frame of mind that fosters learning, engagement, and positive relationships.

Some of the indicators of young children learning self-regulation are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus attention and resist distractions 2. Focus on a self-selected activity or task to completion 3. Demonstrate control of impulsive behavior 4. Recognize how own actions affect others 5. Manage feelings and social situations with greater independence 6. Seek help, clarification, and permission from teachers or other adults 7. Resolve some simple conflict through negotiation and compromise before seeking adult help 8. Demonstrate self-regulation by engaging in prosocial classroom behavior 9. Understand and apply some basic steps for problem solving and relaxation techniques 10. Engage in more structured large and small group activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus attention for brief periods on tasks/topics assigned by others 2. Avoid acting on impulse by calming down strong emotions 3. Make decisions and solves simple problems with other children independently 4. Describe strategies to cope and manage stress 5. Demonstrate uneven ability to practice techniques for self-regulation 6. Demonstrate an ability to tolerate last minute changes and less detailed directions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate longer attention span while engaged in tasks assigned by others 2. Analyze more complex problems to help identify the type of solution needed 3. Employ some techniques for self-regulation when needed 4. Focus attention without interruption effectively on tasks/topics assigned by others for a duration of at least 20 minutes 5. Understand and independently apply steps for resolving more complex conflict and problem solving strategies 6. Recognize that self-instruction can be applied to review and modify actions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate the use of self-calming strategies to cope with uncomfortable emotions 2. Demonstrate the ability to solve problems and manage strong feelings using creative strategies 3. Engage in pro-active self-management strategies using indirect methods such as reading or by leaving potentially challenging situation before losing control 4. Demonstrate a higher ability to focus attention and sit calmly during non-preferred activities (e.g., all-school assemblies) 5. Concentrate on projects and complete tasks with few interruptions 6. Maintain attention for longer than 30 minutes. 7. Employ self-instruction for planning and regulating actions,

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Belonging

Goal Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to their family, community, and culture.

Some of the indicators of young children developing a sense of belonging are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to anticipate some routines 2. Show preference for primary caregivers 3. Smile, wave or laugh in response to friendly adults 4. Show fear of unknown people and places 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipate daily routines 2. Talk about family and familiar people and places 3. Feel comfortable in a variety of places with familiar adults 4. Begin to help with chores, household tasks 5. Enjoy stories, songs and/or poems about a variety of people and cultures 6. Show preferences for most familiar places and things (e.g., only likes potty at home) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to understand the rights of others 2. Show or talk about objects from family or culture. 3. Use family and community scenarios in pretend play 4. Recognize the significance of celebrations and traditions 5. Recognize similarities and differences between self and other people, such as gender, race, special needs, cultures, languages, communities and family structures 6. Take pride in own family composition and demonstrate an interest in others' families

Domain: Belonging, Social and Emotional Learning & Development

Sub-domain: Belonging

Goal Children increasingly demonstrate a sense of belonging to their family, community, and culture.

Some of the indicators of young children developing a sense of belonging are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adapt to larger groups, but still need solitary play time 2. Cooperate in groups by helping, sharing and turn taking 3. Help younger children do things they can't yet do by themselves 4. Report to friends or adults about a family or cultural tradition 5. Demonstrate the ability to allow for own personal space and respect others' space 6. Paraphrase the purpose of rules 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Join with friends in music and activities from their cultural traditions 2. Bond with family and friends who share their time and talents with them 3. Recognize different ethnic/cultural groups 4. Display knowledge and pride in personal ethnic/cultural heritage 5. Recognize that others may experience situations differently 6. Explain the purpose of rules. Show little flexibility; a rule is a rule 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relate a family or cultural tradition, dance, song or practice with classmates, friends and family. 2. Inquire about own family history and culture. 3. Connect with other children in different settings and cultures 4. Base friendship on mutual enjoyment and activities 5. Use listening skills to identify the feelings and perspectives of others 6. Develop relationships with other children and with trusted adults 7. Seek acceptance from peer group 8. Recognize that others may have conflicting perspectives based on differing personal experiences 9. Express feelings that things are unjust or unfair 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write about themselves in the context of their family, culture and environment 2. Imitate actions of friends in an effort to feel a sense of security and belonging 3. Engage in the sharing of others' viewpoints on a variety of topics 4. Demonstrate the ability to work as a partner with shifting roles of leader and follower 5. Gain acceptance of peers by checking to ensure that they are in agreement with actions and ideas before proceeding with shared activities 6. Shows flexibility in applying rules in games and play

Communication

Communication is a dynamic interactive process in which children engage in activities to exchange ideas, feelings, wants and needs. It is our way as humans, to interact and relate with each other.

Children learn language to get things done and to communicate. Learning the system of language is secondary to its social purpose. Exchanging information is less important than creating social connection. (Catherine Snow, 1997)

We cannot not communicate. It is part of our being human. We are social, relating with each other, creating common means of interacting through our communications and languages. Communication is a daily occurrence, encompassing all aspects of who we are. We communicate through our actions; through our gestures; through our words; through reading and writing; and through our creative expression. We communicate internally through our thoughts and externally through our interactions with others.

Communication begins with the very first exhalation of cries at the moment of birth and the vegetative sounds, such as sated burps and fussing whines (Oller, 2000; Stark, Bernstein, & Demosrest, 1983) (Hulit, Howard, Fahey: 2011 p. 314). These early reflexive sounds develop into purposeful speech consisting of vowel and consonant combinations eventually becoming functional words within language. For those who are deaf, communications occur through a gestural language with an established grammatical system, but there is typically no speech. Thus, communication can occur without speech.

From sounding similar during the first year of life, infants around the world begin to prune out neurons in their brains, deleting neurons they do not use and focusing on the speech sounds and language(s) of their home environment. (Hulit, Howard, Fahey: 2011; p. 315) It is in the home environment where first communications develop. Our babies need secure, loving relationships in order to feel comfortable expressing themselves; to take chances and risks to relate with others and ultimately to communicate. From first sounds, children develop words and grammar into language to become competent communicators. With common communication as a tool, children become successful members of their family, local community, and our global society.

Early development is interconnected between cognition, motor skills, communication, emotional growth, and socialization. As children discover the cognitive element of object permanence, understanding that an object out of sight still remains present, they express words to label the phenomenon: *Where go? There is!* As children begin to take the tremendous first steps walking independently, they concentrate so hard on this glorious moment that they may not be able to focus on talking for a bit of time. Talking is placed on the back burner until walking is stable. Infants need to experiment with different mouth postures in order to manipulate the tongue and mouth for later sound production – an intricate motor skill. Development is interwoven; all pieces fitting together, interconnecting to make a whole child; a remarkable human being.

Learning an additional language is a complicated yet prevalent endeavor globally. In our increasingly diverse communities throughout the world, our cultures are intermingling and our languages intertwine sometimes creating new words. We are co-existing. Our diversity, complicated and challenging, is a gift, empowering us to greater strengths as a species, interspersing our ideas, mores and reasons for being. Through common, meaningful, and positive communications, we can develop a successful global community to strengthen our earth.

Language

Children learn language to get things done and to communicate. Learning the system of language is secondary to its social purpose. Exchanging information is less important than creating social connection. (Snow, 1997, p#)

Language begins with the very first cries at the moment of birth and the vegetative sounds, such as sated burps and fussing whines (Oller, 2000; Stark, Bernstein, & Demosrest, 1983). These early reflexive sounds develop into purposeful speech consisting of vowel and consonant combinations and eventually become functional words. It is in the home environment where first communications develop. Babies need secure, loving relationships in order to feel comfortable expressing themselves; to take chances and risks to relate with others, and ultimately to communicate.

From first sounds, children develop words and grammar into language to become competent communicators. With common communication as a tool, children become successful members of their family, local community, and our global society. For children who are deaf, communication occurs through a gestural language with an established grammatical system, but there is typically no speech. Thus, communication can occur without speech.

Early language development is interconnected with cognitive development, increasing motor control, emotional growth, and socialization. For example, as children build the concept of “object permanence”, and understand that an object out of sight still exists, they express words to label the object and the phenomenon: *Where go? There is teddy!* As children begin to take their first steps walking independently, they concentrate so hard on this achievement, that they may not be able to focus on talking for some time. Talking is placed on the back burner until walking is stable. Additionally, infants need to experiment with different mouth postures in order to manipulate the tongue and mouth for later sound production – an intricate motor skill. These examples demonstrate that language development is interwoven: all pieces fitting together.

Learning to speak and understand more than one language is a complicated yet prevalent endeavor, globally. In our increasingly diverse communities throughout the world, our cultures are intermingling and our languages intertwine sometimes creating new words. We are co-existing. Our diversity, complicated and challenging, is a gift, empowering us to greater strengths as a species, interspersing our ideas, mores and reasons for being. Through common, meaningful, and positive communications, we can develop a successful global community to strengthen our earth.

Domain: Speech & Language Development

Sub-domain: Listening and Interacting

Goal: Children demonstrate curiosity about and awareness of their surroundings.

Some of the indicators of young children developing an awareness of their surroundings are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate curiosity with environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turn head to sound source 2. Orally explore toys and objects 3. Reach for objects in proximity <p>Demonstrate desire to be with others</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at face of primary caregiver 2. Prefer mother's voice 3. Exchange facial expressions, ex. smile 4. Hold arms out to desired adult or other person 5. Play participatory games, such as peekaboo and pat-a-cake, etc. 6. Take turns vocalizing 7. Initiate vocal turn-taking <p>Demonstrate trust and regulation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cry and pause for result 2. Stop crying when spoken to 3. Anticipate activities (ex. meals, play) 4. Soothe to music and song 5. Stop action when name is called 6. Respond to <i>come here</i> 7. Follow simple commands (ex. <i>Please sit down. Drink your juice.</i>) 	<p>Demonstrate purposeful listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow 2-step directions (ex. <i>Please take your dish to the sink and wash it.</i>) 2. Maintain attention while sharing books 3. Point to body parts, objects and pictures, upon request 4. Listen to short stories, board books, songs, nursery rhymes <p>Demonstrate interest in peers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use language to gain attention, request information, comment and describe 2. Participate in short peer gatherings such as at playgroups, story hours, or childcare centers 3. Play alongside peers in groups 4. Take turns talking with peers and adults 5. Relate personal experiences (ex. <i>Go to Daddy's today.</i>) 	<p>Demonstrate purposeful listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow simple 3-step directions 2. Answer simple <i>how much, how long, what if . . .</i> and <i>how</i> questions 3. Respond to simple analogies, such as "An elephant is big, and a mouse is . . ." 4. Identify missing parts in pictures or on objects <p>Engage in cooperative play with peers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform related activities in play – logically sequencing tasks 2. Show functional use of toys (ex. spray water from fire hose) 3. Imitate symbolic use of toys, such as using a block as a pretend phone 4. Assign roles and routines with peers in play scenarios 5. Practice daily life experiences in play, such as going to the store 6. Beginning to share <p>Engage in conversations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain topic of conversation 2 – 4 turns & follow detailed explanation 2. May interrupt conversation to interject comment 3. Say <i>please</i> and <i>thank you</i> without reminders 4. Change topics of conversation abruptly 5. Use simple language when talking with younger children 6. Tell long run-on stories

Domain: Speech & Language Development

Sub-domain: Listening and Interacting

Goal: Children demonstrate curiosity about and awareness of their surroundings.

Some of the indicators of young children developing an awareness of their surroundings are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate purposeful listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow 3+ step directions 2. Follow classroom routines 3. Ask for clarity <p>Engage in conversations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain topic of conversation for 3-5 turns 2. Present chronological narratives about past experiences 3. Develop elaborate storylines in play scenarios 4. Sharing toys, objects 5. Adjust message to listener's perspective 	<p>Demonstrate purposeful listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow 3+ step directions 2. Follow classroom routines 3. Asking for clarity 4. Play games with rules (ex. tag) 5. Can indicate errors in others' speech <p>Engage in conversations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain topic of conversation for about five turns 2. Present chronological narratives about past experiences 3. Adjust message to listener's perspective 	<p>Demonstrate purposeful listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow 3+ step directions 2. Follow classroom routines 3. Asking for clarity 4. Play games with rules (ex. tag) 5. Can indicate errors in others' speech <p>Engage in conversations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain topic of conversation for more than five turns 2. Express own thoughts and feelings 3. Present chronological narratives about past experiences with detailed descriptions 4. Adjust message to listener's perspective 	<p>Demonstrate purposeful listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow 3+ step directions 2. Follow classroom routines 3. Asking for clarity 4. Play games with rules (ex. tag) 5. Can indicate errors in others' speech <p>Engage in conversations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain the topic of conversation for nearly ten turns. 2. Initiate a change in conversational topic gradually 3. Seek clarification of confusing message 4. Present chronological narratives about past experiences with detailed descriptions 5. Adjust message to listener's perspective 6. Acquire meaning of unfamiliar words from context 7. Able to take the perspective of listener in conversation 8. Can link own words to what's been said already in a conversation 9. Can wait patiently for turn to speak

Domain: Speech & Language Development

Sub-domain: Sounds and Combinations

Goal: Children demonstrate recognition of and express sounds.

Some of the indicators of young children learning to recognize and combine sounds are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate early vocalizations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May produce differential cries (hunger, pain, discomfort) to gain attention 2. Coo (ooo), squeal (eee) and laugh during games and frolic play 3. Produce early sounds (h, w, b, p, m, t, d, n, k, g, y) 4. Babble (ex. bah bah bah) and jabber (ex. bada godoo) 5. Vary pitch 6. Mimic intonation of adults <p>Express First Words</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First words utilize early sounds 2. Say <i>mama</i> and <i>dada</i> meaningfully 3. First words are one-syllable, consonant-vowel, (ex. <i>bye</i>), vowel-consonant (ex. <i>up</i>), consonant-vowel-consonant (ex. <i>cup</i>) productions 4. First words are heard within jabber 5. Experiment pronouncing words – sometimes correct, sometimes not 6. Produce animal sounds (ex. <i>moo</i>, <i>baa</i>) or motor (<i>brroom</i>) 	<p>Demonstrate wider range of sounds and sound combinations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce most sounds of home language 2. Produce speech sound errors as learning, but understood about 80% of the time <p>Express Longer Words & Word Combinations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce 20 – 300 words 2. As word combinations increase in length, intelligibility may decrease 3. Multi-syllabic words challenging (ex. <i>ba-sketti</i> is <i>spaghetti</i>) 	<p>Increase sound production to near adult-level</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nearly 100% understood, though may still make certain speech errors, such as substituting 't' for 'k' sound, or 'f' for 'th' sound. 2. May make cluster reduction errors, reducing consonant clusters to one of the two sounds (ex. <i>top</i> for <i>stop</i>) 3. May clarify message by shouting <p>Demonstrate early sound awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May recognize sounds at the beginning or ending of words 2. Show interest in rhyming – making up words to create a rhyme (ex. <i>dime rhymes with bime</i>) 3. Show interest in singing songs, creating rhythms, and dancing

Domain: Speech & Language Development

Sub-domain: Sounds and Combinations

Goal: Children demonstrate recognition of and express sounds.

Some of the indicators of young children learning to recognize and combine sounds are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate adult-like speech</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May only err on one or two sounds now, such as substituting 'f' for 'th' or perhaps 'y' for 'l'. 2. May clarify message by shouting <p>Demonstrate phonemic awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can detect rhyming words, create a rhyme, and label the initial and final sounds in one-syllable words 2. Can distinguish syllables in a word 3. Can determine the individual words in a sentence 	<p>Demonstrate adult-like speech</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May still err on 'l' and 'r' productions, but 100% understood 2. Can indicate errors in others' speech <p>Demonstrate phonemic awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can label the vowel sound within one-syllable words 2. Can manipulate the sounds in words to make new words 	<p>Demonstrate adult-like speech</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May still err on 'l' and 'r' productions, but 100% understood 2. Can indicate errors in others' speech <p>Demonstrate phonemic awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can label the vowel sound within one-syllable words 2. Can manipulate the sounds in words to make new words 3. Sound out words in books 4. Experimenting with spelling unfamiliar words 	<p>Demonstrate adult-like speech</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May still err on 'l' and 'r' productions, but 100% understood 2. Can indicate errors in others' speech 3. Can reword a sentence to clarify

Domain: Speech & Language Development

Sub-domain: Vocabulary and Grammar

Goal: Children demonstrate increased vocabularies, grammar, and sentences through understanding and use.

Some of the indicators of young children increasing their vocabularies, grammar and sentences are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Use early gestures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put arms up to be picked up 2. Wave hi and/or bye 3. Point to some body parts (ex. nose, toes) and objects to gain attention 4. Resist removal of a toy 5. Imitate other children 6. Shake head 'no' <p>Combine gestures and words</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Say <i>up, hi, bye, this, that, there, mine, no, yes, uh oh, more</i>, etc. to accompany gestures used (ex. Says <i>mine</i> as tugging on toy) 2. Express 25 - 50 words 3. Ask <i>what's that?</i> and <i>where?</i> 4. Imitate words of others 5. May combine two words into a meaningful utterance (ex. <i>no juice</i>) 	<p>Demonstrate knowledge through vocabulary understanding and use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead caregivers to desired objects 2. May rely on physical means (ex. hitting) to get needs met during stressful times 3. Identify pictures when named 4. Point to actions in pictures 5. Express 200 – 800 words 6. Respond to simple yes/no and <i>who, what, where</i> questions 7. Ask <i>who, when</i> and <i>how</i> questions 8. May relentlessly ask <i>why?</i> 9. Can identify functions of some objects (ex. scissors are for cutting) 10. State first name and gender <p>Create word combinations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Combine 3 – 4 words into sentences 2. Use early location words (ex. <i>here, there, in, on, up, down</i>) 3. Use modifiers (ex. <i>big, little, more</i>) 4. State actions in different tenses (ex. regular past tense – <i>stopped</i>, irregular past tense - <i>ran</i> and present progressive tense - <i>jumping</i>) 5. May delete words like <i>the, is</i>, and <i>to</i> 6. Increase use of negation, including <i>not, don't, isn't</i> 	<p>Demonstrate knowledge through vocabulary understanding and use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show understanding of simple concepts (ex. big, little, cold, hot, wet, dry) 2. Name members of a category (ex. food, animals) 3. Name colors and numbers, but not always correct 4. Express 800 – 2000 words 5. Use negative past tense forms (ex. <i>wasn't, couldn't</i>) 6. Begin to use irregular plurals (<i>children</i>), and plural pronouns (<i>our, they, their</i>) 7. Use possessive pronouns (<i>his, her</i>) 8. Adjust perspectives for <i>this, that, here, there</i> 9. Repeat days of the week 10. State first & last names, and age <p>Create informative sentences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Combine 5-8 words into sentences 2. Combine two clauses with <i>and, if, so</i> (ex. <i>Mommy went to the store and she bought some carrots.</i>) 3. Ask <i>how much</i>, and <i>how many</i> questions 4. Respond to <i>why, when</i> and <i>how</i> questions 5. Use <i>because, and, then</i> interchangeably 6. As for definitions of words 7. Telling simple jokes, puns, riddles 8. Define words by function (<i>a spoon is for eating</i>) 9. Self-talk to guide through difficult tasks

Domain: Speech & Language Development

Sub-domain: Vocabulary and Grammar

Goal: Children demonstrate increased vocabularies, grammar, and sentences through understanding and use.

Some of the indicators of young children increasing their vocabularies, grammar and sentences are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate knowledge through vocabulary understanding and use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define words by function & characteristics (ex. <i>You eat it, it's red.</i>) 2. Indicate opposites 3. Name days of the week 4. Name members of a sub-category (ex. animals that live in the desert). 5. Name parts of a whole 6. Describe location (ex. <i>through, over</i>) 7. Use positional terms (ex. <i>first, last</i>) 8. Indicate knowledge of concepts (<i>half/whole, before/after, etc.</i>) 9. Describe similarities and differences between objects and people <p>Create informative sentences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grammar is near adult-like 2. Use complex sentences to explain (ex. <i>My new school has an elevator because there are two floors.</i>) 3. May speak in run-on sentences 4. Answer <i>what happens if . . .</i> questions 5. Present narratives with characters & logical event sequencing, though end may be unclear 6. Internalize self-talk as work through difficult tasks 7. May give praise, threat, insult or promise 	<p>Demonstrate knowledge through vocabulary understanding and use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State address & recite alphabet 2. State preceding & following numbers, days of the week (ex. <i>what comes after Tuesday?</i>) 3. Show understanding of temporal terms, such as <i>morning, night</i> and seasons of the year 4. Use antonyms & synonyms (ex. <i>another word for nice is?</i>) 5. Indicate knowledge of concepts (<i>half/whole, before/after, etc.</i>) 6. Describe similarities & differences between objects, people, stories.. <p>Create informative sentences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use <i>because</i> accurately 2. Present well-developed narratives 3. Answer inferential questions about stories (ex. <i>What do you think will happen next?</i>) 4. May use slang and profanity 	<p>Demonstrate knowledge through vocabulary understanding and use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe an object via at least three attributes (ex. size, texture, weight) 2. Use antonyms & synonyms (ex. <i>another word for nice is?</i>) 3. Indicate knowledge of concepts (<i>half/whole, before/after, etc.</i>) 4. Name positional terms (ex. <i>first, second, last</i>) 5. Continue to name parts of a whole (ex. Tell me 5 car parts) 6. Describe similarities and differences between objects, people, stories.. <p>Create informative sentences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present narratives with plot including problem, plan of action and plausible solution 2. Respond to simple riddles 3. Recall more details from stories read, including setting, basic plot 	<p>Demonstrate knowledge through vocabulary understanding and use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present more than one meaning for a multiple-meaning word (ex. <i>rock is a stone and rock is a motion</i>) <p>Create informative sentences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present narratives with plot including problem, plan of action and definite solution 2. Answer more complex inferential questions about stories (ex. <i>What do you think would happen if . . . ?</i>) 3. Explain simple idioms (ex. <i>It's raining cats and dogs.</i>)

Literacy

*The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go. Dr. Seuss*

Literacy is a complex concept that includes reading, writing, listening and speaking. In this section of the Vermont Early Learning Standards, the focus is limited to reading and writing. The printed word, whether in a storybook or in the environment, is the bridge that allows children to connect their own lives to distant places, quality literature, and to new information and ideas.

Literacy includes both skill-based competencies and knowledge-based competencies. The skills involved in reading relate to “decoding” what’s on the page and include: concepts about print, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, spelling, and sight words. With supportive environments and instruction, most children acquire and master these skills by the end of third grade. Knowledge-based competencies enable a reader to comprehend what she is decoding. Knowledge-based competencies include the reader’s background knowledge, vocabulary, oral language development, the ability to understand and express one’s thoughts, and reasoning skills; these competencies continue to develop throughout a lifetime. In order for children to be effective readers by the end of third grade, when the shift from learning to read moves to reading to learn, children need a balance of skills- and knowledge-based experiences and instruction. Decoding skills are necessary for comprehension, but these are not sufficient.

Literacy development begins at birth and continues throughout one’s life. Literacy development, especially in early childhood (birth to 9 years of age), relies on various types of integrated and engaging activities that go well beyond knowing phonics. These include:

“...interactions among adults and children, to build up children’s language and knowledge, and to increase the amount of time their eyes spend on print. Throughout the day...that means asking questions, starting conversations, telling stories, and singing songs. It means listening to stories via audio, drawing letters, writing names as well as writing stories, letters and essays. It means visits to local parks, libraries, and museums. It means teaching children to read independently and it also means everyone reading together. It is these interactions and everyday activities—in our homes and communities, our early education and care settings, and our schools—that foster an orientation toward learning and inspire children’s sense of curiosity about the world and greater understanding of it, while simultaneously promoting their language abilities and their thinking.” (Lesaux, et.al., 2010, 1)

VELS and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (CCSS-ELA)

All kindergarten through third grade standards in this section are copied in full from the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts which were adopted by the State of Vermont for grades K to 12 in August, 2010. The standards for infants through preschoolers present the foundational knowledge and skills that correlate with the K-3 CCSS for English Language Arts. Research from various sources was examined in order to formulate the Infants through Preschoolers standards, and a careful analysis was used to bridge these standards for younger children with the K-3 English Language Arts Common Core State Standards.

Although the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) for Reading and Writing for Infants through Third Graders should be viewed as a continuum, there isn't a direct one-to-one correspondence in all cases. The CCSS Reading standards for K-5 are divided into "Reading: Literature" and "Reading: Informational Texts"; whereas, the corresponding VELS sub-domain is entitled "Book Knowledge and Appreciation". On the other hand, "Foundational Skills" and "Writing" are used consistently throughout the continuum. The division of Literacy into Reading and Writing sections in the VELS should not be misconstrued as suggesting that they are separate; literacy learning is an integrated, interdependent process. The division of the two is only to enable us to better focus on the concepts of each separately.

NOTES: In reading the VELS, please note that standards within each age group (i.e., Infants and Young Toddlers, Older Toddlers and Twos, Preschoolers) are organized from the earliest to later developments within that age cohort or sub-section (e.g., "Book Handling"). The K-3 CCSS-ELA standards which are incorporated in the VELS describe expectations at the end of the grade level for which they are cited. It is also important to note that the CCSS-ELA describes the outcomes for each grade level; it does not prescribe any specific instructional method or curricular approach.

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Book Appreciation and Knowledge

Goal: Children develop knowledge and appreciation of books, use “book language” and demonstrate emergent reading skills.

Some indicators of children developing knowledge about books, “book language”, and emergent reading are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Book Handling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make eye contact with a book 2. Explore book by grasping and bringing to mouth 3. Hold cardboard book with both hands and explore how book works by opening and closing it 4. Help adult turn the pages of a book 5. Visual attention to books increases 6. Turn pages well 7. Turn an inverted picture book right side up, or turns head to see the picture right side up <p>Language Understanding and Use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look intently at pictures for several minutes 2. Coo and gurgle while adult reads 3. Laugh or smile when recognize a picture and point to individual 4. Point correctly to familiar objects when asked, “Where’s the…” 5. Name familiar objects pictured 	<p>Book Handling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turn pages well 2. Turn an inverted picture book right side up, or turns head to see the picture right side <p>Language Understanding and Use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Chime in during reading of predictable song or story 4. Point to a picture and asks, “What’s that?” or requests a label in a different way 5. Begin to use two- to four-word sentences (i.e., telegraphic sentences) to describe pictures or events in books 6. Use more complex sentences when talking about a book or a character 7. Ask and answer simple questions during the story 8. Play with the story language outside of the story reading context (e.g., Mommy, mommy, what do you see?” after reading <i>brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?</i> by Bill Martin Jr.) 9. Use storybook language, forms and conventions (“Once there was… The end”) when telling stories 	<p>Language Understanding and Use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play with the story language outside of the story reading context (e.g., Mommy, mommy, what do you see?” after reading <i>brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?</i> by Bill Martin Jr.) 2. Ask and answer questions and make comments about printed materials. <p>Comprehension</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify story-related problems, events and solutions in discussions with adults 2. With prompting and support, retell stories or information from books through conversation, art works, creative movement, or dramatic play 3. Identify characters and recall major events in a story 4. Relate events in books to own experiences 5. Identify factual information when an informational text is shared 6. Begin to demonstrate an understanding of the differences between fantasy and reality 7. Uses pictures to predict a story 8. Recites some words in familiar books from memory 9. Fills in missing information in a familiar story 10. Identifies major characters in story 11. Begins to understand the sequence of a story (e.g., beginning, middle, and end) 12. Makes up an ending for a story 13. Pretends to read a familiar book

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Book Appreciation and Knowledge

Goal: Children develop knowledge and appreciation of books, use “book language” and demonstrate emergent reading skills.

Some indicators of children developing knowledge about books, “book language”, and emergent reading are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Comprehension</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand words for familiar objects in pictures 2. Relate an object or action in a book to real world 3. Show preference for a favorite page by searching for it in a book <p>Emergent Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coo or gurgle when read to 2. Gaze at and/or point to illustrations while adult is reading and looking at a page 3. Vocalize (unintelligibly) while pointing at pictures 4. Point to pictures and vocalize (more intelligibility) such as with rising intonation to indicate “What’s that?” 5. Imitate adult’s hand-finger behaviors by pointing to the words or pictures when sharing a book 6. Name objects pictured although articulation may not be accurate 7. Bring books to adult to read 8. Use book babble (to mimic sound of reading) 9. Insist on having adult read a book repeatedly 10. Have a favorite book 	<p>Comprehension</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform an action shown or mentioned in a book 2. Show empathy for characters or situations depicted in book 3. Make associations across books (e.g., gets two books with similar pictures) 4. Talk about the characters and events during the reading 5. Relate events in books to own experiences 6. Link situations from a book to situations outside of the book-sharing event (e.g., reenacting events) <p>Emergent Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look for preferred books for adult to read 2. Describe illustrations or familiar parts of text in own words 3. Fill in the next word in the text when the adult pauses, says the next word when the adult reads it, or reads along with the adult when text is familiar and highly predictable 4. “Read” to self and pretend to read to dolls or stuffed animals 5. Recite entire phrases from a favorite story if the adult pauses at the opportune time 6. Protest when an adult misreads or skips a word in a familiar, predictable text 7. Ask to be read to requests favorite book to be read repeatedly 8. Look at books, magazines, and other printed material without assistance 9. Look through books and other printed material as though reading 10. Memorize phrases from favorite books 11. Make comments on book 12. Use books during play 13. Select books and magazines when asked to select favorite objects/toys 	<p>Emergent Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show interest in sharing reading experiences and looking at books independently 2. Pretend to read a familiar book by describing what is on each page using picture cues 3. Know some features of a book, such as title, author, illustrator 4. Pretend to read using intonation and referring to the illustrations in the book 5. Demonstrate interest in different types of literature such as fiction and non-fiction, and poetry

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Reading Literature

Goal: Children demonstrate knowledge of the key ideas and details of stories read to them and which they read, the craft and structure of literature, the ability to integrate knowledge and ideas, and to read a range of text with text complexity appropriate to their grade level.

Some indicators of children developing knowledge of key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration, range of reading and text complexity are:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Key Ideas and Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. 2. With prompting and support, retell familiar stories including details. 3. With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. 5. Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems) 6. With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story. 	<p>Key Ideas and Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. 2. Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson. 3. Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses. 5. Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types. 6. Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text. 	<p>Key Ideas and Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask and answer such questions as <i>who</i>, <i>what</i>, <i>where</i>, <i>when</i>, <i>why</i>, and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. 2. Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral. 3. Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song. 5. Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action. 6. Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud. 	<p>Key Ideas and Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. 2. Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text. 3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language. 5. Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as <i>chapter</i>, <i>scene</i>, and <i>stanza</i>; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections. 6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Reading Literature

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>8. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).</p> <p>9. With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.</p>	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>8. Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.</p> <p>9. Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.</p>	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>8. Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.</p> <p>9. Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story (e.g., Cinderella stories) by different authors or from different cultures.</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p>	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>8. Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).</p> <p>9. Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Reading Informational Texts

Goal: Children demonstrate knowledge of the key ideas and details of informational text read to them and which they read, the craft and structure of informational texts, the ability to integrate knowledge and ideas, and read a range of texts with complexity appropriate to their grade level.

Some indicators of children developing knowledge of key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration, range of reading and text complexity are:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Key Ideas & Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. 2. With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. 3. With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. 5. Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book. 6. Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text. <p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts). 	<p>Key Ideas & Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. 2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. 3. Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text. 5. Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text. 6. Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text. 	<p>Key Ideas & Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask and answer such questions as <i>who</i>, <i>what</i>, <i>where</i>, <i>when</i>, <i>why</i>, and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. 2. Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text. 3. Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 2 topic or subject area</i>. 5. Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently. 6. Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe. 	<p>Key Ideas & Details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. 2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea. 3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect. <p>Craft and Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 3 topic or subject area</i>. 5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently. 6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Reading Informational Texts

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>8. With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.</p> <p>9. With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.</p>	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>7. Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.</p> <p>8. Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.</p> <p>9. Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures). Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1.</p>	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>7. Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.</p> <p>8. Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.</p> <p>9. Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p>	<p>Integration of Knowledge & Ideas</p> <p>7. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).</p> <p>8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).</p> <p>9. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.</p> <p>Range of Reading & Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Foundational Skills

Goal: Children develop the basic skills needed for understanding print and for decoding.

Some indicators of children developing basic skills needed for decoding are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Print Concepts Emerging</p> <p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Imitate vocalizations and sounds 2. Show increasing awareness of the sounds of spoken words by focusing on the speaker 3. Vocalize familiar words when read to 4. Recite last word of familiar rhymes, with assistance 5. Imitate sounds when looking at words in a book 6. Show interest in rhyming words shows beginning sound awareness by reacting differently to different sounds <p>Phonics and Word Recognition Emerging</p> <p>Fluency</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show an interest in books and pictures especially those with contrast, colors, and patterns 2. Point to pictures or objects in a book when asked to 3. Interact with books by turning pages, pointing to pictures and details, imitating actions and sound effects – when encouraged by an adult 	<p>Print Concepts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize print in everyday life uses symbols or pictures to represent oral language 2. Recite a song with the letters of the alphabet, with assistance (e.g., an alphabet song or recitation) 3. Begin to understand that print represents words (e.g., pretends to read text) <p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing along with rhyming songs 2. Recite phrases from familiar rhymes 3. Complete a familiar rhyme by providing the last word 4. Participate in rhyming games and songs with other children 4. Imitate tempo and speed of sound (e.g., clapping hands fast and clapping hands slowly, speaking fast and speaking slowly) <p>Phonics and Word Recognition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize own first name in print in a familiar context 2. Enjoy ABC books <p>Fluency</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pretend to read a familiar book 	<p>Print Concepts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize print in everyday life 2. Understand that print conveys meaning 3. Understand print conventions such as print moves from left to right and top to bottom, with prompting and support as needed 4. Recognize words as a unit of print and can segment them in a simple sentence 5. Understand that letters are grouped to form words 6. Recognize the association between written words and spoken or signed words 7. Recognize that the letters of the alphabet are a specific type of symbol that can be named 8. Recognize that the letters of the alphabet have specific sounds associated with them 9. Recognize and name 10 or more upper and lower case letters of the alphabet <p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and discriminate between words in spoken language 2. Identify and discriminate between separate syllables in words 3. Participate in and create songs, rhymes, and games that play with sounds of language (e.g., clap out sounds or rhythms of language) 4. Identify initial sound of words, with assistance (e.g., book begins with the /b/ sound) 5. Make three or more letter-sound correspondences (e.g., identify that “David,” “day,” and “dog” all begin with “d”) 6. Find objects in a picture with the same beginning sound, with assistance 7. Differentiate between similar-sounding words (e.g., “three” and “tree”) <p>Phonics and Word Recognition TO BE Completed</p> <p>Fluency</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pretend to read a familiar book

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Foundational Skills

Goal: Children develop the basic skills needed for understanding print and for decoding.

Some indicators of children developing basic skills needed for decoding are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Print Concepts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page. b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters. c. Understand that words are separated by spaces in print. d. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet. <p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognize and produce rhyming words. b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words. d. or /x/.) e. Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words. 	<p>Print Concepts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation). <p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words. b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends. c. Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words. d. Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes). <p>Phonics and Word Recognition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs. b. Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words. 	<p>(No Print Concepts & Phonological Awareness Standards for this grade/ age group)</p> <p>Phonics and Word Recognition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words. b. Know spelling-sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams. c. Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels. d. Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes. e. Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences. f. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. g. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. 	<p>(No Print Concepts & Phonological Awareness Standards for this grade/ age group)</p> <p>Phonics and Word Recognition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes. b. Decode words with common Latin suffixes. c. Decode multisyllable words. d. Read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. <p>Fluency</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Foundational Skills

Goal: Children develop the basic skills needed for understanding print and for decoding.

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Phonics and Word Recognition</p> <p>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or most frequent sound for each consonant. b. Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels. c. Read common high frequency words by sight (e.g., the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does). d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ. <p>Fluency</p> <p>4. Read emergent reader texts with purpose and understanding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Know final –e and common Use knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word. d. Use knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word. e. Decode two-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables. f. Read words with inflectional endings. g. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. <p>Fluency</p> <p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. 	<p>Fluency</p> <p>4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. b. Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary. 	

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Writing

Goal: Children develop knowledge of the writing as a form of communication and acquire skills needed to make meaning.

Some indicators of children understanding writing as a form of communication and acquiring writing skills are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scribble or make marks independently 2. Make imprints on paper using finger paints 3. Grasp marker or crayon with fist and make marks on paper in all directions 4. Pick up small writing tools (e.g., thin crayons) using finger and thumb (pincer) grasp but possibly without control or pressure on paper 5. Begin to develop eye-hand coordination 6. Manipulate materials with increasing precision (e.g., picking up and putting small blocks in a bucket) 7. Explore writing tools and materials 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Label pictures using scribble writing or ask an adult to label the picture 2. scribbles and makes marks on paper purposefully 3. Use symbols or pictures to represent experiences, thoughts, objects and ideas 4. Make marks on paper and tell others what the scribbles mean 5. Use a variety of writing tools 6. Draw horizontal and vertical lines 7. Use unconventional shapes to convey messages 8. Ask adult to write their name on a picture they made. 9. Are able to distinguish between writing words and drawing pictures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make marks or scribble when an adult suggests writing 2. Recognize that writing is a way of communicating for various purposes, such as giving information, sharing stories, or giving an opinion 3. Write some letters and letter-like forms 4. Use scribbles, letters, shapes and pictures to represent experiences, ideas, objects, or stories 5. Copy, trace, or independently write letters or words 6. Begin to use "sound spelling" (use initial sound of word and other letters to represent sounds heard in the word) 7. Experiment with a variety of writing tools and surfaces 8. Begin to print or copy own name and identify some of the letters 9. Show awareness of the difference between own writing and conventional print

Domain: Literacy
Sub-domain: Writing

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Text Types and Purposes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is...) 2. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic. 3. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened. 	<p>Text Types and Purposes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure. 2. Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure. 3. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure. <p>Production and Distribution of Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed. 2. With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers. 	<p>Text Types and Purposes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., <i>because</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>also</i>) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section. 2. Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section. 3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure. <p>Production and Distribution of Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing. 2. With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers. 	<p>Text Types and Purposes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons. b. Provide reasons that support the opinion. c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>because</i>, <i>therefore</i>, <i>since</i>, <i>for example</i>) to connect opinion and reasons. d. Provide a concluding statement or section. 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>also</i>, <i>another</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>more</i>, <i>but</i>) to connect ideas within categories of information. d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

Domain: Literacy

Sub-domain: Writing

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Production and Distribution of Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed. 2. With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers. <p>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them). 2. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. <p>Range of Writing (Begins in grade 3)</p>	<p>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of “how-to” books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions). 2. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. <p>Range of Writing (Begins in grade 3)</p>	<p>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations). 2. Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. <p>Range of Writing (Begins in grade 3)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations. c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order. d. Provide a sense of closure. <p>Production and Distribution of Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.) 2. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 3 on page 29.) 3. With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others. <p>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic. 2. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories. <p>Range of Writing</p> <p>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>

CREATIVE ARTS

The Creative Arts is included within the Communications area of learning and development to emphasize the focus on the arts as an opportunity for children's self-expression, exploration, improvisation, and communication of thoughts and feelings. The Creative Arts include the sub-domains of the *Visual Arts*, *Dramatic Arts*, *Music*, and *Movement*.

The Creative Arts for young children birth to third grade is focused on a *process* rather than a *product* approach. Adults facilitating children's learning of the Creative Arts should focus on the process; so put away the patterns, the samples, the coloring pages, the step-by-step instructions, and instead provide materials and time for open-ended exploration of art materials, pretend-play scenarios, music, and movement experiences. Adults should acknowledge the child's creative processes and emphasize the joy in these activities. Art materials should be available for visual and spatial learners; movement should be used as a learning tool as so many children are bodily-kinesthetic and physical learners at this developmental level; imagination and improvisation should be fostered to promote creative thinking and problem-solving skills; music can be in the background or at the forefront at various times of day and can simply set the stage for the classroom atmosphere or be focused specifically on a focused skill such as building vocabulary.

The Creative Arts should be considered an integral element of a young child's learning and development. The Creative Arts are an often left-out portion of the curriculum for a variety of reasons, including financial constraints, the lack of confidence of the classroom teacher, or the prioritization of other areas of learning; but, the creative arts should part of a young child's daily routine.

The Creative Arts also support all areas of learning and should be used as a strategy for learning. Preschool children may use art materials to create a menu in a pretend restaurant scenario. Second grade children may communicate their understanding of simple math problems by drawing their processes and results. Children may communicate their understanding of a book through the visual arts or dramatization. The Creative Arts allows for communication beyond the spoken word.

Domain: Creative Arts

Sub-Domain: Visual Arts

Goal: Children use a variety of tools and art media to express their ideas, feelings, and creativity.

Some of the indicators of young children learning how to use tools and art media are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	Interact with visual art <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gaze at pictures, photos, and mirror images 2. Show interest in color, shape, texture 3. Use open-ended, process-oriented, developmentally appropriate art materials such as crayons at the scribbling stage 	Interact with visual art <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use open-ended, process-oriented, developmentally appropriate art materials such as crayons and paint to express self at the scribbling and circles stage 2. Enjoy the process of doing art 3. Sharing feelings by making art 	Engage in self-expression through the visual arts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a variety of open-ended, process-oriented, developmentally appropriate art tools and processes to express ideas and feelings 2. Begin early representational drawing of something familiar 3. Use developmentally appropriate art vocabulary 4. Enjoy the process of doing art and consider it as a play experience 5. Identify the visual arts in relation to diversity and cultures

Domain: Creative Arts

Sub-Domain: Visual Arts

Goal: Children use a variety of tools and art media to express their ideas, feelings, and creativity.

Some of the indicators of young children learning how to use tools and art media are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	Communicate through the visual arts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use open-ended media and materials to convey ideas, feelings, concepts, or stories 2. Experiment with a variety of media and materials for creative expression 3. Use basic art elements and principles to communicate ideas, feelings, or concepts (e.g., line, shape, color) 4. Identify the visual arts in relation to history and cultures 	Communicate through the visual arts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use media and materials to convey ideas, feelings, concepts, or stories 2. Experiment with a variety of media and materials for creative expression 3. Use basic art elements and principles to communicate ideas, feelings, or concepts (e.g., line, shape, color) 4. Compare a variety of purposes for making art (e.g., to tell a story, communicate emotion, beautify functional objects) 5. Relate the visual arts in relation to history and cultures 	Communicate through the visual arts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use media and materials to convey ideas, feelings, concepts, or stories 2. Experiment with a variety of media and materials for creative expression 3. Use basic art elements and principles to communicate ideas, feelings, or concepts (e.g., line, shape, color) 4. Identify a variety of purposes for making art (e.g., to tell a story, communicate emotion, beautify functional objects) 5. Relate the visual arts in relation to history and cultures 	Communicate through the visual arts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use media and materials to convey ideas, feelings, concepts, or stories 2. Experiment with a variety of media and materials for creative expression 3. Identify a variety of motivations and purposes for making art in different times and places (e.g. cultural tradition, personal satisfaction, communication of belief) 4. Discuss the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

Domain: Creative Arts

Sub-Domain: Dramatic Arts

Goal: Children engage in dramatic play activities representing real-life experiences, ideas, knowledge, feelings, and fantasy.

Some of the indicators of young children's understanding and engaging in pretend or dramatic play are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	Engage in simple dramatic play experiences <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in simple pretend play experiences (e.g., stirring pretend soup, talking on pretend phone) 2. Engage in play with dolls, toy animals, and pretend people 	Engage in dramatic play as a means of self-expression and creativity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in simple pretend role-play experiences (e.g., pretending to be a parent or pet) 2. Engage in play with dolls, toy animals, and pretend people 3. Stay in pretend role while playing alone 4. Use simple pretend props 5. Share feelings through role-playing 	Engage in socio-dramatic play as a means of self-expression and creativity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate pretend role-playing experiences 2. Stay in pretend role while alone or with peers 3. Experience perspective of others through sociodramatic play (taking on roles such as farmer during play) 4. Tell a story through dramatic play 5. Use pretend props in play 6. Develop deeper understanding of daily life through play
	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)
	Communicate through drama <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in fantasy play 2. Initiate play with props, costumes, and stage pieces or using symbolic props 3. Imagine, pretend, play with others, observe and copy 4. Participate with a group of peers 	Communicate through drama <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in fantasy play including sociodramatic play (taking on roles) 2. Demonstrate a character (real or imaginary) 3. Participate in theater games with peers 4. Identify and label moods through dramatic play and theater games 	Communicate through drama <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate a character (real or imaginary) 2. Participate in theater games with peers 3. Identify and label moods through dramatic play and theater games
			Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
			Communicate through drama <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate a character based on literature 2. Develop a character with a script 3. Repeat for an audience something already created 4. Speak with clarity before an audience 5. Improvise a character with a prop 6. Accept or give a cue 7. Read a part in a script

Domain: Creative Arts

Sub-Domain: Music

Goal: Children use music to creatively communicate their ideas and feelings.

Some of the indicators of young children's developing ability to use music to communicate their ideas and feelings are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	Respond to music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sway or clap to music 2. Show interest in voices, sounds, tones 3. Respond to simple songs with repeating and rhyming words 	Respond to music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing simple songs 2. Move body to music 3. Use simple musical instruments to explore rhythm and sound 4. Respond to a variety of types of music 	Respond to and engage with music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing simple songs 2. Echo short melody 3. Move body to music 4. Maintain a steady beat by clapping, tapping, or using an instrument 5. Show an interest in music
	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)
	Respond to and engage with music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing simple songs 2. Echo short melody 3. Maintain a steady beat by clapping, tapping, or using an instrument 4. Show an interest in music 	Communicate through music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing alone and in unison, using developmentally appropriate repertoire in rhythm, maintaining a steady beat 2. Play instruments, alone and with others, using developmentally appropriate instruments, in rhythm, maintaining a steady beat 	Communicate through music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing alone and in unison, using developmentally appropriate repertoire in rhythm, maintaining a steady beat 2. Play instruments, alone and with others, using developmentally appropriate instruments, in rhythm, maintaining a steady beat
			Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
			Communicate through music <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sing alone and with others, using developmentally appropriate repertoire, on pitch, in rhythm, maintaining a steady beat, singing simple two part music 2. Play instruments, alone and with others, using developmentally appropriate instruments, on pitch, in rhythm, maintaining a steady beat, using pitched and non-pitched instruments.

Domain: Creative Arts

Sub-Domain: Movement

Goal: Children use movement to creatively express their ideas, feelings.

Some of the indicators of young children's developing ability to use movement to communicate their ideas and feelings are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)	
Standards	Moves to communicate <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use gestures to communicate (e.g., lifting arms to be held, pointing to identify needs) 2. Smile to communicate 3. Mimic adult actions 	Moves to express concepts, ideas, and feelings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use gestures to communicate (e.g., lifting arms to be held, pointing to identify needs) 2. Point to identify needs 3. Smile to communicate 4. Mimic adult actions 5. Dance and clap to music 6. Enjoy big body movement and small body movement such as finger plays 	Move to express concepts, ideas, and feelings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create movements showing balance through concentration and muscle control 2. Dance, clap, and engage in learned motions to music 3. Demonstrates feelings through music 4. Move to show understanding of a concept (e.g., move as a seed being watered, growing into a flower) 5. Show interest in developing skills in movement and/or dance 6. Enjoy big body movement and small body movement 	
	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
	Move to express thoughts, concepts, and feelings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create movements showing balance through concentration and muscle control 2. Dance, clap, and engage in learned motions to music 3. Move to show understanding of a concept (e.g., move as a seed being watered, growing into a flower) 4. Show interest in developing skills in movement and/or dance 5. Enjoy big body movement and small body movement 6. Use movement and dance to express a simple idea 7. Interpret a story, piece of music, artwork, play, or learning experience through movement and dance 	Move to express thoughts, concepts, and feelings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use movement and dance to express a simple idea and share it with their peers 2. Interpret a story, piece of music, artwork, play, or learning experience through movement and dance 	Move to express thoughts, concepts, and feelings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use movement and dance to express a simple idea and share it with their peers 2. Interpret a story, piece of music, artwork, play, or learning experience through movement and dance 	Move to express thoughts, concepts, and feelings <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use movement and dance to express complex ideas and narrative 2. Use improvisation to discover and invent movement and dance 3. Communicates through dance by demonstrating qualities/dynamics/levels of movement (e.g., fast/slow, hard/soft, heavy/light)

Learning About the World: Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

This Area of Development and Learning, *Learning about the World*, focuses on what children do as they explore, make observations and analyze relationships in the world in which they live. The VELs identifies three Domains in this area: Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Young children make simple observations about their environment. They begin to examine various objects (shapes) and begin to reason spatially about the relative size and position of the objects in their world. They also begin to recognize simple quantitative relationships by discovering how to use the word *more*. VELs explores how these early experiences become the underpinnings for developing and learning about *number, operations, measurement, geometry and spatial reasoning*.

[Brief Science intro](#)

[Brief Social Studies intro](#)

Mathematics

Mathematics is the *active process* of making sense of the world around us, discovering regularities and patterns, and exploring big ideas related to number, operations, measurement, geometry, and spatial reasoning. “The process of constructing meaning is the process of learning. We actually create our knowledge; we do not discover it.” (Fosnot and Dolk, 2001). Children naturally engage in mathematics as they solve problems in their environment within a community. They interact with peers and adults in their world and make sense of their discoveries. Mathematics should not be viewed as a list of facts to memorize and procedures to practice, while it is true that many facts will eventually be entered into memory, and many procedures will become fluent over time, making sense and creating new knowledge through exploration, solving problems and communicating and sharing ideas with others should be the focus of mathematics instruction. By providing intentional, well-designed learning opportunities young children will be successful in learning mathematics and understanding the big ideas and concepts that will provide a strong foundation for continued learning throughout their lives.

VELS and the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM)

All kindergarten through third grade mathematics standards in this document are copied in full from the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) which were adopted by the State of Vermont for all grades K to 12 in August, 2010 (For a full copy of the CCSSM please go to <http://www.corestandards.org>). The birth through prekindergarten standards were written to bridge toward the CCSSM and to provide a consistent approach to developing mathematics understanding from birth to grade 3. Current cognitive research was examined in order to fully understanding the development from birth to prekindergarten and careful analysis of the research helped to tie the two sets of standards together. The CCSSM Writing Team added these opening statements to the CCSSM to state the purpose of the Standards which applies to all the K-3 Standards in the VELS. These statements are summarized below (refer to the CCSSM, pg. 4 to read the statements in full).

These Standards define what students should understand and be able to do in their study of mathematics. Asking a student to understand something means asking a teacher to assess whether the student has understood it. But what does mathematical understanding look like? One hallmark of mathematical understanding is the ability to justify, in a way appropriate to the student’s mathematical maturity, *why* a particular mathematical statement is true or where a mathematical rule comes from...

The Standards set grade-specific standards but do not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students who are well below or well above grade-level expectations. It is also beyond the scope of the Standards to define the full range of supports appropriate for English language learners and for students with special needs. At the same time, all students must have the opportunity to learn and meet the same high standards if they are to access the knowledge and skills necessary in their post-school lives. The Standards should be read as allowing for the widest possible range of students to

participate fully from the outset, along with appropriate accommodations to ensure maximum participation of students with special education needs ...No set of grade-specific standards can fully reflect the great variety in abilities, needs, learning rates, and achievement levels of students in any given classroom. However, the Standards do provide clear signposts along the way to the goal of college and career readiness for all students.

Standards for Mathematics Practice

The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) provides a set of Standards for Mathematics Practice that are intended to connect with the Standards for Mathematical Content. These Standards for Mathematics Practice, “describe varieties of expertise that mathematics educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students.” These are student practices that must be encouraged and fostered by parents, caregivers, educators and others while children are actively engaged in discovering and learning new mathematics concepts. These Standards for Mathematics Practices are summarized below (refer to the CCSSM, pg. 6-8 to read the statements in full).

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

Mathematically proficient students start by explaining to themselves the meaning of a problem and looking for entry points to its solution. Younger students might rely on using concrete objects or pictures to help conceptualize and solve a problem. Mathematically proficient students check their answers to problems using a different method, and they continually ask themselves, “Does this make sense?” They can understand the approaches of others to solving complex problems and identify correspondences between different approaches.

2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

Mathematically proficient students make sense of quantities and their relationships in problem situations. They can use the context of the problem when needed or they can take the numbers out of context to consider the quantitative relationships in choosing strategies for solving problems.

3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.

Elementary students can construct arguments (to prove the correctness of their solutions) using concrete referents such as objects, drawings, diagrams, and actions. Students at all grades can listen or read the arguments of others, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to clarify or improve the arguments.

4. Model with mathematics.

Mathematically proficient students can apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace. In early grades, this might be as simple as writing an addition equation to describe a situation. Mathematically proficient students are able to identify important quantities in a practical situation and map their relationships using such tools as diagrams and tables. They can analyze those relationships mathematically to draw conclusions. They routinely interpret their mathematical results in the context of the situation and reflect on whether the results make sense, possibly improving the model if it has not served its purpose.

5. Use appropriate tools strategically.

Mathematically proficient students consider the available tools when solving a mathematical problem. These tools might include concrete models, pencil and paper, a ruler, a protractor, or a calculator. Proficient students are sufficiently familiar with tools appropriate for their grade to make sound decisions about when each of these tools might be helpful, recognizing both the insight to be gained and their limitations.

6. Attend to precision.

Mathematically proficient students try to communicate precisely to others. They try to use clear definitions in discussion with others and in their own reasoning. They state the meaning of the symbols they choose, including using the equal sign consistently and appropriately. They are careful about specifying units of measure. They calculate accurately and efficiently, express numerical answers with a degree of precision appropriate for the problem context.

7. Look for and make use of structure.

Mathematically proficient students look closely to discern a pattern or structure. Young students, for example, might notice that three and seven more is the same amount as seven and three more, or they may sort a collection of shapes according to how many sides the shapes have.

8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Mathematically proficient students notice if calculations are repeated, and look both for general methods and for shortcuts. As they work to solve a problem, mathematically proficient students maintain oversight of the process, while attending to the details. They continually evaluate the reasonableness of their intermediate results.

Sub-domains of Mathematics

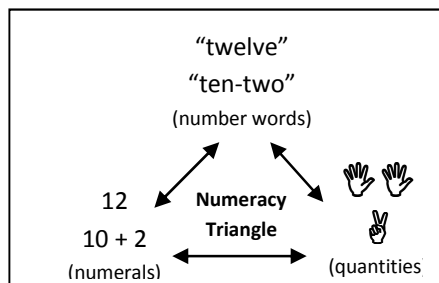
The following VELs for Mathematics are organized into Sub-domains. To be consistent with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM), VELs uses the same language to identify each of its Sub-domains in this section. These Sub-domains include *Counting and Cardinality*, *Operations and Algebraic Thinking*, *Numbers and Operations in Base-Ten*, *Numbers and Operations—Fractions*, *Measurement and Data*, and *Geometry*. Along with these Sub-domains, the *Standards for Mathematics Practice* are also summarized above and should be implemented alongside the Mathematics Content Standards below.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain & Goal: Counting and Cardinality

This sub-domain focuses on counting and includes: rote counting (knowing the number names and saying them in the correct sequence), object counting (including one-to-one counting correspondences when counting, and knowing the cardinality of a group of objects), reading and writing numerals, and comparing quantities. While the counting process may appear to be a simple task, children need to make connections between what they know and what they know how to do. To be a successful counter, children need to know the number words and the correct sequence, have a way to keep track of the objects they are counting (which have been counted and which still need to be counted), understand one-to-one correspondence, synchronize the words they say to one and only one object, and know that the last number said after they have counted tells the number of objects that have been counted and answers “how many?” questions.

The many standards in the sub-domain address the connections between the number words, the symbols (numerals), and the quantities they represent. These connections are often thought of as a triangle (Fuson, Clements & Beckmann, 2009; Shane, 2000).



There are many connections to be made when expressive and receptive language are considered while analyzing this triangle. "Show me *three* fingers," requires children to hear and understand (receptive language) the word *three* and then to show (expressive) the correct quantity of fingers. The reverse is true if three fingers are held up and children are asked, "How many fingers do you see?" This requires the children to say the word *three* (expressive language). These same connections can be made between any two vertices (points) of this triangle: connections between word and numerals, numeral and words, numerals and quantities, and quantities and numerals. Opportunities for children to make sense of numbers and make strong connections to these fundamental components of quantitative understanding are a priority for young children.

As indicated in the above triangle, this sub-domain also includes correct numeral formation and numeral recognition and identification. By the end of kindergarten, children should have the fine motor ability to correctly form all the digits from 0-9 and have many exposures to numerals including various forms of the numerals (the straight and curvy 9, the open and closed 4, etc.). Numeral recognition and identification are addressed in the early years and addressed in Sub-domain: Number and Operations in Base-ten in later years when there is an increased focus on place value.

The final cluster of standards in this sub-domain involves connecting numerals to quantities and comparing quantities to determine which of two groups have *more* or *less* than the other or if they are the *same* (equal). Opportunities to compare quantities arise in other sub-domains such as when sorting objects by color, size, shape etc. and comparing group size (Sub-domain: Measurement and Data and Sub-domain: Geometry)

The Standards in Sub-domain: Counting and Cardinality end after kindergarten. The Standards in the years leading up to and including kindergarten heavily focus on counting and cardinality. Beyond kindergarten, counting is embedded in other domains most notably in the Sub-domain: *Numbers and Operations in Base-ten* when first graders explore the base-ten system by grouping and counting by tens and ones and build an understanding of place-value notation.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Counting and Cardinality

Goal: Children rote count, recognize numerals, and connect numerals with quantities.

Some of the indicators of young children developing knowledge of counting and cardinality are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Know number names and the count sequence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a few number words and some parts of the number sequence without understanding quantity (e.g., imitate a counting rhyme, song or book). 	<p>Know number names and the count sequence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the words <i>one</i> and <i>two</i> (e.g., distinguish <i>one</i> and <i>two</i> from <i>many</i>; identify pairs of objects as two; identify three or more objects as <i>many</i> rather than a <i>one</i> or <i>two</i> of something; respond appropriately to the request, "Take just one," or "Give me two."). 2. Know their age. 3. Understand the words <i>three</i> and/or other counting words. <p>Count to tell the number of objects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Determine the number of objects in a group of up to five objects by using one-to-one counting (i.e., labeling each object in a group with one and only one number word from the counting sequence to determine the total number of objects in a group, as in finger counting, and counting out snack items). <p>Compare numbers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Use the word <i>more</i> to identify the larger of two groups, and <i>less</i> for smaller groups. 6. Recognize some numerals and connect them to the quantities they represent. 	<p>Know number names and the count sequence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Count to 29 and understand that numbers come before or after one another. 2. Give the next number in a sequence 1-10. 3. Identify numerals to 5 by name. <p>Count to tell the number of objects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Recognize number and quantities in the everyday environment. 5. Finger count to 10 and shows 1–5 fingers when named (e.g., "show me 3 fingers."). 6. Count a group of up to 5 objects. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Point to or move objects when counting. b. Understand that the last number tells how many in all. 7. Connect numerals 1-5 to a group of counted objects. 8. Identify small groups of objects without counting (subitize a group of 1-3 objects). e.g., can answer the question, "How many crackers are on your plate?" without counting when there are 1-3 crackers. <p>Compare numbers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Compares groups of up to 10 objects and identifies which group has <i>more</i> or <i>less</i>, or if they are the <i>same</i> (equal).

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Counting and Cardinality

Goal: Children rote count, recognize numerals, and connect numerals with quantities.

Some of the indicators of young children developing knowledge of counting and cardinality are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Know number names and the count sequence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Count to 100 by ones and by tens. Count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence (instead of having to begin at 1). Write numbers from 0 to 20. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0-20 (with 0 representing a count of no objects). <p>Count to tell the number of objects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> When counting objects, say the number names in the standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object. Understand that the last number name said tells the number of objects counted. The number of objects is the same regardless of their arrangement or the order in which they were counted. Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger. Count to answer "how many?" questions about as many as 20 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 10 things in a scattered configuration; given a number from 1–20, count out that many objects <p>Compare numbers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group, e.g., by using matching and counting strategies. Compare two numbers between 1 and 10 presented as written numerals. 	No standards in this domain.	No standards in this domain.	No standards in this domain.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain & Goal: Operations and Algebraic Thinking

This sub-domain focuses on the understanding the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers; the relationships between addition and subtraction; and in later years the relationship between multiplication and division; and the properties of operations including the *commutative and associative properties* of addition and multiplication, the *additive identity of 0* and the *multiplicative identity of 1*.

An early focus in this sub-domain is causality or the relationship between cause and effect. For very young children the understanding of causality develops when they discover that one thing can cause another thing to happen. This understanding is important for developing quantitative relationships and becomes apparent when children begin to understand and use the term *more*. If they say or sign, “more,” they receive additional items (e.g., more crackers at snack time or more toys during playtime). Their request results in a change of quantity which is a foundational understanding of addition. Further on, young children discover the connections between counting and addition and subtraction. Each successive number in the count sequence represents one more; when counting backward it represents one less; and when skip counting each number represents the total when repeatedly adding the same amount leading to understanding the relationship between addition and multiplication. In fostering these connections parents, caregivers, educators and others can help by using supportive language during counting activities and say, “We have 3 right now. I’m going to add one more (add one). Now, how many do we have? Let’s add another...” Similar language can be used when removing objects and counting backward, or when repeatedly adding the same amount to the pile. The connection between counting and addition and subtraction is a critical understanding as children begin to construct, invent or reinvent (as Kamii calls it) their own strategies for solving problems.

The CCSSM recognizes several common addition, subtraction, multiplication and division situations. In the early years children begin to understand addition as *adding to* (a start amount) and subtraction as *taking from* (a start amount); addition as *putting together* (two or more groups) and subtraction as *taking apart* (one group into two); and *compare* situations in determining the difference between two quantities (more or fewer). Having a deep understanding operations and the relationships between them are foundational concepts for later algebraic thinking—a major focus of the CCSSM. For more detail about these operational situations and the common multiplication and division situations, please refer to the glossary of the CCSSM on pages 88-90.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Goal: Children understand operations and the relationships between them.

Some of the indicators of young children developing knowledge of operations and algebraic thinking are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Understand causality, and understand addition as adding to and understand subtraction as taking from.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discover that one thing can cause another thing to happen. 2. Understand <i>more</i> (e.g., “do you want <i>more</i>?”). 3. Use the term <i>more</i> to get additional objects (e.g., asking for <i>more</i> when eating snack or playing with toys) 	<p>Understand causality, and understand addition as adding to and understand subtraction as taking from.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine that <i>one</i> object added to another makes <i>two</i> and that <i>one</i> object taken away from <i>two</i> make <i>one</i>. 2. Recognize that adding to a group of objects increases the total, and taking some from a group decreases the total. 3. Recognize that if you change the size of a part of a group, then you also change the size of the whole group. 	<p>Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the more you add to a group the greater the total. 2. Understand the more you take away, the less you have, and the less you take away, the more you have. 3. Put two groups together to form one larger groups and find the total of up to 5. 4. Separate one group into two smaller groups and know the size of the parts (beginning with a total of up to 5), e.g., “I can give 2 blocks to my friend and still have 3 to play with.”

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Goal: Children understand operations and the relationships between them.

Some of the indicators of young children developing knowledge of operations and algebraic thinking are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds (e.g., claps), acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations. 2. Solve addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem. 3. Decompose numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $5 = 2 + 3$ and $5 = 4 + 1$). 4. For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation. 5. Fluently add and subtract within 5. 	<p>Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. 2. Solve word problems that call for addition of three whole numbers whose sum is less than or equal to 20, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. 3. Understand subtraction as an unknown-addend problem. For example, subtract $10 - 8$ by finding the number that makes 10 when added to 8. Add and subtract within 20. <p>Understand and apply properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Apply properties of operations as strategies to add and subtract.² Examples: If $8 + 3 = 11$ is known, then $3 + 8 = 11$ is also known. (Commutative property of addition.) To add $2 + 6 + 4$, the second two numbers can be added to make a ten, so $2 + 6 + 4 = 2 + 10 = 12$. (Associative property of addition.) 	<p>Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use addition and subtraction within 100 to solve one- and two-step word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. <p>Add and subtract within 20.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Fluently add and subtract within 20 using mental strategies.² By end of Grade 2, know from memory all sums of two one-digit numbers. 	<p>Represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpret products of whole numbers, e.g., interpret 5×7 as the total number of objects in 5 groups of 7 objects each. For example, describe a context in which a total number of objects can be expressed as 5×7. 2. Interpret whole-number quotients of whole numbers, e.g., interpret $56 \div 8$ as the number of objects in each share when 56 objects are partitioned equally into 8 shares, or as a number of shares when 56 objects are partitioned into equal shares of 8 objects each. For example, describe a context in which a number of shares or a number of groups can be expressed as $56 \div 8$. 3. Use multiplication and division within 100 to solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays, and measurement quantities, e.g., by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. 4. Determine the unknown whole number in a multiplication or division equation relating three whole numbers. For example, determine the unknown number that makes the equation true in each of the equations $8 \times ? = 48$, $5 = _ \div 3$, $6 \times 6 = ?$

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Operations and Algebraic Thinking

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards		<p>Add and subtract within 20.</p> <p>5. Relate counting to addition and subtraction (e.g., by counting on 2 to add 2).</p> <p>6. Add and subtract within 20, demonstrating fluency for addition and subtraction within 10. Use strategies such as counting on; making ten (e.g., $8 + 6 = 8 + 2 + 4 = 10 + 4 = 14$); decomposing a number leading to a ten (e.g., $13 - 4 = 13 - 3 - 1 = 10 - 1 = 9$); using the relationship between addition and subtraction (e.g., knowing that $8 + 4 = 12$, one knows $12 - 8 = 4$); and creating equivalent but easier or known sums (e.g., adding $6 + 7$ by creating the known equivalent $6 + 6 + 1 = 12 + 1 = 13$).</p> <p>Work with addition and subtraction equations.</p> <p>7. Understand the meaning of the equal sign, and determine if equations involving addition and subtraction are true or false. For example, which of the following equations are true and which are false? $6 = 6$, $7 = 8 - 1$, $5 + 2 = 2 + 5$, $4 + 1 = 5 + 2$.</p> <p>8. Determine the unknown whole number in an addition or subtraction equation relating three whole numbers. For example, determine the unknown number that makes the equation true in each of the equations $8 + ? = 11$, $5 = _ - 3$, $6 + 6 = _$.</p>	<p>Work with equal groups of objects to gain foundations for multiplication.</p> <p>3. Determine whether a group of objects (up to 20) has an odd or even number of members, e.g., by pairing objects or counting them by 2s; write an equation to express an even number as a sum of two equal addends.</p> <p>4. Use addition to find the total number of objects arranged in rectangular arrays with up to 5 rows and up to 5 columns; write an equation to express the total as a sum of equal addends.</p>	<p>Understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division.</p> <p>5. Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide.2 Examples: If $6 \times 4 = 24$ is known, then $4 \times 6 = 24$ is also known. (Commutative property of multiplication.) $3 \times 5 \times 2$ can be found by $3 \times 5 = 15$, then $15 \times 2 = 30$, or by $5 \times 2 = 10$, then $3 \times 10 = 30$. (Associative property of multiplication.) Knowing that $8 \times 5 = 40$ and $8 \times 2 = 16$, one can find 8×7 as $8 \times (5 + 2) = (8 \times 5) + (8 \times 2) = 40 + 16 = 56$. (Distributive property.)</p> <p>6. Understand division as an unknown-factor problem. For example, find $32 \div 8$ by finding the number that makes 32 when multiplied by 8.</p> <p>Multiply and divide within 100.</p> <p>7. Fluently multiply and divide within 100, using strategies such as the relationship between multiplication and division (e.g., knowing that $8 \times 5 = 40$, one knows $40 \div 5 = 8$) or properties of operations. By the end of Grade 3, know from memory all products of two one-digit numbers.</p> <p>Solve problems involving the four operations, and identify and explain patterns in arithmetic.</p> <p>8. Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding.3</p> <p>9. Identify arithmetic patterns (including patterns in the addition table or multiplication table), and explain them using properties of operations. For example, observe that 4 times a number is always even, and explain why 4 times a number can be decomposed into two equal addends.</p>

Domain: Mathematics**Sub-domain & Goal: Numbers and Operations in Base-Ten**

The standards in this sub-domain focus on our base-ten system and place-value notation. In kindergarten, children discover that teen numbers are composed of one group of ten and some more. First and second grade standards extend the counting sequences focusing on the connection between skip counting, the base-ten system and place value. They also begin to record the results of comparisons with the symbols $>$, $=$, and $<$. Students explore multiple tens and ones and use correct place-value notation for numbers up to 120 in first grade moving to numbers to 1000 by then end of second grade. Second grade students gain an even deeper understanding of place value when they begin to discover strategies for adding and subtracting 2- or 3-digit numbers which include counting in units or multiples of hundreds, tens and ones and using expanded notation or place value. Third graders continue to deepen their understanding of place value even further when they explore multiplying by multiples of 10.

Domain: Mathematics**Sub-domain: Numbers and Operations in Base-Ten**

Goal: Children understand our base-ten system and place-value notation.

Some of the indicators of young children developing knowledge of base-ten and place-value notation are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	No standards in this domain.	No standards in this domain.	Recognize patterns in the counting sequence. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Count beyond 29 by repeating the 1-9 pattern when given a new decade name (e.g., when given the next decade name the count continues, 28, 29... "30", 31, 32, 33...).

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Numbers and Operations in Base-Ten

Goal: Children understand our base-ten system and place-value notation.

Some of the indicators of young children developing knowledge of base-ten and place-value notation are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value.</p> <p>1. Compose and decompose numbers from 11 to 19 into ten ones and some further ones, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each composition or decomposition by a drawing or equation (such as $18 = 10 + 8$); understand that these numbers are composed of ten ones and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine ones.</p>	<p>Extend the counting sequence.</p> <p>1. Count to 120, starting at any number less than 120. In this range, read and write numerals and represent a number of objects with a written numeral.</p> <p>Understand place value.</p> <p>2. Understand that the two digits of a two-digit number represent amounts of tens and ones. Understand the following as special cases:</p> <p>a. 10 can be thought of as a bundle of ten ones — called a “ten.”</p> <p>b. The numbers from 11 to 19 are composed of a ten and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine ones.</p> <p>c. The numbers 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 refer to one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine tens (and 0 ones).</p> <p>3. Compare two two-digit numbers based on meanings of the tens and ones digits, recording the results of comparisons with the symbols $>$, $=$, and $<$.</p>	<p>Understand place value.</p> <p>1. Understand that the three digits of a three-digit number represent amounts of hundreds, tens, and ones; e.g., 706 equals 7 hundreds, 0 tens, and 6 ones. Understand the following as special cases:</p> <p>a. 100 can be thought of as a bundle of ten tens — called a “hundred.”</p> <p>b. The numbers 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900 refer to one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine hundreds (and 0 tens and 0 ones).</p> <p>2. Count within 1000; skip-count by 5s, 10s, and 100s.</p> <p>3. Read and write numbers to 1000 using base-ten numerals, number names, and expanded form.</p> <p>4. Compare two three-digit numbers based on meanings of the hundreds, tens, and ones digits, using $>$, $=$, and $<$ symbols to record the results of comparisons.</p> <p>Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract.</p> <p>5. Fluently add and subtract within 100 using strategies based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.</p> <p>6. Add up to four two-digit numbers using strategies based on place value and properties of operations.</p> <p>7. Add and subtract within 1000, using concrete models or drawings and strategies based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction; relate the strategy to a written method. Understand that in adding or subtracting three-digit numbers, one adds or subtracts hundreds and hundreds, tens and tens, ones and ones; and sometimes it is necessary to compose or decompose tens or hundreds.</p> <p>8. Mentally add 10 or 100 to a given number 100–900, and mentally subtract 10 or 100 from a given number 100–900.</p> <p>9. Explain why addition and subtraction strategies work, using place value and the properties of operations.</p>	<p>Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.</p> <p>1. Use place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100.</p> <p>2. Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.</p> <p>3. Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range 10–90 (e.g., 9×80, 5×60) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations.</p>

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain & Goal: Number and Operations—Fractions (3rd grade only)

The standards in this sub-domain focus on developing and understanding of the symbolic notation for fractions and connecting this understanding to the geometry standards found in the kindergarten, first and second grades where students compose shapes using equal sized parts and decompose shapes into equal parts. While there are no formal standards for fractions in birth to preschool, frequent opportunities to explore fair shares present themselves during play and snack time, e.g., when breaking a cracker in half. Word of caution—There is no such thing as ‘the big half’ or the ‘little half.’ If one piece is larger than the other, they are two pieces, not halves. Halves are equal in size.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Numbers and Operations-Fractions

Goal: Children understand fractions as numbers.

Some of the indicators of Third Graders understanding fractions as numbers are as follows:

Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
<p>Develop understanding of fractions as numbers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand a fraction $1/b$ as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size $1/b$. 2. Understand a fraction as a number on the number line; represent fractions on a number line diagram. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Represent a fraction $1/b$ on a number line diagram by defining the interval from 0 to 1 as the whole and partitioning it into b equal parts. Recognize that each part has size $1/b$ and that the endpoint of the part based at 0 locates the number $1/b$ on the number line. b. Represent a fraction a/b on a number line diagram by marking off a lengths $1/b$ from 0. Recognize that the resulting interval has size a/b and that its endpoint locates the number a/b on the number line. 3. Explain equivalence of fractions in special cases, and compare fractions by reasoning about their size. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understand two fractions as equivalent (equal) if they are the same size, or the same point on a number line. b. Recognize and generate simple equivalent fractions, e.g., $1/2 = 2/4$, $4/6 = 2/3$. Explain why the fractions are equivalent, e.g., by using a visual fraction model. c. Express whole numbers as fractions, and recognize fractions that are equivalent to whole numbers. Examples: Express 3 in the form $3 = 3/1$; recognize that $6/1 = 6$; locate $4/4$ and 1 at the same point of a number line diagram. d. Compare two fractions with the same numerator or the same denominator by reasoning about their size. Recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two fractions refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with the symbols $>$, $=$, or $<$, and justify the conclusions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain & Goal: Measurement and Data

As young children begin to crawl exploring more of their environment and traveling greater distances, they are discovering the concepts of *here* and *there*, and *near* and *far*. These early discoveries led to examining their world in terms of space and distance. They also begin to explore how objects vary in size, the passing of time as they notice regularity in their daily routines, and new language to support communicating their new discoveries. Preschoolers and kindergarteners begin to directly compare objects, holding one object next to another to determine which is taller, longer, heavier, etc. In first grade, “students develop an understanding of the meaning and processes of measurement” and begin to explore how to use smaller items of equal size (non-standard units such as popsicle sticks, or blocks) to measure length or distance by lining up the items from one end to another (CCSSM, p. 13). During first and second grade, student begin to formalize their concepts of time and accurately tell time by the end of second grade providing the foundation needed to solve problem involving elapsed time and time interval in later grades. Second graders also “recognize the need for standard units of measure (centimeter and inch) and they use rulers and other measurement tools with the understanding that linear measure involves an iteration (repetition) of units. They recognize that the smaller the unit, the more iterations they need to cover a given length” (CCSSM, p.17). Repeated experiences with standard measuring tools provide second graders with the concepts necessary to understand the number line and how it can be used as a tool to model addition and subtraction strategies. However, NCTM (2009) has found that “number lines are not appropriate for children before grade 2” (Fuson, Clements & Beckman p. 43). In third grade, “students recognize area as an attribute of two-dimensional regions,...by decomposing rectangles into rectangular arrays of squares, students connect area to multiplication, and justify using multiplication to determine the area of a rectangle” (CCSSM, p. 21). Third graders also solve problems involving time, liquid volumes, and masses of objects, and apply their knowledge of fractions to measurement.

This sub-domain also includes collecting and exploring data—the foundation of which is developed in the early years as young children begin to recognize how objects are similar and/or different from one another. As they begin to recognize various attributes of objects they sort and classify. This provides the opportunity to count the number of objects in each group and compare the results of the counts. These early experiences lay the foundation for collecting representing and comparing data in later grades.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Measurement and Data

Goal: Children learn and use concepts of measurement and comparison.

Some of the indicators of young children learning about measurement and comparisons are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Discovers measurable attributes and explores spatial reasoning</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand concepts such as <i>here</i> and <i>there</i>, and <i>near</i> and <i>far</i>. 2. Adjusts reach based on distance and size of an object. 3. Adjusts grasp of an object based on its weight. 	<p>Describe and compare measurable attributes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore objects by filling and emptying containers. 2. Discover that different-sized containers hold more or less. 3. Develop language to describe attributes such as <i>big</i> v. <i>small</i> (height/area/volume), <i>long</i> or <i>tall</i> v. <i>short</i> (length/height), <i>heavy</i> v. <i>light</i> (weight) and <i>fast</i> v. <i>slow</i> (speed). 4. Develop sense of time through participating in routine daily activities (e.g., know about when its' time to eat, nap, go home, etc.). 5. Recognize patterns in the environment (e.g., day follows night, patterns in carpeting or clothing, etc.) 6. Use terms such as <i>now</i>, <i>later</i>, <i>tomorrow</i> and <i>yesterday</i>. <p>Classify objects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Understand the concepts of <i>same</i> and <i>different</i>, and describe objects in these terms. 8. Classify and sort familiar objects by a known (e.g., hard v. soft, large v. small, heavy v. light). 9. Order blocks or other objects by size. 	<p>Describe and compare measurable attributes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore objects by filling and emptying containers. 2. Directly compares and orders objects using attributes of length, weigh and size (bigger/smaller, longer/shorter, taller/shorter, heavier/lighter). <p>Classify objects and count the number of objects in each category.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Sorts, classifies, and serializes objects (puts in a pattern) using attributes such as color, shape, size, etc. 4. Compare group size of sorted objects, e.g., I have more blue bears than red bears. 5. Use terms such as <i>before</i>, <i>after</i>, <i>now</i>, <i>later</i>, <i>tomorrow</i> and <i>yesterday</i>.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Measurement and Data

Some of the indicators of young children learning about measurement and comparisons are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Describe and compare measurable attributes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object. Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common, to see which object has “more of”/“less of” the attribute, and describe the difference. For example, directly compare the heights of two children and describe one child as taller/shorter <p>Classify objects and count the number of objects in each category.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Classify objects into given categories; count the numbers of objects in each category and sort the categories by count. 	<p>Measure lengths indirectly and by iterating length units.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Order three objects by length; compare the lengths of two objects indirectly by using a third object. Express the length of an object as a whole number of length units, by laying multiple copies of a shorter object (the length unit) end to end; understand that the length measurement of an object is the number of same-size length units that span it with no gaps or overlaps. Limit to contexts where the object being measured is spanned by a whole number of length units with no gaps or overlaps. <p>Tell and write time.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tell and write time in hours and half-hours using analog and digital clocks. <p>Represent and interpret data.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories; ask and answer questions about the total number of data points, how many in each category, and how many more or less are in one category than in another. 	<p>Measure and estimate lengths in standard units.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Measure the length of an object by selecting and using appropriate tools such as rulers, yardsticks, meter sticks, and measuring tapes. Measure the length of an object twice, using length units of different lengths for the two measurements; describe how the two measurements relate to the size of the unit chosen. Estimate lengths using units of inches, feet, centimeters, and meters. Measure to determine how much longer one object is than another, expressing the length difference in terms of a standard length unit. <p>Relate addition and subtraction to length.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use addition and subtraction within 100 to solve word problems involving lengths that are given in the same units, e.g., by using drawings (such as drawings of rulers) and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. Represent whole numbers as lengths from 0 on a number line diagram with equally spaced points corresponding to the numbers 0, 1, 2, ..., and represent whole-number sums and differences within 100 on a number line diagram. whole-number units. 	<p>Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time, liquid volumes, and masses of objects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tell and write time to the nearest minute and measure time intervals in minutes. Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of time intervals in minutes, e.g., by representing the problem on a number line diagram. Measure and estimate liquid volumes and masses of objects using standard units of grams (g), kilograms (kg), and liters (l). Add, subtract, multiply, or divide to solve one-step word problems involving masses or volumes that are given in the same units, e.g., by using drawings (such as a beaker with a measurement scale) to represent the problem. <p>Represent and interpret data.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Draw a scaled picture graph and a scaled bar graph to represent a data set with several categories. Solve one- and two-step “how many more” and “how many less” problems using information presented in scaled bar graphs. For example, draw a bar graph in which each square in the bar graph might represent 5 pets. Generate measurement data by measuring lengths using rulers marked with halves and fourths of an inch. Show the data by making a line plot, where the horizontal scale is marked off in appropriate units—whole numbers, halves, or quarters. <p>Geometric measurement: understand concepts of area and relate area to multiplication and to addition.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize area as an attribute of plane figures and understand concepts of area measurement.

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards			<p>Work with time and money.</p> <p>7. Tell and write time from analog and digital clocks to the nearest five minutes, using a.m. and p.m.</p> <p>8. Solve word problems involving dollar bills, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies, using \$ and ¢ symbols appropriately. Example: If you have 2 dimes and 3 pennies, how many cents do you have?</p> <p>Represent and interpret data.</p> <p>9. Generate measurement data by measuring lengths of several objects to the nearest whole unit, or by making repeated measurements of the same object. Show the measurements by making a line plot, where the horizontal scale is marked off in whole-number units.</p> <p>10. Draw a picture graph and a bar graph (with single-unit scale) to represent a data set with up to four categories. Solve simple put-together, take-apart, and compare problems using information presented in a bar graph.</p>	<p>a. A square with side length 1 unit, called “a unit square,” is said to have “one square unit” of area, and can be used to measure area.</p> <p>b. A plane figure which can be covered without gaps or overlaps by n unit squares is said to have an area of n square units.</p> <p>6. Measure areas by counting unit squares (square cm, square m, square in, square ft, and improvised units).</p> <p>7. Relate area to the operations of multiplication and addition.</p> <p>a. Find the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths by tiling it, and show that the area is the same as would be found by multiplying the side lengths.</p> <p>b. Multiply side lengths to find areas of rectangles with whole number side lengths in the context of solving real world and mathematical problems, and represent whole-number products as rectangular areas in mathematical reasoning.</p> <p>c. Use tiling to show in a concrete case that the area of a rectangle with whole-number side lengths a and $b + c$ is the sum of $a \times b$ and $a \times c$. Use area models to represent the distributive property in mathematical reasoning.</p> <p>d. Recognize area as additive. Find areas of rectilinear figures by decomposing them into non-overlapping rectangles and adding the areas of the non-overlapping parts, applying this technique to solve real world problems.</p> <p>Geometric measurement: recognize perimeter as an attribute of plane figures and distinguish between linear and area measurements</p> <p>8. Solve real world and mathematical problems involving perimeters of polygons, including finding the perimeter given the side lengths, finding an unknown side length, and exhibiting rectangles with the same perimeter and different areas or with the same area and different perimeters.</p>

Domain: Mathematics**Sub-domain & Goal: Geometry**

The sub-domain focused on two- and three-dimensional shapes and spatial reasoning. In our three-dimensional world young children explore various shapes by touching, feeling, shaking, stacking, etc. Their discoveries lead to recognizing some regularity in these shapes, some shapes are “flat” and some are “round.” As they hear adults in their environment use language to identify various attributes and names of shapes, they explore using the language to communicate their discoveries, beginning with informal language at first and later using more formal and precise language. As children move through their preschool and kindergarten years, they will begin to increase their understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes and can recognize, identify and name many common shapes regardless of their orientation. They also explore composing and decomposing shapes to make new shapes. In later grades, students refine their descriptions and definitions of shapes and their attributes and explore various way to sort and categorize shapes. Composing and decomposing shapes also provides opportunities to discuss equal parts of a whole and describing each part in fractional terms. The explorations in kindergarten through second grade should focus equal shares (parts), describing the shares (parts) using the words halves, fourths, and quarters, and use the phrases half of, fourth of, and quarter of. Describe the whole as two of, or four of the shares. Although these students may see and use some fraction notations, the goal during these early years should focus on partitioning shapes into *equal sized* parts, indentifying how many *equal sized* parts make up the whole (four), name for each part or unit (a fourth), and counting how many parts or units you are referring to (3 fourths). Formal fraction notation will be thoroughly explored in third grade (see Sub-domain: Numbers and Operations—Fractions).

Standards focusing on spatial reasoning are also included in this Sub-domain. As young children are exploring this world, building and stacking, they explore concepts and eventually the language of physical relations and relative positions such as *over, under, above, on, beside, next to, in front, behind, in inside, outside, between, up down, top, bottom, front, back near, far, left, right* and later they are able to follow one- and two-step directions using these terms, e.g., Please put this *on the top shelf and next to* the book about dogs.

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Geometry

Goal: Children recognize two- and three-dimensional objects and use spatial reasoning.

Some of the indicators of young children learning about geometry are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Discover shapes in their environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop concept of three-dimensionality. <p>Reason spatially</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Understand that objects have fronts and backs. 3. Understand that when an object is completely hidden, it is still there and can be removed. 4. Recovers objects that have been removed from hiding and hidden again in a second position. 5. Work simple insert puzzles. 6. Remove parts from and toy (e.g., a wheel and replace them). 7. Build three-dimensional structures using one type of object. 	<p>Identify and describe shapes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informally identify and play with solid objects (e.g., picking out a familiar object by touch when placed in a bag with two other objects). 2. Name and recognize shapes and communicate their ideas about how they are the same or different. 3. Match shapes of same size and orientations and moving towards shapes with different sizes and orientations. 4. Create pictures using simple shapes (e.g., using pattern blocks or parquetry blocks) 5. Put together and take apart shapes (e.g., understand that a whole object such as pizza can be separated into parts). 6. Build two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional structures often exploring symmetry. <p>Reason spatially</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Complete increasingly complex puzzles 8. Understand and use some words representing physical relations or positions (e.g., <i>over, under, above, on, beside, next to, in front, behind, in inside, outside, between, up down, top, bottom, front, back near, far, left, right</i>). 	<p>Identify and describe shapes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children name and recognize common two- and three-dimensional shapes, and their parts and attributes, and communicate their ideas about how they are the same or different. 2. Recognizes common shapes (e.g. square, rectangle, circle, triangle) regardless of orientation. 3. Compose (combine) and decompose shapes to make other shapes. <p>Reason spatially</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Communicate ideas about relative position of objects using terms such as <i>on top of, beside, in front, etc.</i> 5. Follow simple directions related to relative position (<i>beside, between, next to, etc.</i>)

Domain: Mathematics

Sub-domain: Geometry

Goal: Children recognize two- and three-dimensional objects and use spatial reasoning.

Some of the indicators of young children learning about geometry are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Identify and describe shapes (squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, hexagons, cubes, cones, cylinders, and spheres).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as <i>above</i>, <i>below</i>, <i>beside</i>, <i>in front of</i>, <i>behind</i>, and <i>next to</i>. Correctly name shapes regardless of their orientations or overall size. Identify shapes as two-dimensional (lying in a plane, “flat”) or three-dimensional (“solid”). <p>Analyze, compare, create, and compose shapes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/“corners”) and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length). Model shapes in the world by building shapes from components (e.g., sticks and clay balls) and drawing shapes. Compose simple shapes to form larger shapes. For example, “Can you join these two triangles with full sides touching to make a rectangle?” 	<p>Reason with shapes and their attributes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguish between defining attributes (e.g., triangles are closed and three-sided) versus non-defining attributes (e.g., color, orientation, overall size); build and draw shapes to possess defining attributes. Compose two-dimensional shapes (rectangles, squares, trapezoids, triangles, half-circles, and quarter-circles) or three-dimensional shapes (cubes, right rectangular prisms, right circular cones, and right circular cylinders) to create a composite shape, and compose new shapes from the composite shape. Partition circles and rectangles into two and four equal shares, describe the shares using the words halves, fourths, and quarters, and use the phrases half of, fourth of, and quarter of. Describe the whole as two of, or four of the shares. Understand for these examples that decomposing into more equal shares creates smaller shares. 	<p>Reason with shapes and their attributes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and draw shapes having specified attributes, such as a given number of angles or a given number of equal faces. Identify triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, and cubes. Partition a rectangle into rows and columns of same-size squares and count to find the total number of them. Partition circles and rectangles into two, three, or four equal shares, describe the shares using the words halves, thirds, half of, a third of, etc., and describe the whole as two halves, three thirds, four fourths. Recognize that equal shares of identical wholes need not have the same shape. 	<p>Reason with shapes and their attributes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that shapes in different categories (e.g., rhombuses, rectangles, and others) may share attributes (e.g., having four sides), and that the shared attributes can define a larger category (e.g., quadrilaterals). Recognize rhombuses, rectangles, and squares as examples of quadrilaterals, and draw examples of quadrilaterals that do not belong to any of these subcategories. Partition shapes into parts with equal areas. Express the area of each part as a unit fraction of the whole. For example, partition a shape into 4 parts with equal area, and describe the area of each part as $\frac{1}{4}$ of the area of the shape.

SCIENCE

Science for young children, birth through grade 3, is focused on developing habits of mind such as curiosity, questioning, openness to new ideas, and wondering. This is a time when children are experiencing the world around them and constructing knowledge. Science should be relevant and concrete – at their fingertips allowing for understanding through their senses; it should be about where the children live, about their bodies, about aspects of the natural world they can explore themselves. The younger the child, the closer the experience needs to be to them.

The state of the world today makes it imperative to start science exploration as early as possible. As Wynne Harlen states, “. . . whether we teach science or not, they will be developing ideas about the world around them from their earliest years (Harlen, p. 2).” Children begin early to understand their relationship with the earth and nature and their place in the system. They begin early to understand healthy choices for living such as healthy foods and leading active lives with exercise and daily time outside. They enthusiastically investigate how to make things move and can thoughtfully observe living things in their habitats.

For early childhood educators, science is a relevant, exciting topic for teaching across the curriculum. Science offers opportunities for mathematical, reading, and writing experiences. It provides a meaningful context for these activities. The teacher’s role in science is to provide opportunities for concrete experiences, facilitate those experience, listen to ideas, ask open-ended questions, explore along with the child, provide opportunities for problem-solving, examine early understandings, and provide information – the key is to allow for a safe, supportive environment that fosters scientific dispositions and builds science content knowledge over time .

Within VELs, science is divided into the domains of physical science, life science, the human body, and earth and space, to provide clear expectations for what children should be learning about. In each domain, outcomes are addressed that focus on both science process and content knowledge. Science and engineering practices include **planning, observing, exploring, problem-solving, using models, gathering and recording information, and discussing findings**. Content outcomes are focused on elements of the study of each domain and how children interact with and construct knowledge about earth and space, life science, the human body, and physical science.

Physical Science

Children explore the physical properties of objects and materials in their everyday environment and experience. They notice that different kinds of matter exist (e.g., wood, metal, water) and that some matter can be identified as either solid or liquid, depending on their temperature. Children can observe that heating or cooling substances can cause changes. Through experimentation, children can determine what properties are best suited for specific purposes.

Physical science also includes force and motion concepts. Children investigate the cause and effect relationships of pushes and pulls. They come to realize that pushing or pulling an object can change the speed or direction of its motion. Additionally, they develop an understanding of friction as a pull that opposes the object’s motion. Energy is explored through waves, which are regular patterns of motion that can be made in water by disturbing the surface. Waves, or vibrations, from sound energy can also be created and their impact observed. Children discover that light energy allows us to see objects and very hot objects give off light (e.g., a fire, the sun). Some materials allow light to pass through them, others allow only some light through, and others block all the light and create a dark shadow on any surface beyond them, where the light cannot reach.

Life Science

Children explore the characteristics of living things within their experience and environment. They learn that plants and animals have different parts that help them to meet their needs for survival. Through observations, children discover how plants and animals change over time and produce offspring who share characteristics of their parents. Children come to understand that all animals need food in order to live and grow while water and light are essential for plant growth. They learn how animals depend on their surroundings to get what they need, including food, water, shelter, and a favorable temperature. Finally, children need to know that some kinds of plants and animals that once lived on Earth (e.g., dinosaurs) are no longer found anywhere, although others now living (e.g., lizards) resemble them in some ways.

Human Body

Children examine the human body through exploration of movement, health, and exercise. They observe and compare physical features of themselves and their classmates. Children notice that people have different external features, such as color of hair, skin and eyes. They learn that these features are inherited from their biological parents. Children investigate their world using a variety of senses and recognize that different senses provide different information. They also begin to understand how senses help people to meet their needs for survival. With the support of adults, children identify substances in the environment that can be harmful to their bodies and strategies for keeping themselves safe. Children observe how people change over time and go through predictable stages of development.

Earth and Space Science

Children investigate the earth and sky in their environment and examine them more closely. They observe, describe, and predict patterns of the motion of the sun, moon, and stars and recognize that scientific tools like telescopes make it possible to observe celestial objects in greater detail. They learn that some events occur in cycles, like day and night, while others, like a volcano, have a beginning and an end. Additionally, children begin to understand that some events, like earthquakes, happen very quickly; others, such as the formation of the Grand Canyon, occur very slowly, over a time period much longer than one can observe. They record observations of the weather in order to notice patterns that occur over time. Children use models to explore how wind and rain can change the land and look for evidence of these changes in their own environments. The impact of plants and animals, including humans, on the land is examined and children identify options that can reduce adverse impacts on land, water, air, and other living things—for example, by reducing trash through reuse and recycling.

Crosscutting Concepts

The domains of science are fortified by concepts that are threaded throughout the physical, life, and Earth/space sciences. These crosscutting concepts can be considered the learning goals necessary to achieve science literacy. They serve as “connective tissue” across the domains of science and allow children to develop coherent, predictable views of the natural world. Patterns, cause and effect relationships, cycles, sustainability (stability and change), scale/proportion/quantity, systems, and structure/function are crosscutting concepts that need to be carefully woven into science experiences that are also rich with content and opportunities to develop science and engineering practices.

(http://www.nsta.org/about/standardsupdate/resources/201202_Framework-Duschl.pdf)

A Framework for K-12 Science (http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13165) identifies the following crosscutting scientific and engineering concepts:

1. *Patterns.* Observed patterns of forms and events guide organization and classification, and they prompt questions about relationships and the factors that influence them.
2. *Cause and effect: Mechanism and explanation.* Events have causes, sometimes simple, sometimes multifaceted. A major activity of science is investigating and explaining causal relationships and the mechanisms by which they are mediated. Such mechanisms can then be tested across given contexts and used to predict and explain events in new contexts.

3. *Scale, proportion, and quantity.* In considering phenomena, it is critical to recognize what is relevant at different measures of size, time, and energy and to recognize how changes in scale, proportion, or quantity affect a system's structure or performance.
4. *Systems and system models.* Defining the system under study—specifying its boundaries and making explicit a model of that system—provides tools for understanding and testing ideas that are applicable throughout science and engineering.
5. *Energy and matter: Flows, cycles, and conservation.* Tracking fluxes of energy and matter into, out of, and within systems helps one understand the systems' possibilities and limitations.
6. *Structure and function.* The way in which an object or living thing is shaped and its substructure determine many of its properties and functions.
7. *Stability and change.* For natural and built systems alike, conditions of stability and determinants of rates of change or evolution of a system are critical elements of study.

(*A Framework for K-12 Science*, p. 84)

The Role of Engineering

In addition to quality science experiences, young children should be provided with opportunities to solve engineering challenges. Look around your classroom or home. How much of what you see is part of the human-made world that was created in response to a need or problem? Engineers ask questions, imagine possibilities, and then plan, design, and construct solutions. They revisit their work and make improvements. Children are born engineers! They are fascinated by intriguing problems and delight in building, taking things apart, and investigating how things work. Engineering breathes life into mathematics and science by providing opportunities for application and integration of content. Designing pathways for balls to roll down, constructing pulley systems to move materials from one place to another, and building the “tallest” tower are examples of engaging engineering challenges that can naturally occur in early education classrooms.

<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/beyond/seed/zan.html>

Technology as a Tool

Technology is integral to the study of science and is considered a tool for learning. Technology offers children the opportunity to observe living things more closely such as looking at pond water through a digital microscope. It offers children the opportunity to document a plant's growth with a digital camera or to document the phases of the moon through photography. New technologies that support children's understanding of science concepts are being developed; be sure to check for streaming video, computer applications, and other technologies that help science come alive for children.

The National Research Council reports that a preschool curriculum that promotes skills such as reflecting, predicting, questioning, and hypothesizing is most effective for engaging young learners (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001).

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS K-3) and the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)

The performance expectations (VELS Content) as well as the Science and Engineering Practices for each grade level K-3 are taken directly from the Next Generation Science Standards (DRAFT). Crosscutting concepts identified in NGSS are also included. For additional information that will clarify the intent of the science standards, educators are encouraged to go directly to NGSS at <http://www.nextgenscience.org>. Explicit connections to Common Core State Standards for both Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy, clarification statements for performance expectations, descriptions of disciplinary core ideas, and assessment boundaries are incorporated into NGSS in order to support a common, shared interpretation of the standards.

Domain: Science

Sub-Domain: Physical Science

Goal:

Some of the indicators of young children learning about physical science are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Interact with the world around them</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the people, things, and places in their world through exploration and play: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> React to sounds outside Experiment with their own ability to create sounds Observing objects that emit light Handle and mouth objects Explore own body such as grabbing foot, looking at hands Make discoveries with objects such as rattles (cause and effect) Repeat behaviors to figure out cause and effect (e.g., a toy released high always goes down (law of gravity) or enjoy filling containers and dumping contents out 	<p>Interact with the world around them</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Move away from trusted caregiver to explore new things, then check back by looking or showing object Use objects in more than one way Describe patterns observed Act on the understanding that objects still exist while out of sight Ask simple questions like Why? What? Where? Use objects as a means to an end (e.g. carries blocks in a bucket) Observe and describe how items or people are the same and different Experiments with the effects of pushing and pulling on objects Creates sounds intentionally (e.g., moos like a cow, plays with instruments) 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices: Use scientific practices including asking questions, observing, recording, and discussing their findings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing (e.g., block play, sand & water play) Use scientific practices of <i>planning, observing, exploring, problem-solving, gathering and recording information, and discussing findings.</i> Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real-life experiences May use technology as a tool for learning (e.g., digital cameras for recording) Identify problems and use materials to create solutions. (Engineering) <p>CONTENT: Use the five senses to investigate physical properties of objects and materials</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify differences in the properties of objects and materials Explore and describe how things move (force and motion) Use words to describe how objects move in different ways Explore patterns of movement and describe various actions that can change an object's motion such as pulling, pushing, twisting, rolling, and throwing Explore and describe cause-effect relationships based on everyday experiences Experience the warmth of the sun Recognize that lights, TV, radios, and other electronics use energy that should be conserved. <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scale, Proportion, and Quantity (e.g., block building) Patterns Cause & Effect Relationships Sustainability

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Physical Science

Some of the indicators of children learning about physical science are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions based on observations of the natural and/or designed world. <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With guidance, design and conduct investigations in with peers. 2. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and conduct an investigation of different kinds of materials to describe their observable properties and classify the materials based on the patterns observed. 2. Design and conduct investigations to test the idea that some materials can be a solid or liquid depending on temperature. 3. Ask questions, based on observations, to classify different objects by their use and to identify whether they occur naturally or are human-made. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and conduct investigations collaboratively. 2. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. 3. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements of a proposed object or tool or solution to determine if it solves a problem or meets a goal. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use information from direct or indirect observations to construct explanations. 2. Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution that solves a specific problem. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Record observations, thoughts, and ideas. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construct an explanation using observations as evidence that objects in darkness can be seen only when light travels to the objects and shines on them. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze data from tests of an object or tool to determine if a proposed object or tool functions as intended. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution to a specific problem. 2. Generate and compare multiple solutions to a problem. <p>Engaging in Argument from Evidence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify arguments that are supported by evidence. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze data from tests of a student-designed tool to determine if the tool measures weight or size accurately, compared to standard measuring tools. 2. Design an object built from a small set of pieces to solve a problem and compare solutions designed by peers given the same set of pieces. 3. Identify arguments that are supported by evidence that some changes caused by heating or cooling can be reversed and some cannot. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formulate questions that can be investigated and predict reasonable outcomes based on patterns such as cause and effect relationships <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and conduct investigations collaboratively, using fair tests in which variables are controlled and the number of trials considered. 2. Make observations and/or measurements, collect appropriate data, and identify patterns that provide evidence for an explanation of a phenomenon or test a design solution. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply scientific knowledge to solve design problems. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate the motion of objects to determine when a consistent pattern can be observed and used to predict future motions in the system.

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Physical Science

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	CROSSCUTTING CONCEPTS -Patterns -Cause and Effect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an investigation to determine the effect of placing objects with different characteristics in the path of a beam of light and use these characteristics to meet a goal. Record and communicate Observations that some very hot objects give off their own light. Conduct an investigation to provide evidence that vibrating matter creates sound and that sound can cause matter to vibrate. Use tools and materials to design and build a device that uses light or sound to solve the problem of sending a signal over a distance. CROSSCUTTING CONCEPTS -Cause and Effect:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze data from testing objects made from different materials to determine if a proposed object functions as intended. CROSSCUTTING CONCEPTS -Scale, Proportion, and Quantity -Energy and Matter Asking Questions and Defining Problems: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool. Planning and Carrying Out Investigations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Design and conduct investigations collaboratively. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution to a specific problem. Engaging in Argument from Evidence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Make a claim about the effectiveness of an object, tool, or solution that is based on relevant evidence. CONTENT <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out investigations to provide evidence that an object may stay in one place, move, or change shape when pushed/pulled. Design and conduct investigations of objects moving at different speeds to compare the change of an object's motion and shape before and after a collision. Make a claim about the effectiveness of a solution that applies a push or a pull to change the speed or direction of an object to solve a problem. Carry out investigations to determine the relationship among friction, motion, and the warming of objects. Define a problem caused by either too much or too little friction between two objects and develop solutions that address problem. CROSSCUTTING CONCEPT : - Cause and Effect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out investigations of the motion of objects to predict the effect of forces on an object in terms of balanced forces that do not change motion and unbalanced forces that change motion. Investigate the effect of electric and magnetic forces between objects not in contact with each other and use the observations to describe their relationships. Apply scientific knowledge to design and refine solutions to a problem by using the properties of magnets and the forces between them. CROSSCUTTING CONCEPTS -Cause and Effect -Stability and Change:

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Life Science

Goal:

Some of the indicators of children learning about life science are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Interact with living things around them</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show interest in animals and pictures of animals 2. Use the senses (mouthing, watching, grasping, reaching) to get information and explore what's nearby 3. Show interest in the natural world 4. Recognize self and family members 	<p>Show curiosity about the living things around them</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show interest in animals and other living things. 2. Begin to label animals by name and to identify traits (such as the sound a cow makes). 3. Enact animals' activities (such as eating, sleeping) in pretend play. Move toy animals to mimic animals in the wild. 4. Explore the parts of living things, such as leaves fallen from trees 5. Engage with plants and animals in a respectful way 6. Differentiate between animal and plant 7. Name some common animals and their babies 	<p>SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES: Use scientific practices including asking questions, observing, recording, and discussing their findings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing (e.g., plants, animals, insects discovered outside) 2. Use scientific practices of <i>planning, observing, exploring, problem-solving, gathering and recording information, and discussing findings.</i> 3. Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real-life experiences 4. May use technology as a tool for learning (e.g., digital cameras) 5. Create models including drawings that demonstrate understanding of science concepts. <p>CONTENT: Demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics of living things.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate, describe, and compare the characteristics that differentiate living from non-living things 2. Observe and describe plants and animals to notice change over time 3. Notice similarities and differences between animals and their offspring <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns -Sustainability -Cause & Effect Relationships -Cycles

Domain: Science
Sub-domain: Life Science

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions based on observations of the natural and/or designed world. <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With guidance, design and conduct investigations in with peers. 2. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and conduct an investigation of different kinds of materials to describe their observable properties and classify the materials based on the patterns observed. 2. Design and conduct investigations to test the idea that some materials can be a solid or liquid depending on temperature. 3. Ask questions, based on observations, to classify different objects by their use and to identify whether they occur naturally or are human-made. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and conduct investigations collaboratively. 2. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. 3. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements of a proposed object or tool or solution to determine if it solves a problem or meets a goal. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use information from direct or indirect observations to construct explanations. 2. Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution that solves a specific problem. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Record observations, thoughts, and ideas. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construct an explanation using observations as evidence that objects in darkness can be seen only when light travels to the objects and shines on them. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze data from tests of an object or tool to determine if a proposed object or tool functions as intended. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution to a specific problem. 2. Generate and compare multiple solutions to a problem. <p>Engaging in Argument from Evidence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify arguments that are supported by evidence. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze data from tests of a student-designed tool to determine if the tool measures weight or size accurately, compared to standard measuring tools. 2. Design an object built from a small set of pieces to solve a problem and compare solutions designed by peers given the same set of pieces. 3. Identify arguments that are supported by evidence that some changes caused by heating or cooling can be reversed and some cannot. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formulate questions that can be investigated and predict reasonable outcomes based on patterns such as cause and effect relationships <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and conduct investigations collaboratively, using fair tests in which variables are controlled and the number of trials considered. 2. Make observations and/or measurements, collect appropriate data, and identify patterns that provide evidence for an explanation of a phenomenon or test a design solution. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply scientific knowledge to solve design problems. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate the motion of objects to determine when a consistent pattern can be observed and used to predict future motions in the system.

Domain: Science
Sub-domain: Life Science

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use and share pictures, drawings and/or writings of observations. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use information from direct or indirect observations to construct explanations. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and comprehend grade-appropriate texts and media to acquire scientific and/or technical information. 2. Critique and/or communicate information or design ideas and/or solutions with others in oral and/or written forms using models, drawings, writing, or numbers. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool. <p>Developing and Using Models:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and/or use models (i.e., diagrams, drawings, physical replicas, dioramas, dramatizations, or storyboards) that represent amounts, relationships, relative scales (bigger, smaller), and/or patterns in the natural and designed worlds. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use information from direct or indirect observations to construct explanations. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool. <p>Developing and Using Models:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and/or use models (i.e., diagrams, drawings, physical replicas, dioramas, dramatizations, or storyboards) that represent amounts, relationships, relative scales (bigger, smaller), and/or patterns in the natural and designed worlds. <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display data in tables and graphs, using digital tools when feasible, to reveal patterns that indicate relationships. 2. Use data to evaluate claims about cause and effect. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use evidence (e.g., measurements, observations, patterns) to construct a scientific explanation or design a solution to a problem. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and/or combine across complex texts and/or other reliable media to acquire appropriate scientific and/or technical information. 2. Use multiple sources to generate and communicate scientific and/or technical information orally and/or in written formats, including various forms of media, and may include tables, diagrams, and charts. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze and interpret data about changes in the environment of different areas and describe how the changes may affect the organisms that live in the areas. 2. Use evidence about organisms in their natural habitats to design an artificial habitat in which the organisms can survive well. 3. Analyze and interpret data from fossils to describe the types of organisms that lived long ago and the environments in which they lived and compare them with organisms and environments today. 4. Use multiple sources to generate and communicate information about the size, stability, and specialization of groups animals may form, and how different types of groups may help the members survive in their natural habitats.

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect, analyze, and use data to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive. 2. Obtain information to describe the relationship between the needs of different plants and animals (including humans) and where they live on the land or in the water. 3. Construct an explanation for how plants and animals (including humans) can change their environment while meeting their basic needs. 4. Communicate and discuss solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment using models and/or drawings. <p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns -Cause and Effect -Systems and System Model 	<p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and comprehend grade-appropriate texts and media to acquire scientific and/or technical information. 2. Record observations, thoughts, and Ideas <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use diagrams and physical models to support the explanation of how the external parts of animals and plants help them survive, grow, and meet their needs. 2. Define a human problem and design a solution to the problem based on how animals use external parts to meet their own needs. 3. Use information from observations to support the explanation that different individual plants and animals of the same type have similarities and differences. 4. Record observations and communicate about the ways young plants and 5. Use information from text and other reliable media about the behaviors of parents and offspring and communicate about how those behaviors help offspring survive. <p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns -Structure and Function 	<p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution that solves a specific problem. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make observations about the variety of plants and animals living in an area and identify the specific places they live in order to make comparisons between different areas. 2. Develop and use models to compare how living things depend on their surroundings to meet their needs in the places they live. 3. Design a solution to a problem caused when a habitat changes and some of the plants and animals may no longer be able to live there. 4. Define a simple problem and test solutions to determine which better fulfills the function of an animal necessary for the reproduction of a flowering plant. <p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause and Effect -Stability and Change -Systems and System Models 	<p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Systems and System Models: -Stability and Change <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use evidence (e.g., measurements, observations, patterns) to construct a scientific explanation or design a solution to a problem. 2. Identify the evidence that supports particular points in an explanation. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and/or combine across complex texts and/or other reliable media to acquire appropriate scientific and/or technical information. 2. Use multiple sources to generate and communicate scientific and/or technical information orally and/or in written formats, including various forms of media and may include tables, diagrams, and charts. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construct explanations from evidence that life cycles of plants and animals have similar features and predictable patterns. 2. Use evidence to support explanations that traits are inherited from parents, as well as influenced by the environment, and that organisms have variation in their inherited traits. 3. Construct explanations for how differences in characteristics provide an advantage to some individuals in the same species in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing. 4. Communicate information about how some characteristics of organisms have been used to inspire the design of technology that meets people's changing needs and wants. <p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patterns: -Cause and Effect:

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Earth and Space

Goal:

Some of the indicators of children learning about the earth and space are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Children interact with their environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use more than one sense at a time, such as when looking at, feeling, and shaking a rattle 2. Show curiosity about things and try to get things that are out of reach 3. Interact daily with the outdoors 	<p>Children exhibit curiosity towards their environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at and handle things to identify what's the same and what's different about them 2. Explore nature using the senses, such as looking at and feeling different leaves 3. Ask simple questions about the natural world (Where does the snow come from?) 4. Show interest in animals and other living things. 5. Observe and identify weather change such as sun, rain, snow 6. Identify that people and animals can live in different kinds of places, such as fish living in the lake 	<p>SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES:</p> <p>Use scientific practices including asking questions, observing, recording, and discussing their findings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing (e.g., plants, animals, insects discovered outside) 2. Use scientific practices of <i>planning, observing, exploring, problem-solving, gathering and recording information, and discussing findings.</i> 3. Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real-life experiences 4. May use technology as a tool for learning (e.g., digital cameras for recording, digital microscopes for observing) 5. Create models including drawings that demonstrate understanding of science concepts. <p>CONTENT:</p> <p>Demonstrates knowledge of the Earth's environment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the characteristics of weather based on first-hand observations using related vocabulary 2. Name objects seen in the day or night sky (e.g., clouds, lightning) 3. Collect, describe, and sort rocks. <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns -Cause and effect relationships -Cycles -Sustainability (stability and change)

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Earth and Space

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions based on observations of the natural and/or designed world. (K-ESS3-c) <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use and share pictures, drawings, and/or writings of observations. (K-ESS2-a) 2. Use observations to describe patterns and/or relationships in the natural and designed worlds in order to answer scientific questions and solve problems. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use tools and materials provided to design a device or solution to a specific problem.) <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read and comprehend grade-appropriate texts and media to acquire scientific and/or technical information. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements of a proposed object or tool or solution to determine if it solves a problem or meets a goal. <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use and share pictures, drawings, and/or writings of observations. 2. Use observations to describe patterns and/or relationships in the natural and designed <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Record and share observations of locally occurring natural events to identify patterns that are cycles and those that have a clear beginning and end. 2. Use observations to describe patterns of objects in the sky that are cyclic and can be predicted. 	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Developing and Using Models:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and/or use models (i.e., diagrams, drawings, physical replicas, dioramas, dramatizations, or storyboards) that represent amounts, relationships, relative scales (bigger, smaller), and/or patterns in the natural and designed worlds. <p>Planning and Carrying Out Investigations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements to collect data which can be used to make comparisons. 2. Make direct or indirect observations and/or measurements of a proposed object or tool or solution to determine if it solves a problem or meets a goal. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constructing explanations and designing solutions in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to the use of evidence or ideas in constructing explanations and designing solutions. 2. Use information from direct or indirect observations to construct explanations. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Critique and/or communicate information or design ideas and/or solutions with others in oral and/or written forms using models, drawings, writing, or numbers. 2. Record observations, thoughts, and ideas. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p>	<p>Science and Engineering Practices:</p> <p>Analyzing and Interpreting Data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display data in tables and graphs, using digital tools when feasible, to reveal patterns that indicate relationships. <p>Using Mathematics and Computational Thinking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use mathematical thinking and/or computational outcomes to compare alternative solutions to an engineering problem. 2. Organize simple data sets to reveal patterns that suggest relationships. 3. Describe, measure, estimate, and graph quantities such as area, volume, weight, and time to address scientific and engineering questions and problems. <p>Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use evidence (e.g., measurements, observations, patterns) to construct a scientific explanation or design a solution to a problem. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and/or combine across complex texts and/or other reliable media to acquire appropriate scientific and/or technical information. <p>Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and/or combine across complex texts and/or other reliable media to acquire appropriate scientific and/or technical information.

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Earth and Space

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>2. Critique and/or communicate information or design ideas and/or solutions with others in oral and/or written forms using models, drawings, writing, or numbers.</p> <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observe, record, and share representations of local weather conditions to describe changes over time and identify patterns. 2. Obtain information from text and other media about different types of local weather, including severe weather, and identify the most common types of weather in the local region. 3. Ask questions and communicate information about the purpose of weather forecasting to prepare for, and respond to, problems caused by weather and how life would be different without forecasts. 4. Carry out investigations using observations to determine the effect of sunlight on Earth's surface. 5. Use tools and materials provided to design and test a structure that will reduce the warming effect of sunlight on Earth's surface. <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns -Cause and Effect 	<p>3. Make and share observations about tools to determine if they solve the problem of allowing people to see more objects in the sky and see some objects in greater detail.</p> <p>Crosscutting Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constructing explanations and designing solutions in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to the use of evidence or ideas in constructing explanations and designing solutions. 2. Use information from direct or indirect observations to construct explanations. <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and use models to describe patterns of kinds and shapes of landforms and of bodies of water. 2. Use observations to construct explanations about how landforms and bodies of water provide homes for living things. 3. Use observations to construct explanations that water exists in different forms in natural landscapes, determining the variety of life forms that live in a particular location. 4. Develop models to investigate how wind and water can move Earth materials from one place to another and change the shape of the land quickly or slowly. 5. Communicate information about possible design solutions to the loss of homes on land for living things resulting from wind or water resulting in change in the shape of the land. 6. Use drawings and physical models to test, compare strengths and weaknesses, and communicate design solutions that slow or prevent wind and/or water from changing the shape of the land. <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns -Cause and Effect -Stability and Change 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Combine information in written text with that contained in corresponding tables, diagrams, and/or charts. 3. Use multiple sources to generate and communicate scientific and/or technical information orally and/or in written formats, including various forms of media and may include tables, diagrams, and charts <p>CONTENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize simple weather data sets to record local weather data and identify day-to-day variations, as well as long-term patterns of weather. 2. Display simple data sets in tables and graphs to describe typical weather conditions expected during a particular season and identify variations over years. 3. Obtain and communicate information about the similarities and differences between weather and climate. 4. Use evidence to evaluate and refine design solutions that reduce the environmental and/or societal impacts of a weather-related hazard.* 5. Obtain and communicate information about new and/or improved technologies, developed as a result of increased scientific knowledge of weather or related hazards, which have changed the way people live or interact with one another. <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patterns

Domain: Science

Sub-domain: Human Body

Goal:

Some of the indicators of children learning about the human body are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
S Standards	<p>Children feel confident, safe, and healthy physically and psychologically</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore own body: grab foot, clap hands, stick out tongue 2. Use senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell to explore the world 3. Grasp and reach for objects 4. Has periods of contentment when needs are met 5. Experiment with different ways of moving 	<p>Children feel confident, safe, and healthy physically and psychologically</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in confidence in taking reasonable risks like climbing up and down one or two stairs 2. Recover from small falls while walking 3. Clap for self and looks around for others to share in pride 4. Help with dressing by pushing arms or legs into clothing 5. Enjoy daily outdoor time 6. Begin to recognize safe situations and avoid unsafe ones 7. Assert preferences 	<p>SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES:</p> <p>Use scientific practices including asking questions, observing, recording, and discussing their findings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask questions based upon discoveries made while playing (e.g., role playing dentist, doctor, nurse) 2. Use scientific practices of <i>planning, observing, exploring, problem-solving, gathering and recording information, and discussing findings.</i> 3. Make simple observations, predictions, explanations and generalizations based on real-life experiences 4. May use technology and props as a tool for learning (e.g., stethoscope, blood pressure cuffs, x-rays, wheel chairs, crutches) 5. Create models including drawings that demonstrate understanding of science concepts. <p>CONTENT:</p> <p>Demonstrates knowledge of the human body, health, and exercise</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate complex movements in play and games (e.g., runs quickly, changes direction, stops, starts again, skips) 2. Manage routines such as dressing self, using toilet alone, using utensils 3. Identify and attend to personal hygiene needs 4. Identify healthy food choices 5. Articulate what to do in an emergency 6. Recognize everyday dangers <p>Crosscutting Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cause and effect relationships -Cycles

Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Human body concepts are incorporated into the life science standards in grades K-3.			

Social Studies

From the moment they are born, children begin exploring their world. At each development stage—infant, toddler, preschool and early elementary—children look around and try to make sense of their social and physical environments. They begin by making connections to family, then friends. As they enter preschool they begin to explore their community and by the time they begin their early elementary school years, they see themselves as citizens in a big world (Gayle Mindes, 2005).

Social Studies is about helping children become involved and responsible citizens. Educators and researchers agree: now more than ever, there is a need for Social Studies programs to prepare children for the future (Sief, 2003). In the elementary classroom Social Studies should be given as much attention as reading and writing, as conceptual knowledge from Social Studies makes reading and writing easier (Johnson 2000).

Within the school curriculum, Social Studies draws upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences (NCSS). This interdisciplinary integration of the social sciences and humanities leads to practicing problem-solving and decision-making for the purpose of developing citizenship skills on critical social issues (Zarillo, 2004). Children are then able to develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world (NCSS).

The function of Social Studies is to develop students' understanding of the society in which they live. Social Studies for young children must be concrete, involving children in doing and experiencing; they should have direct, hands-on experiences allowing for exploration, experimentation and inquiry (Sunal, 1990). From preschool on, they are then able to gather information and increase their understanding of Social Studies content (Bruner, 1960).

Social Studies should be the thread that ties all elements of the curriculum together throughout the entire school day (Charlesworth and Miller 1997). Educators can help children explore Social Studies every day by:

- Relating Social Studies topics to real-life experiences (read diverse fiction and non-fiction, encourage role-playing, take field trips, invite family and community members to the classroom);
 - Helping children articulate their own Social Studies questions and pursue answers (Allemman, 2003, Levstik, 2001);
 - Talking with children in ways that require thinking about people and how they live;
 - Ensuring children understand and use inquiry processes (NCSS, 2010);
 - Providing opportunities for collaboration, decision-making and problem solving (NCSS, 2010);
 - Observing and recognizing Social Studies learning when children demonstrate it.

The Social Studies domain is divided into five sub-domains: Self, Family and Community; Geography; Civics; History, and; Economics. In each of the sub-domains, there are standards and practices outlined for: infants and young toddlers (birth to 18 months); older toddlers and twos (18 months to 36 months); preschool (three-

and four-year-olds); Kindergarten (five- and six-year-olds); first grade (six- and seven-year-olds); second grade (seven- and eight-year-olds), and; third grade (eight- and nine-year-olds). You will see “emerging” noted in the age groups where appropriate. You will also see appropriate and suggested practices outlined for each of the subdomains.

Overarching Practices for Learning About Our World: Social Studies

- Read and discuss books that promote understanding of social studies content and skills and promote critical thinking/problem solving skills (Hilke, 1999 and McGowen, 1996).
- Select both historical and contemporary fiction and non-fiction books that are authentic, accurate, multicultural, historical and contemporary.
- Ask and prompt children to ask open-ended question that promote discussion (Levstik, 2001)
- Initiate projects that promote understanding of social studies content and skills and promote critical thinking/problem solving skills (Doolittle, 2003)
- Provide opportunities for students to research Social Studies topics on the Internet
- Teach quantitative skills necessary to read and interpret charts and graphs (Johnson, 2000)
- Use scaffolding techniques of knowledge-building to continually support Social Studies learning (Levstik, 2001)
- Use classroom projects and experiences to engage students in real life social studies inquiry and experiences (Galston, 2003)
- Use a variety of methods and props (puppets, dramatics play, role playing) to discuss social studies topics (Maxwell, 2001)

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Self, Family and Community

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of themselves, their families, friends and communities.

Some of the indicators of children learning about themselves, their families, friends and communities are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Begin to demonstrate an understanding of themselves and their families and caregivers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to respond with movement and/or sounds when someone speaks child's name. 2. Show interest in people. 3. Begin to notice repeated routines (i.e. lifting arms to be picked up). 4. Begin to notice physical characteristics, respond to emotional expressions of adults and imitate facial expressions. 	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of themselves and their families and caregivers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is eager for recurring events. 2. Begin to connect new experiences to past experiences. 3. Experiment with physical relationships (on/under, inside/outside, etc.). 4. Begin to understand roles of various people in the community. 	<p>Demonstrate a further understanding of themselves and their families and caregivers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can name family members by relationship and make a drawing of his/her own family as the child sees it. 2. Begin to understand that people live in families in which individuals have different roles. 3. Begin to understand that families are the same and different in many ways. 4. Begin to understand that rules and responsibilities differ from family to family. 5. Begin to understand that families have different traditions, routines and foods. 6. Recognize whose parent is whose when parents come for their children or in photos of each other's families. 7. Begin to understand that people are the same and different in many ways. 8. Describe own unique characteristics and those of others. <p>Begin to demonstrate an understanding of community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to understand that a community is a group in which a person may belong. 2. Recognize a variety of jobs and the work associated with them. 3. Begin to recognize various cultural groups within a community (churches, etc.).

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Self, Family and Community

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of themselves, their families, friends and communities.

Some of the indicators of children learning about themselves, their families, friends and communities are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7-year-olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year-olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9- year-olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of themselves and friends.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify emotions and use words to describe them. 2. Able to express own preferences, thoughts and feelings. 3. Be able to wait (for a turn, treat, etc.) 4. Adapt to new environments by behaving and displaying emotions in ways expected. 5. Begin to recognize how own actions affect others. 6. Begin to make and follow, some of the time, multi-step plans for completing a task. 7. Show understanding of others' feelings (in school, on playground, etc.). 8. Make decisions and solve problems with other children. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in discussions about family and community customs and traditions. 2. Begin to understand the cultures represented by the classroom and in the community. 	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of themselves, friends and families.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand how body and face show different emotions. 2. Understand how families in the community are the same and different. 3. Talk about families and the ways families live and work together in a neighborhood. 4. Begin to understand that people and families have different cultures and customs all over the world. 5. Understand that telling and listening is a way that people can learn from others. 6. Understand that people often choose to do certain things their own way. 7. Understand that people often choose to dress, talk, and act like their friends. 8. Understand that disagreements occur between friends. 	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of themselves, friends and families.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand impact of different emotions on others. (Being happy might help others feel happy, etc.). 2. Share a family or cultural tradition, dance, song or practice with classmates, friends and family. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand that people belong to some groups because they are born into them and some because they join them. 2. Learn how the local community works, and a variety of ways that communities organize themselves. 	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of themselves, friends and families.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know and use strategies to deal with different emotions, such as using self-control when angry. 2. Have a better understanding of others' feelings. 3. Understand that various factors contribute to the shaping of a person's identity. 4. Understand that human beings have different interests, motivations, skills, and talents. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show interest in learning about the different people living in his/her community and state. 2. Understand that family, groups and community influence the individual's daily life and personal choices. 3. Understand the role of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Geography

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of people, places and their environment.

Some of the indicators of children learning about people, places and their environment are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Begin to investigate environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Move to explore surroundings by rolling over, crawling, beginning to use arms and legs purposefully. 2. Explore spaces, such as trying to fit into an open cardboard box. 3. Begin to recognize some familiar places, such as home or a grandparent's house. 4. Begin to know where favorite toys or books are kept. 	<p>Investigate environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experiment with physical relationships, such as on/under, near/far, inside/outside. 2. Begin to use words to indicate location and position. 3. Begin to recognize aspects of the environment, such as roads, buildings, trees, gardens, bodies of water or land formations. <p>Investigate moving in the environment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore different ways of moving, including how animals move. 2. Begin to talk about and dramatize transportation (cars, trucks, trains). 3. Begin to answer questions about where they went on a trip. 4. Begin to talk about things they see on the way to and from school. 	<p>Begin to demonstrate an understanding of environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use words to indicate relative location and use spatial and locational words. 2. Use personal experiences as a basis for exploring geographic concepts and skills. 3. Engage in play where one item represents another (miniature vehicles, people, blocks). 4. Follow directions related to movement, e.g. make and walk on paths between objects from the door to the window. 5. Build and navigate a simple obstacle course. 6. Identify and describe prominent features or landmarks of the classroom, school, neighborhood and community. 7. Begin making simple maps of the classroom and neighborhood (teacher-directed). 8. Begin to recognize that roads have signs or a name, and houses and apartments have numbers to help identify their location. 9. Explore similarities and differences between their own environment and other locations.

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Geography

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of people, places and their environment.

Some of the indicators of children learning about people, places and their environment are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7-year-olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year-olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9- year-olds)
Standards	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of environment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use terms to describe relative location (i.e. above/below, etc.) 2. Can verbalize name and address. 3. Recognize that neighborhood spaces are defined by boundaries (fences, yard, sidewalk). 4. Identify location and physical characteristics represented on maps and globes (e.g. land, water, roads, cities). 5. Understand that a globe is a kind of map and is like a picture of the whole world. 6. Use a simple map to find something (for example: a treasure map). 7. As a group, draw a simple map of the neighborhood after taking a walk. 	<p>Understand environment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Able to write name and address. 2. Able to locate places in the school and community and describe their relative location. 3. Identify and use simple map symbols and key/legend. 4. Able to create maps to describe the relative location of places in the school and community. 5. Explain representations of the earth such as maps and globes. 6. Begin to know the differences among a bar, pictograph and circle graph and begin to interpret graphs, charts and diagrams. 7. Know that the physical features of an area determine the type of home in which people live. 	<p>Understand environment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use cardinal directions to locate places on maps and places in the classroom, school and community. 2. Sketch a simple map related to the classroom, school or community (mental map). 3. Identify examples of various land forms (e.g. continents, islands). 4. Describe how location, weather and physical environment affect where and how people live. 5. Understand how human factors and the distribution of resources affect the development of communities and the movement of populations. 6. Identify the types of settlement and patterns of land use in the local community. 7. Explain how people's actions affect the community's environment (e.g. pollution, recycling, gardening). 8. Use simple charts and graphs to represent given geographical information. 9. Participate in inquiry investigations to learn about other parts of the world. 	<p>Understand environment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe characteristics and use of various maps. 2. Use maps, charts and pictures to describe how places in Vermont are different (land use, vegetation, etc.). 3. Sketch a simple map of Vermont from memory (mental map). 4. Begin to understand political, topographical and historical maps. 5. Begin to understand the use of mental maps to organize information about people, places and environments in a spatial context. 6. Understand how geographic processes and human actions modify the environment and how the environment affects humans. 7. Know the difference between a bar, pictograph and circle graph. 8. Interpret a graph, chart and diagram. 9. Participate in inquiry investigations to learn about other parts of the globe.

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Civics

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding and behaviors of what it means to be a responsible citizen.

Some of the indicators of children understanding what it means to be a responsible citizen are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<p>Emerging</p> <p>Understand words such as “no” or “stop”</p>	<p>Begin to learn about rules and responsibilities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help with class routines (e.g. clean-up, putting toys away, etc.). 2. Follow rules with teacher support. 3. Make choices about food, toys, (clothing, etc.) 4. Begin to enjoy small group activities facilitated by an adult 5. Try a variety of approaches to solve a problem 	<p>Learn about rules and responsibilities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to understand rules and follow rules with adult support 2. Begin to respect of the rights and opinions of others 3. Cooperate with others in a joint activity 4. Participate in creating classroom rules and participate in discussions about fairness. 5. Know the authority figures who make, apply and enforce rules 6. Help make plans for classroom activities (learning centers, field trips, projects, etc.) 7. Think about a problem and try different solutions and participate in discussing and generating solutions to class problems and conflicts 8. Demonstrate responsible behaviors in caring for toys and materials 9. Recognize the needs of other people by helping them 10. Participate in voting as a way of making choices

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Civics

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding and behaviors of what it means to be a responsible citizen.

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7-year-olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year-olds)\	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9- year-olds)
Standards	<p>Understand the balance between rights and responsibilities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to understand cause and effect and how they relate to personal experience 2. Explore ways to balance the needs of individuals and groups 3. Understand there are different rules within different contexts 4. Understand the consequences of complying or not complying with different rules 5. Demonstrate ways of improving the quality of life in the classroom or school 6. Demonstrate how an individual can make a positive difference in the community 7. Begin to understand the election process by participating in voting (mock elections, boo selections, field trips) as a way of making choices 8. Work cooperatively in a group to set goals, complete a project and solve conflicts 	<p>Understand what it means to be a citizen.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate an understanding of rights and responsibilities. 2. Demonstrate an understanding of and respect for other people's points of view. 3. Recognize the purpose of rules and practicing self-control. 4. Begin to understand the meaning of political symbols and concepts: flags, patriotic songs, the Pledge of Allegiance, laws and rules 5. Describe feelings and situations that might lead to conflict 6. Describe and explore ways that people solve problems 7. Participate in setting classroom rules 8. Participate in classroom decision-making through voting 9. Take responsibility for own actions 10. Recognize and give examples of fairness 11. Begin to understand the tensions between wants and needs of individuals 12. Demonstrate positive interaction with group members (e.g., working with a partner to complete a task) 13. Begin to demonstrate empathy, social responsibility and consideration of others 	<p>Understand what it means to be a citizen.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take part in voting to make classroom decisions 2. Know that rules and laws are established by people, explain why they are written down and explain the consequences of not following them. 3. Identify examples of interdependence among individuals and groups (e.g., family, sports teams) 4. Describe his/her role as a member of various groups 5. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of political symbols and concepts: flags, patriotic songs, the Pledge of Allegiance, laws and rules 6. Demonstrate self-discipline and self-reliance 7. Explain own point of view on issues that affect them 8. Demonstrate empathy, social responsibility and consideration of others <p>Understand that people participate in government.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe what it means to be a responsible member of a group 2. Begin to understand and explain the purpose of government 3. Understand that state, local and national officials are elected 4. Begin to recognize that communities have a government that provides services such as schools, libraries, fire and police protection) 5. Describe actions that can improve the school and community. 	<p>Demonstrate what it means to be a citizen.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate how people can participate in their government 2. Demonstrate the roles individuals have in the voting process 3. Describe behaviors that foster cooperation among individuals 4. Describe different types of conflict among individuals and groups 5. Explain different ways in which conflict has been resolved 6. Identify the men and women who've made contributions to enhance and promote the ideal of "freedom and justice for all" 7. Understand that communities benefit from volunteers <p>Demonstrate an understanding of government.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand how government protects the rights and property of individuals 2. Explain the purpose of rules and laws and compare similarities and differences (e.g., how are bike helmet and seat belt laws similar?). 3. Demonstrate an understanding that the basic purposes of government are to make laws and decide if laws have been broken 4. Describe political ideas and traditions important to the development of the United States e.g. democracy, individual rights, concepts of freedom

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: History

Goal: Children will demonstrate an understanding of time and begin to understand the historical concepts that give meaning to past and present events.

Some of the indicators of children understanding time and historical concepts are as follows:

Standards	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)	
	Begin to notice the passage of time. 1. Begin to notice daily routines. 2. Begin to recognize beginning and ending of event (clapping at the end of a song, etc.).	Begin to understand sequences, routines and passage of time. 1. Begin to connect new experiences to past experiences. 2. Begin to help with routines (setting table for meals, etc.).	Understand sequences, routines and time. 1. Begin to predict what comes next in the day. 2. Begin to remember and follow directions. 3. Begin to understand the measurement of time and demonstrate an awareness of time by using and responding to words such as yesterday, today and tomorrow, before, after, now and then. 4. Begin to observe and document changes that take place over time in their environment. 5. Become aware of changes in self and others over time. 6. Understand that people of different ages have different appearances and behaviors. 7. Begin to talk about changes they've noticed in themselves since they were babies.	
	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
	Understand time. 1. Begin to talk about the past and future, such as what the child did this morning or will do on the weekend. 2. Compare past and present events. 3. Use words to describe the chronology of the day (first, next, last). 4. Identify ways in which people are same and/or different (past vs. present).	Understand time. 1. Use words to describe time (past, present, future). 2. Identify similarities/differences in people, places and events over time. 3. Create a primary source of personal information (journal, diary, autobiography) through pictures and/or writing. 4. Use a calendar to measure time.	Understand time. 1. Begin to ask questions about family history and culture. 2. Develop a personal timeline. 3. Identify similarities/differences in communities over time. 4. Identify an important event in their lives and discuss changes that resulted (after library got flooded, we had to get new books). 5. Identify sources where historical information can be found and how it can be used. 6. Locate general areas on maps and globes referenced in historical stories.	Understand time. 1. Begin to learn about the history and customs of other parts of the world. 2. Complete a timeline based on given information. 3. Use information on a map, table or graph to describe the past. 4. Identify primary and secondary sources and differentiate among fact, interpretation and opinion. 5. Collect information about the past through interviews, photos and artifacts. 6. Identify ways different cultures record their histories.

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Economics

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of how individuals in societies make choices in order to satisfy their needs and wants.

Some of the indicators of children understanding how individuals in societies make choices are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	Emerging	Emerging	<p>Begin to understand the difference between needs and wants</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw pictures showing the difference between their needs and wants. 2. Participate in role play in problem-solving situations about needs and wants. 3. Role play purchasing and other situations where choices must be made <p>Describe various community workers and understand what people do in their work.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Match tools to jobs. 2. Participate in role play showing jobs of community workers. 3. Help create a mural of community workers. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of producers and consumers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work together as a group making something to sell, setting up a store and selling the product.

Domain: Social Studies

Sub-domain: Economics

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of how individuals in societies make choices in order to satisfy their needs and wants.

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<p>Understand the difference between needs and wants.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate through discussion, representation and role play that people make choices because they cannot have everything they want. 2. Begin to distinguish between the items that meet needs and meet wants in a store. <p>Understand money and how it is used.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role play purchasing and other situations. 2. Investigate ways people earn money in order to buy things. 3. Participate in money-saving activities: set a goal, make a plan, save money, meet goal. 4. Discuss and represent the benefits of saving money. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of producers and consumers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research community businesses and services. 2. Work as a group to decide what to produce and how to sell it. 3. Begin to recognize where food products come from. 	<p>Recognize the difference between needs and wants.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know that food and shelter are more important than toys and sweets. 2. Understand that people make choices because they cannot have everything they want. 3. Distinguish between the items that meet needs and meet wants in a store. <p>Understand money and how it is used.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the difference between barter and money. 2. Describe ways in which people exchange money for goods. 3. Explain why people earn, spend and save money. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of producers and consumers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in activities as buyer or seller and describe where goods come from. 2. Begin to identify economic activities that use local resources. 3. Explain the difference between goods and services and describe the goods and services that are provided in their school and community. 4. Identify community workers and the value these jobs provide. 	<p>Recognize the difference between needs and wants.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain ways that people decide what is a need and what is a want. 2. Understand that people make choices because they cannot have everything they want. 3. Distinguish between the items that meet needs and meet wants in a store. <p>Understand money and how it is used.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand why people need to be responsible about saving and spending money. <p>Demonstrate an understanding of production and consumption.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe natural resources (water, soil, wood, etc.), human resources (people at work), and capital resources (machines, tool and buildings) 2. Describe how these resources are used to produce goods and services 3. Understand that scarcity (limited resources) requires people to make choices about producing and consuming goods and services 4. Describe what goods and services are an important part of a person's daily life 5. Identify goods and services provided by the government 	<p>Recognize the difference between needs and wants.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain ways people meet their basic needs and wants <p>Understand money and how it is used.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain with specific examples how and why people save money 2. Understand the differences between the use of barter and the use of money in the exchange of goods <p>Demonstrate an understanding of production and consumption.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify goods and services provided by local and state governments 2. Understand and discuss how goods and services (specifically products and services students use) are marketed and the purpose and effect of advertising 3. Participate in community service activities.

Growing, Moving and Being Healthy

The “Growing, Moving and Being Healthy” section of the Vermont Early Learning Standards outlines age-appropriate expectations in three inter-related domains: Motor Development and Coordination, Health and Personal Care, and Safety. In order for children to develop to their full potential, they need to play indoors and outdoors, have good nutrition, feel safe, and be loved and protected. Children who are active, feeling good about themselves, and are physically healthy will be better learners.

As children grow from newborns to toddlers, and beyond, their nervous system matures which, in turn, enables them to perform increasingly complex movements. This maturation process happens in a predictable way, although the exact sequence and rate of physical growth may vary. Hence, infants typically roll over, and then sit up, crawl, and walk. The general pattern of physical growth is that large muscles (body core, legs, arms) develop before small muscles (hands, fingers, dexterity). Additionally, muscular strength and coordination grow from the center of the child’s body out to her extremities.

A description of the milestones of children’s healthy growth and development would not be complete if no mention of the alarming problem of childhood obesity is made. “Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled. Today, almost one in every three children in our nation is obese or overweight.” (www.letsmove.gov). Childhood obesity is a product of poor nutrition and a lack of exercise. Children need a healthy diet children and ample opportunities to move their bodies. Children who get exercise have stronger muscles and bones, a leaner body because exercise helps control body fat, and be less likely to become overweight or obese. Besides enjoying the health benefits of regular exercise, kids who are physically fit sleep better and are better able to handle physical and emotional challenges.

Motor Development and Coordination

Developing and practicing motor skills are essential for lifelong healthy living and learning. Large or gross motor skills refer to the ability for children to move and control large muscle groups and move the entire body or large portions of the body (e.g., legs, body core). Small or fine motor skills refer to the child’s ability to use the smaller muscles in the body, such as her hands and fingers. In combination with gross motor and fine motor skills, the body uses the senses to help guide motion thus creating sensorimotor skills. Developing physical health through gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and sensorimotor skills is essential to the development of the child as a whole.

Health and Personal Care

Learning and practicing healthy habits and safe choices in early childhood and the primary years are foundational for lifelong healthy living. Children who are feeling good and feeling good about themselves develop key self-management skills. Good nutrition, personal hygiene, basic personal care practices (e.g., healthy sleep patterns, bathing, dressing, dental hygiene) and the ability to recognize and appropriately address acute and chronic illness are essential to promoting optimal health.

Being Safe

Being Safe includes protecting children from exposure to harmful substances and situations, and helping children develop the behaviors and habits they need in order for them to keep themselves safe by avoiding harmful objects, environments and circumstances. Safety begins as an adult’s responsibility, but it increasingly becomes a set of skills children need to learn and independently use. The continuum in this area moves from the attentive, nurturing caregiver providing an environment free of harmful objects and moves through to the adult providing intentionally planned activities and experiences to help children acquire the skills they need to have. These skills include knowing how and when to ask for help, and recognizing the boundary between safety and danger. The following outlines the age expectations for the development of safety skills, ranging from what adults can do to keep children safe and progressing to the skills children acquire to help them build the foundation they need to make healthy and safe choices across varied environments with both their peers and adults.

Domain: Motor Development and Coordination

Sub-domain: Large Motor Development

Goal: Children demonstrate increasing strength and coordination of the large muscles (e.g., arms, legs, trunk).

Some of the indicators of young children's large motor development are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold head erect and steady when held on a shoulder 2. Lift head and chest when lying on stomach 3. Kick and reach for feet with hands 4. Roll from side to side, then back to front, and front to back 5. Sit with support and then without supports 6. Move by rolling, scooting, creeping or crawling 7. Pull up to stand and then walk while holding onto something or someone 8. Walk independently 9. Stoop over to explore things on ground increasingly maintaining balance 10. Begin to run 11. Dance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry objects while walking 2. Pull toys while walking 3. Climb up and down from low objects (ex. chair, bed, coffee table) 4. Walk and run with increasing skill; is able to change speed and direction 5. Walk backwards 6. Jump up and down in place 7. Kick ball that's not moving and throws a ball but with little control of direction or speed 8. Catch a large ball against the body 9. Coordinate using a hammer to hit a peg with increasing accuracy 10. Can briefly balance standing on one foot 11. Can bend down from waist while standing and still maintain balance 12. Walk up and then down stairs one at a time without alternating feet 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use both hands to grasp and or to catch 2. Balance standing on one foot 3. Walk along a straight line or beam 4. Demonstrate body and space awareness to move and stop with control 5. Climb on play equipment with balance 6. Exhibit motor control and balance when moving the whole body in a range of physical activities such as walking, propelling a wheelchair or mobility device, skipping, running, climbing and hopping 7. Demonstrate motor control and skill when using objects for a range of physical activities such as pulling, throwing, catching, kicking, bouncing or hitting balls, riding a tricycle 8. Jump over obstacles with two feet 9. Hop short distance on one foot 10. Walk up and down stairs alternating feet 11. Gallop

Domain: Motor Development and Coordination

Sub-domain: Large Motor Development

Some of the indicators of young children's large motor development are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Run with an even gait 2. Run forward, backward, slide to the side, and pivot without pausing 3. Hop on each foot separately without support 4. Maintain balance while bending, twisting, or stretching 5. Walk up and down stairs while holding an object 6. Able to stop and start on a signal 7. Move their bodies into position to catch a ball, and then throw the ball in the right direction 8. Kick a large ball to a given point with some accuracy 9. Alternate weight and feet while skipping or using stairs 10. Move to a rhythm 11. Demonstrate momentary stillness in a various balance activities 12. Enjoy activities that require attention to form, such as yoga, karate, sports, gymnastics or dance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate progress toward the mature form of selected locomotor skills (walking, running, skipping, hopping, galloping, jumping, and sliding) 2. Demonstrate progress towards the mature form of selected manipulative skills (throwing, catching, bounding, striking, kicking, rolling and object) 3. Show the ability to stop with control at a boundary, and the ability to change direction, quickly and safely, without falling. 4. Control the force of personal movement in general space (ex. tagging) 5. Demonstrate contrast between fast and slow movement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate competency toward the mature form of selected locomotor skills (walking, running, skipping, hopping, galloping, jumping, and sliding) 2. Demonstrate competency towards the mature form of selected manipulative skills (throwing, catching, bounding, striking, kicking, rolling and object) 3. Control force of personal movement and while moving objects (ex. striking a pinata) 4. Demonstrate a simple rhythmic movement (ex. hopping in time to an independent or imposed beat) 5. Follow simple rhythmic movements led by the teacher 6. Combine two fundamental skills (e.g., bounce and catch, jump and turn) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solve simple movement challenges in a group (3-4 people) 2. Adjust movement to work successfully with a partner. 3. Solve more complex movement challenges (ex. moving in general space changing direction and pathways). 4. Move with others (ex. do-si-do) 5. Balance with control on a variety of pieces of equipment (ex. large apparatus, skates, stilts). 6. Demonstrate the contrast between fast, medium and slow movement. 7. Move rhythmically when using various objects (ex. balls, ribbons, sticks, parachute) 8. Demonstrate smooth transitions between sequential motor skills (ex. smoothly running into a jump) 9. Show good form in basic movement (locomotor skills) and in skills with the hands (manipulative skills), even when participating in fast-moving games.

Domain: Motor Development and Coordination

Sub-domain: Small (or Fine) Motor Development

Goal: Children demonstrate increasing strength and coordination of the small muscles.

Some of the indicators of young children's small/fine motor development are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grasp caregivers' fingers 2. Reach and swipe at a dangled objects. 3. Reach for a toy, mouth open, and bring object to mouth for exploration. 4. Grasp and release an object 5. Use both hands to grasp toy and bring towards self 6. Shake a rattle 7. Transfer small object from hand to hand 8. Pick up small objects (ex. Cheerios) with thumb and forefinger 9. Bang objects together 10. Mimic hand clapping or a good-bye wave 11. Empty objects from containers 12. Turn pages of a board book independently 13. Point at object that is out of reach 14. Hold fat crayon with a full-hand grasp and scribble on large paper 15. Fit two cups together, one inside the other 16. Hold toys in one hand and explore them with the other hand 17. Make attempts to stack objects 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use some eating utensils appropriately (ex. spoon) 2. Open doors, with assistance, by turning and pulling doorknobs 3. Scribble with crayons and begin to imitate marks (e.g., a circle) 4. Use a paintbrush 5. Coordinate eye and hand movements, such as when putting objects into a container 6. Turn book pages one page at a time, most of the time 7. Stack two to three objects so they balance 8. Complete simple insert puzzles 9. Use shape sorter box or put large pegs into peg board 10. Pour liquid from a small pitcher to a cup. 11. Imitate hand motions of simple finger plays or songs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eat with utensils (scoops, spears, and spreads food) 2. Use various drawing and art materials (ex. crayons, markers, brushes, finger paints) 3. Open and close blunt scissors with one hand 4. Fasten large buttons and use large zippers independently 5. Demonstrate eye-hand coordination when using everyday tools, such as pitchers for pouring or utensils for eating 6. Copy shapes and geometric designs 7. Cut a piece of paper on a straight line and on a curve with some accuracy 8. Manipulate small objects with ease (ex. strings beads, fits small objects into holes) 9. Operate a stapler or hole punch 10. Complete increasingly complex puzzles (ex. single, cut-out figures to 10-piece puzzles) 11. Write some recognizable letters or numbers

Domain: Motor Development and Coordination

Sub-domain: Small (or Fine) Motor Development

Some of the indicators of young children's small/fine motor development are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove and replace easy-to-open container lids 2. Cut, draw, use glue with materials provided 3. Tie knots and shoe laces, with assistance 4. Print some letters in own name 5. Put together and pull apart manipulatives such as Legos 6. Thread small beads on a string 7. Draw a person with six parts 8. Demonstrate the ability to lace a card or sewing with age appropriate materials 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cut soft foods with a knife 2. Copy designs and shapes, letters and numbers 3. Tie a knot and bow 4. Manage buttons, zippers, laces and other closures 5. Sweep and dust, make bed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print many words 2. Manage many tasks that require dexterity 3. Draw pictures with increasing number of details 4. Create spontaneous drama, music and dance, with other children or alone 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write in cursive 2. Manage any task that requires dexterity 3. Draw pictures with increasing number of small details

Domain: Motor Development and Coordination

Sub-domain: Sensorimotor Development

Goal: Children demonstrate the ability to use their senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste to guide and integrate their actions.

Some of the indicators of young children's sensorimotor development are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)	
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Respond by turning toward sound, movement, and touch2. Focus eyes on near and far objects3. Enjoy sensation of swinging and rocking4. Become calm with caregiver assistance5. Explore the environment with mouth and hands6. Move objects from one hand to the other7. Coordinate eye and hand movements (ex. pick up and put objects into large container)8. Explore and respond to different surface textures such as soft toys, hard table tops	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Perform basic creative movements, with adult guidance or alone (e.g., dances to music)2. Demonstrate awareness of own body in space (e.g., walk around table without bumping into it)3. Eat food with a variety of textures4. Exhibit eye-hand coordination (ex. build with blocks, complete simple puzzles, string large beads)5. Enjoy climbing, walking up inclines, sliding, and swinging6. Play with materials of different textures (e.g., sand, water, leaves)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. React appropriately to the environment (ex. bends knees to soften a landing, moves quickly to avoid obstacles)2. Demonstrate concepts through movement (ex. imitate an animal through movement, sounds)3. Improve eye-hand coordination (ex. catch a bounced ball)4. Practice sensory regulation by pushing objects, climbing short ladders, swinging on a swing, and sliding5. Move to different patterns of beat and rhythm	
	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hit a medium-size ball (6" to 8") with a bat with some consistency2. Catch a ball thrown from a distance of five to ten feet3. Manipulate simple puppets4. Carry a glass of water or juice across the room without spilling it5. Enjoy vigorous, active play combined with social contact and games with basic rules (ex. freeze tag)6. Move a variety of body parts to different beats and rhythms of music7. Combine two fundamental movement skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Maintain balance while stopping and starting movements2. Control force of personal movement while moving objects3. Demonstrate a simple rhythmic movement4. Identify physiological signs of exercise	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Demonstrate the ability to change direction quickly and safely without falling.2. Demonstrate contrast between fast and slow movements3. Demonstrate simple rhythmic movements4. Combine up to 3 movements with or without equipment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create and perform movement, showing balance through concentration and muscle control.2. Understand and demonstrate static and dynamic balance3. Control personal movements while moving objects.4. Create a movement sequence combining movements and concepts that incorporate speed, force, levels, directions, and pathways5. Identify physiological effects of the different levels of exercise and how they relate to the body

Domain: Health and Personal Care

Sub-domain: Nutrition and Feeding

Goal: Children will recognize and eat a variety of nutritious foods.

Some of the indicators of young children's learning about nutrition are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)	
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Suck and swallow2. Connect breast or bottle (and food) with getting fed3. Help caregiver hold the bottle4. Chew and bite; explore and eat finger foods5. Regulate the speed/intensity of eating6. Consume a variety of nutritious foods from all food groups7. Drink and eat until satisfied/show feelings of hunger and fullness8. Grasp and drink from cup9. Begin to feed self with a spoon	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Distinguish between food and non-food items2. Feed self with a spoon, without help3. Feed self a sandwich, taking bites4. Recognize and eat a variety of healthy foods and choose among food options5. Name five or six of own body parts6. Try new foods when offered7. Consume age appropriate amounts of nutritious beverages (e.g., water, milk, occasional 100% juice8. Drink from a cup	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Distinguish food on a continuum from most healthy to less healthy2. Choose to eat foods that are better for the body than others, with assistance3. Pass food at the table and take appropriate sized portions, or other culturally-specific family serving style4. Try different healthy foods from a variety of cultures5. Help prepare healthy snacks6. 6. Eat a variety of nutritious foods and eat independently.	
	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain the primary function of certain foods (e.g., milk helps to build strong bones)2. Recognize foods from different food groups, with assistance3. Provide simple explanations for own and others' food allergies4. Help prepare meals and snacks5. State food preferences.6. Try most new foods.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Select a variety of foods that can be eaten for healthy snacks.2. Create a list of foods that should be limited.3. Identify a variety of nutritious food choices.4. Describe the benefits associated with a healthy diet	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain the importance of eating a variety of nutrient-rich foods.2. Set a short-term personal health goal for healthy eating and physical activity.3. Understand health-related fitness concepts and the benefits of physical activity.4. Begin to understand the consequences of health behaviors and choices that may prevent illness.5. Create healthy fruit and vegetable snacks.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Choose a variety of healthy foods in appropriate portions.2. Identify and classify foods, including recommended amounts to eat according to choosemyplate.gov3. Identify major nutrients supplied by food groups necessary for growth and maintenance.4. Describe strategies to improve or maintain personal health.

Domain: Health and Personal Care

Sub-domain: Daily Living Skills

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of how daily activity and hygiene promote their health and general well-being.

Some of the indicators of young children's learning about nutrition are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have periods of contentment when needs are met 2. Soothe selves and fall asleep 3. Respond to vocalizations during routines including diaper changing, eating, and dressing 4. Relax during bathing routines 5. Begin to be aware of and indicate own needs and wants (cry/vocalize when need changing or hungry, get blanket when tired, etc.) 6. May help adult when dressing, undressing and diapering 7. Wash and dry hands, with help 8. Begin to brush gums and teeth with assistance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Want to take care of self and show increasing participation/independence in personal care (e.g., pull at pants or give signs of needing toilet, assert independence "me do it!") 2. Participate in sleeping routines, such as getting and arranging soft toys to take to bed 3. Sleep well. Wake up rested and ready to be active. 4. Dress and undress completely (except for fasteners), with help 5. Participate in bathroom routine and show interest in toilet training. Use the toilet by about age 3, with help 6. Participate in healthy care routines (e.g., bathing, brushing teeth, washing hands, using tissue to wipe nose) and use personal care objects correctly and regularly, sometimes with assistance 7. Communicate with caregiver when not feeling well 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dress and undress with help. Take off coat and put it where it belongs. 2. Begin to take care of own toileting needs 3. Participate easily and know what to do in routine activities (such as meal time, nap time) 4. Communicate need to rest, drink and eat 5. Brush teeth with limited assistance 6. Cover mouth when coughing 7. Increase understanding of the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, nose, and mouth, and how the senses work together 8. Begin to understand and communicate how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety 9. Know what self-care items are used for (e.g., comb and toothbrush) and complete personal care tasks, such as dressing, brushing teeth, toileting, and washing hands independently. 10. Recognize the importance of doctor and dentist visits and cooperate during these visits. 11. Participate in the prevention and management of acute and chronic health conditions. 12. Avoid toxins, such as lead 13. Identify health products (e.g., shampoo, toothpaste, soap) 13. Recognize and communicate when experiencing pain or symptoms of illness

Domain: Health and Personal Care

Sub-domain: Daily Living Skills

Goal: Children demonstrate an understanding of how daily activity and hygiene promote their health and general well-being.

Some of the indicators of young children's learning about nutrition are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to use practices to be safe and healthy, with minimal adult help 2. Understand the importance of taking care of self and growing strong 3. Brush teeth and attempt flossing with supervision, and then allow assistance to complete process 4. Wash face without assistance. 5. Cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with elbow or tissue. 6. Explain the benefits associated with exercise 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to understand how own decisions can impact health and wellness now and in the future 2. Show interest in learning about body systems and a variety of health topics 3. Identify health service providers (nurse, dentist, paramedic, physician) that can help with personal health issues. 4. Brush teeth and floss with some assistance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand health-related fitness concepts and the benefits of physical activity 2. Begin to understand the consequences of health behaviors and choices, such as ways to prevent illness. 3. Recognize signs and symptoms of common illnesses 4. Brush teeth and floss with little or no assistance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brush teeth at least twice daily and floss once a day 2. Understand how health habits impact growth and development 3. Take responsibility for making healthy life choices

Domain: Personal Health & Well-Being

Sub-domain: Being Safe

Goal: Children will be able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of safety rules and knowledge about harmful objects and situations and how to avoid them.

Some of the indicators of young children's learning about being safe are as follows:

	Infants and young toddlers (I) (birth to 18 months)	Older toddlers and twos (T) (18 months to 36 months)	Preschoolers (P) (3- and 4-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prefer caregiver over stranger. Will be able to discriminate between his/her main caregiver and family, and strangers. 2. Stop/wait when caregiver says "no" or gives a nonverbal cue for alarm/danger. 3. Follow some consistently set rules and routines. 4. Watch familiar adults for appropriate reactions. 5. Accept comfort from others. 6. Explore own body: grabs foot, puts finger in ear, pulls hair, and finds mouth to suck on thumb/fingers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to avoid dangers, but cannot be relied on to keep themselves safe. 2. Know to hold caregivers' hand when walking in public places. 3. Communicate to an adult when someone hurts or makes them feel bad. 4. Recognize safety rules, but may not follow them. 5. Recover from small falls when walking 6. Take care of toileting needs in a variety of ways. 7. Assert preferences in a positive manner. 8. Anticipate consequences for not following rules. 9. Pay attention to safety instructions, with assistance. 10. Verbally offer simple rules. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold adults' hands when walking in public places. 2. Begin to learn safety rules of daily activities. 3. Engage in play as a means to understand healthy behavior and develop their bodies. 4. Begin to practice safe and healthy behaviors: recognize danger and poison symbols and avoid those areas. 5. Begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety. 6. Demonstrate safety awareness when purposefully using materials(e.g., carry scissors and pencils with points down to avoid accidents). 7. Increasingly perform self-care skills independently. 8. Care for personal belongings. 9. Show safe behavior for self and others by applying established rule, procedures and safe practices with adult guidance. 10. Communicate to peers and adults when seeing dangerous behaviors. 11. Do not touch or take medicine, without adult assistance; but know that medicine can improve health when used properly. 12. Look both ways before crossing street or road, and know to cross with adult assistance. 13. Understand the difference between safe and unsafe touch. 14. Identify appropriate clothing and sunscreen for various weather conditions. 15. Recognize safety issues with guns, fire, water and strangers.

Domain: Personal Health & Well-Being

Sub-domain: Being Safe

Goal: Children will be able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of safety rules and knowledge about harmful objects and situations and how to avoid them.

Some of the indicators of young children's learning about being safe are as follows:

	Kindergartners (K) (5- and 6- year olds)	First Graders (1) (6- and 7- year olds)	Second Graders (2) (7- and 8-year olds)	Third Graders (3) (8- and 9-year olds)
Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the reasons for safety rules. 2. Show safe behavior for self and others by applying established class rules, procedures and safe practices with adult guidance. 3. Explain when not to accept rides, food or money from strangers. 4. Understand that some practices may be personally dangerous. 5. Identify adults who can assist in dangerous situations. 6. Recognize personal privacy in relation to their body. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand that some game rules are for safety. 2. Recognize risky situations and explain how to avoid them. 3. Recognize what unwanted touch is. 4. Show safe behavior for self and others by applying established class rules, procedures and safe practices with limited teacher guidance. 5. Express self in safe and appropriate ways. 6. Show ability to control destructive impulses with guidance. 7. See teachers and adults outside of family as trusted resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate understanding of the harmful effects of drugs. 2. Show safe behavior for self and others by applying established class rules, procedures and safe practices with limited teacher guidance. 3. Express self in safe and appropriate ways. 4. Show control of destructive impulses with guidance. 5. See teachers and adults outside of family as trusted resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to expresses self in safe and appropriate ways. 2. Show control of destructive impulses with guidance. 3. Show safe behavior for self and others by practicing personal and group safety when applying class rules, procedures and practices. 4. Know and use ways to keep safe from strangers. 5. Know appropriate responses to harassment, bullying, intimidation and abuse.

The Key to Good Policy, Smart Decisions and Wise Investments:

Vermont's Roadmap for an Early Childhood Data Reporting System

JANUARY
2012

by
Project Core Team

Kathleen Eaton Paterson (Department for Children and Families)

Bob Costantino (Department for Children and Families)

Ann Dillenbeck (Building Bright Futures)

Manuela Fonseca (Department of Education)

Angela Rouelle (Agency of Human Services)

Suzanne Santarcangelo (Agency of Human Services)

Lisa Ventriss (VT Business Roundtable)

Vermont Early Childhood Data Reporting System Project, Phase 1: 2009-2011

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Project Core Team, Kathleen Eaton Paterson (Head Start Collaboration Office, Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families, 2003-2011), Bob Costantino (Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families), Ann Dillenbeck (Children's Integrated Services, Chittenden and Building Bright Futures Council), Manuela Fonseca (Department of Education), Angela Rouelle (Agency of Human Services), Suzanne Santarcangelo (Agency of Human Services) and Lisa Ventriss (VT Business Roundtable) would like to acknowledge and thank the many people who contributed to this effort.

First a thank-you to the National Governor's Association (NGA), sponsor of the National Governor's Association Initiative Supporting Ready States and its project coordinator, Rachel Demma.

There were many people in Vermont (recognized by the National Governor's Association as a home team) who contributed to this effort at various points along the way of this technical assistance award from the NGA. Much was learned from their expertise and experience and most valued was the time they shared. Many thanks to: Barbara Saunders, Barbara Postman, Beth Tanzman, Bob Bower, Carlen Finn, Carole Pomeroy, Cynthia Greene, Dana Robson, Danielle Howes, Dee Smith, Eileen Underwood, Fred Holmes, Garry Schaedel, Heather Wilson, Heidi Tringe, Hunt Blair, Jack Hoffman, Jan Walker, Jane Helmstetter, Janice Mantell, Jenny Samuelson, John Burley, Judy Adams, Karen Garbarino, Kate Rogers, Kay Johnson, KC Whiteley, Kim Keiser, Linda Michniewicz, Lisa Gauvin, Mark Sustic, Matt Snodgrass, Melissa Riegle-Garret, Mike Bailey, Mitzi Johnson, Nancy Kaplan, Nancy Sugarman, Paul Behrman, Peggy Brozicevic, Reeva Murphy, Sara Barry, Scott Johnson, and Shawn Skafelstad.

For further information on the National Governor's Association Initiative Supporting Ready States, go to:

<http://www.nga.org/cms/home/nga-center-for-best-practices/meeting--webcast-materials/page-edu-meetings-webcasts/col2-content/main-content-list/supporting-ready-states-a-projec.html> and <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1010GOVSGUIDEEARLYCHILD.PDF>

For further information on the Early Childhood Data Collaborative, go to: <http://www.ecedata.org/>

Your feedback is valued and most welcome. Please share your feedback or request information on the Vermont Early Childhood Data Reporting System Project, by contacting Kathleen Eaton Paterson at katheatonpaterson@gmail.com, Ann Dillenbeck at ann.dillenbeck@neklsvt.org or Bob Costantino at bob.costantino@state.vt.us

The full report and executive summary can be found on the Building Bright Futures website, www.buildingbrightfutures.org.

THE KEY TO GOOD POLICY, SMART DECISIONS AND WISE INVESTMENTS

VERMONT'S ROADMAP FOR AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA REPORTING SYSTEM

Vermont's strategic investments in its early childhood infrastructure over the past two decades demonstrate a strong commitment to building a system that will ensure all children arrive at the schoolhouse door ready to succeed in school and in life. Investments in governance, program quality, service integration and professional development have established Vermont's early childhood statewide governance body, the Building Bright Futures (BBF) Council, along with 12 regional BBF councils, a state-wide early care and education tiered quality rating and improvement system (Step Ahead Recognition System-STARS), integration of nursing, mental health, early intervention and family support services (Children's Integrated Services,) establishment of a statewide publicly funded prekindergarten system, and unification of the early childhood professional development system in a statewide career development center (Northern Lights Career Development Center).

A critical infrastructure component, a comprehensive early childhood data system to track child outcomes and measure return on investments, remains undeveloped. Currently, early childhood programs and service providers collect and report on a grab bag of data to satisfy a variety of state and federal requirements. This means that Vermont currently lacks adequate capacity to fully collect, analyze and hold itself accountable to established early childhood outcomes and indicators. As a result, we are unable to target and evaluate our investments. This paper proposes a road map for a comprehensive, longitudinal data system to track results and drive continued improvement.

This road map is the product of a 2009 technical assistance award to Vermont from the National Governor's Association (NGA) Initiative *Supporting Ready States: A Project to Develop Key Components of State Early Childhood Infrastructure*. Vermont's work – the Vermont Early Childhood Data Reporting System Project - used the NGA recommended approach and engaged partners to design a comprehensive early childhood data reporting system that can be used by stakeholders in all sectors and locations to improve programs and practices, and advance policies that support children's health, development and learning. The Project's recommended next steps, described at the end of this paper, will be overseen by Vermont's State Early Childhood Advisory Council, Building Bright Futures.

CURRENT AND DEVELOPING DATA CAPACITY

Two well established, integrated web-based data systems are operating currently; Vermont's Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) and the Vermont Immunization Registry (IMR.) Implemented in 2005, BFIS is an integrated statewide, web-based and real-time care and education information system with unique child, family, program and educator identifiers that have the capacity to expand and link with other data systems. BFIS links multiple functions within the child care and education system such as licensing, professional development, referral and subsidy, and exchanges data with other benefit programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/Reach-Up,) State Nutritional Assistance Programs (SNAP/3 Squares VT) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP.) The system design includes a provider web portal which is used by 91% of child care programs to bill electronically for services to families receiving a child care subsidy, and by an estimated 30% of individual child care and education providers to maintain their professional credentials and log continuing education.

First made available to health care providers in 2004, the Vermont Immunization Registry (IMR) is a confidential, computerized system for maintaining immunization records. It tracks the dates of immunizations given, prints reports for parents/schools, and provides guidance for timing of vaccine administration. More than half of all Vermont children under the age of seven have immunization histories in the IMR. As of July, 2011, IMR had imported birth certificate information for all individuals born in Vermont since 1910. Starting October 15, 2011, the IMR began to allow licensed child care providers access to the registry. Like school nurses, these providers will have read-only access and must obtain written parental consent before searching for a child's record.

Currently under development is an early childhood prevention and early intervention service data system named Vermont Family and Child Tracking System (VFACTS) that will be linked to BFIS. Vermont has two other important data systems, focused on early childhood data, the Birth Registry (population-based) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, popularly known as WIC (program-based.)

Other data systems that include early childhood data are:

- Vermont's Department for Children and Families (DCF) ACCESS database.
This includes Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and State Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and is used to track eligibility and enrollment. DCF also has a Family Services (Child Protection) database that tracks child abuse and neglect reports, child

investigations, child assessments and family assessments (e.g., a newborn with a positive toxicology screen for illegal substances) and open cases;

- Department of Vermont Health Access, Management and Information System (MMIS.) This provides access to Medicaid eligibility and claims data for analysis of health care eligibility and utilization patterns and third party health care coverage. One example of an early childhood data point is the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure, *Well-Child Visits in the First 15 Months of Life* which indicates the percentage of all 15 month old beneficiaries who had six or more well-child visits with a primary care practitioner (PCP) during their first 15 months of life.
- Vermont Department for Mental Health Monthly Service Reports submitted by the designated community mental health agencies that includes types of services young children receive including service planning and coordination, individual therapy and consultation; and
- Head Start Program Information Reporting (PIR) submitted from each of Vermont's seven programs to the federal Head Start Bureau. This includes enrollment, type of service and some health measures data, and is available through a web-based reporting system at the national Early Learning and Knowledge Center.

The Agency of Human Services and the Department of Education (DOE) both maintain separate data warehouses that collect some early childhood data from their respective programs. The Agency of Human Services warehouse is the Central Source for Measurement and Evaluation (CSME.) It is a repository that captures and presents information at an aggregate level view of an individual across all AHS departments, services, authorizations, and programs. At this time, two major early childhood data systems in AHS - BFIS and WIC - are not included in the CSME. The DOE, Education Data Warehouse (EDW) includes preK, Part B of 619 and school enrollment and assessment data for the early grades by student type over time. The Education Data Warehouse also includes demographic data (e.g., race, gender) and information on licensed educators. These data systems play a major role in building a comprehensive and longitudinal early childhood data reporting system.

In addition to these administrative data sources there are several important national and state survey and administrative data sources listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: National and Vermont Survey and Administrative Data Sources

National

- US Census,
- American Community Survey,
- Kids Count,
- Children's Health Survey and Children with Special Needs Health Survey and
- National Study of Early Care and Education - Supply and Demand (Data collection starts December 2011)

State

- Kindergarten Readiness Survey,
- Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS,)
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS,)
- Early Childhood and Family Outcomes for Part C and Part B section 619 of IDEA,
- School Nurse Survey,
- VT Tax Expenditures – Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Care Tax Credits, and
- VT Basic Needs Budget and Livable Wage.

Furthermore, Vermont has many major information technology initiatives underway that offer opportunities to build a comprehensive and longitudinal early childhood data reporting system, these include but are not limited to:

- The Agency of Human Services, Service Oriented Architecture (SOA), an enterprise wide approach to install core functional IT components for the AHS that will be shared and reused across programs to optimize currently disparate and duplicative data systems, and
- The Department for Vermont Health Access, Medicaid Enterprise System (MES) a modernization of the MMIS/Claims processing system into a full person centered management information system for Medicaid beneficiaries.
- Vermont Information Technology Leaders (VITL) Vermont Health Information Technology/Exchange (HIT/E), a secure computer network that connects the electronic health information systems of different health care providers, enabling those providers to share clinical, payment and demographic data of patients they have in common.

Other potential opportunities to further the development of a comprehensive and longitudinal early childhood data reporting system are Vermont's application, December 2011, to the federal Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant Program and Vermont's high quality plan developed for its application to the federal Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Grant Program. While Vermont's RTT-ELC application was not funded, it contains a useful strategic plan that has the approval and support of the Shumlin administration. The plan addresses five key areas of reform: establishing successful state systems; defining high-quality, accountable programs; promoting early learning and development outcomes for

children; supporting a great early childhood education workforce; and measuring outcomes and progress. All of which will inform the development of a comprehensive and longitudinal early childhood data reporting system.

In summary, comprehensive, longitudinal data is needed to inform policy makers as they make decisions on funding and resource allocation. Because data needs cross state departments and agencies, high level participation and commitment is critical so Vermont can share data and develop shared policies for the early childhood system. To answer pressing and complex policy questions we must have the capacity to access and analyze data across our currently independent systems. Without such a system Vermont cannot evaluate or maximize its investments.

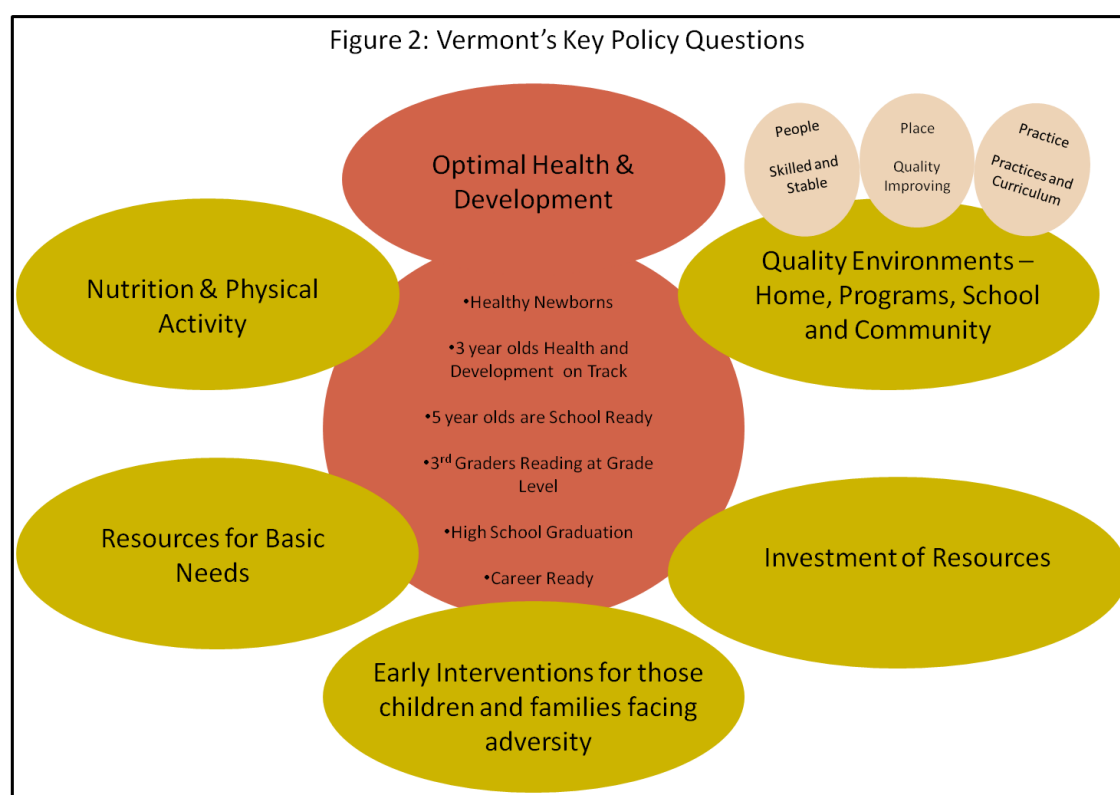
POLICY

The need for an Early Childhood Data Reporting System to inform policies and improve practices that support children's health, development and learning is clear. Working with Building Bright Futures, the VT-NGA Ready States Initiative Project used the recommended approach, "10 Fundamentals of Coordinated State Early Care and Education (ECE) Data Systems" with two important modifications. First, it broadened its scope from an early care and education data system to a broader early childhood data system that represented all aspects of Vermont's early childhood system. Second, it articulated the intent to build a data reporting system versus a data system. The difference being that a reporting system builds upon the data systems (including surveys) in place and does not create a new system. It brings together key data for reporting (analysis and use of data.)

The Project held its first stakeholder meeting in June, 2010, introducing the project, its core and home team and gaining insight from the project sponsor - the NGA - the national Early Childhood Data Collaborative and meeting participants. This was followed by an electronic process engaging stakeholders to determine the most critical policy questions confronting state policymakers. The agreed upon key policy questions mirror the BBF commitment statements, its statewide outcomes and regional planning work, and are grounded in Vermont's longstanding State/AHS outcomes specific to early childhood. These policy questions will guide the development of Vermont's Early Childhood Data Reporting System (see Figure 2):

- Are our young children achieving optimal health and development?
- Are children ages birth to six getting the nutritious food and opportunities for physical activity to be healthy during their school years?

- Are children ages birth to six spending their days in quality environments - home, early childhood programs (includes early care and education programs including preK, Part C of IDEA, Part B, section 619 of IDEA and Early Head Start and Head Start) and community?
- Do our young children and their families have resources to meet their basic needs (as defined by the Legislative Joint Fiscal Office for Basic Needs Budget)?
- Do our young children and their families experiencing adversity¹ have early, timely, and highly skilled interventions?
- What is the relationship between receipt of prevention or early intervention services and children's success in life during their school years?
- Are we investing our early childhood dollars wisely (the rate of return exceeds the investment)?



Once the policy questions were agreed upon, five small stakeholder workgroups were convened to “unpack” each policy question. The unpacking process resulted in a list of specific data points needed to answer each policy question. Work continues to complete the unpacking process and will conclude with bringing together early childhood research, data and policy experts to examine the data points identified and answer the following questions:

- Is each data point of high quality, evidence-based and culturally appropriate?
- Which data are the most critical to answer the policy question?

- What are the opportunities and challenges to collect and access these data?
- Do these data need to be collected system-wide?

For example, the following four data points were generated by the stakeholder group that unpacked the policy question: Are our young children achieving optimal health and development?

- Are all children born full-term and weigh greater than 5.5 pounds? (Source: Birth Registry)
- Are all 3 year olds health and development on track? (Source: TBD)
- Are children ready for school in all five domains (social and emotional development, communication, physical health and development, cognitive and approaches to learning)? (Source: Kindergarten Readiness Survey)
- Are all children proficient in reading at the end of 3rd grade? (Source: New England Common Assessment Program)

The following two data points used in education and post secondary education show how the early childhood data reporting structure would align as children move beyond the early grades.

- What is the graduation rate from high school?
- Are young adults career ready?

The stakeholder group that unpacked the policy question: Are children ages birth to six spending their days in quality environments?, looked at the question from the perspective of place (home, community, and early care and education programs,) practice (parenting approaches as well as teacher approaches and curriculum) and people by place (parents and family members-home, service providers-community and educators and caregivers—early care and education programs). When looking at early care and education programs as place, the group identified the following data points that could answer the early care and education program aspect of the policy question:

- Place: Is the quality (3, 4 and 5 Stars or national accreditation) of early childhood programs improving?
- Practice: What approaches or curriculum models are implemented by adults in the environments where young children spend their days?
- People: How skilled and stable is our early care and education workforce?²

The group also identified the gap in enrollment data for early care and education programs that is necessary to address this policy question and is further described in the Next Steps section.

A mapping process will be completed to record current ‘as is’ and chart ‘to be’ data structures and elements that can be brought together to report on the key policy questions. Two activities completed in

the winter of 2011 will provide useful information to this mapping process. These include the national Early Childhood Data Collaborative survey of state early childhood and education data systems and the BBF effort to gather early childhood data and sources for its first report to the Legislature in 2012. These activities have already identified critical data gaps that prevent Vermont from answering its key early childhood policy questions which are explained further in the Next Steps section at the end of this paper.

One of the 10 fundamentals of Coordinated State ECE Data Systems is the use of a unique statewide child identifier. Through in-depth discussions with national and Vermont experts, the project advises to explore alternatives to this approach. Rather than creating a unique statewide child identifier (a single, non-duplicated number that is assigned to and remains with a child throughout participation in early childhood programs and services and across key databases), Vermont could use a probabilistic matching approach. This approach is often used in the field of research and has become more common in other sectors. With the availability of SOA IT and/or the health information exchange network created by VITL, that supports a master person index approach, it would also be possible to provide a longitudinal analysis using actual client records and de-identified information.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM AND DATA REPORTING SYSTEM GOVERNANCE

The Building Bright Futures Council, as established in statute³, is the governance body of Vermont's early childhood system. Many of its duties depend upon a comprehensive early childhood data system, and include:

- (1) Advise the administration and general assembly on the status and needs of the early care, health, and education system by conducting a review of the status of young children in Vermont and the care, health, and education services and systems that support them.
- (2) Monitor overall system performance by regularly tracking and reporting system data on the well-being of young children and the performance of the system of care related to the council's commitments to children and selected indicators.
- (3) Select the key indicators to be tracked in early childhood and identify priority strategies to improve outcomes.
- (4) Ensure children from birth to six years of age are included in statistical data systems developed by the department of education and other state agencies and that all such systems are interoperable.
- (5) Analyze data to assess progress in achieving outcomes consistent with No. 68 of the Acts of the 2009 Adj. Sess. (2010) and make recommendations for any necessary adjustments.

- (6) Report to the governor and the legislative committees of jurisdiction during the first month of each legislative biennium on the council's findings and recommendations, progress toward outcomes consistent with No. 68 of the Acts of the 2009 Adj. Sess. (2010), and recommendations for priorities for the biennium.

The BBF Council, as the governance body for the early childhood system, is responsible for oversight of the Vermont Early Childhood Data Reporting System Project as it transitions from a NGA sponsored initiative (2009-2011) to a BBF sponsored project, and includes the establishment of a data governance body. The Data Governance body will fall under the auspices of the BBF Data and Evaluation Committee which will study potential data governance structures, membership, roles, responsibilities and operations, and make a recommendation to the BBF Council for approval. A number of other states have developed models Vermont can learn from, and our own Department of Education's Data Governance Council offers an in-state opportunity for a collaborative partnership.

BBF's early childhood data governance body is responsible for setting policies and protocols for the datasets that answer the key policy questions and are necessary to ensure quality, privacy, security, integrity and transparency of the data. Protocols are needed to cover exchange agreements (developing and tracking data), and management of datasets that answer the key policy questions, for ex: who will have access to what data? who is responsible for hosting the data reporting system? and who is the "keeper" or data steward ?

To address issues of privacy and security when sharing data, the project will look to the Department of Education (DOE) and the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and Vermont Information Technology (VITL) Leaders for guidance. AHS, VITL and DOE have strong internal controls that establish roles, permissions and guidelines in accessing various types and levels of their data systems that meet their federal (e.g., HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act requirements) and state regulations. DOE and AHS initiated discussions on the sharing of early childhood data through a reporting infrastructure mechanism during the DOE's 2009 SLDS grant application. These discussions will continue with the Department of Education's 2011 SLDS grant application.

Vermont benefits from the long time partnership between the Agency of Human Services and Department of Education as co-lead agencies in the implementation of Part C of IDEA. Over the last five years, within each agency and between the two agencies, capacity has expanded for publicly sharing Annual

Public Reports and Early Childhood and Family Outcome data. Another key player, the Vermont Head Start Association, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in engaging families, in particular through its policy councils, which will greatly inform the development of data transparency policies.

VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL LINKS

Horizontal linkages are those that exist concurrently, linking spheres of a child's life among home, community, early childhood programs and school, and other services, such as health care, early intervention, parenting education and family support. It is often referred to as a comprehensive or ecological approach in the early childhood world because it considers all aspects of the individual child (social and emotional development, communication, physical health, and cognitive) within the context of the child's family and community. It offers a 360° view.

Horizontal linkages also exist within and between programs and services of an early childhood system. Often referred to as system development, it calls for alignment and linkages among standards, screening, assessment, curriculum, professional development and practices. In 2006, Vermont released its Implementation Plan for an Early Childhood System which provides a more in-depth description (go to www.buildingbrightfutures.org.) One recent example of a new early childhood systems development effort is Vermont's Children's Integrated Services (CIS) initiative. A hallmark of service integration that CIS employs is the practice of using a primary service provider and consultation team approach with an integrated child-family plan. More recent enhancements of CIS that reflect horizontal linkages include linking child care consultation for children with high needs, the federal Maternal and Early Childhood Home Visiting initiative and the Blueprint for Health with its current delivery of services, and the new statewide, web-based information system VT Family and Child Tracking System (VFACT.)

Vertical linkages focus on children's experiences as they move vertically from one age grouping (and setting) to another. An example of a vertical linkage is the transition a young child makes from birth to the toddler years to preK and then on to kindergarten and the early grades. Vertical linkages in the world of data and information technology are reflected in the development of state longitudinal data systems that can follow and track individual children's health and development over time and within the context of their family, school and community. BFIS has vertical linkages for some populations, such as those receiving a child care subsidy, their attendance in early care and education programs and the quality of those programs, but it does not continue into the early grades or include assessment data such as kindergarten readiness. The Education Data Warehouse has vertical linkages for all children participating in publicly funded early childhood programs (e.g., preK, Part B section 619) and can link attendance to

state assessment data in the early and later grades; however, there are no linkages to the kindergarten readiness data.

DATA ACCESS, REPORTING AND USE

Access to early childhood data is essential if we wish to improve programs, services and, most importantly, the well-being of Vermont's children. The lack of ready access to early childhood data (including socio-demographic data) that can be manipulated easily to represent localities is a source of frustration as communities seek to improve their selected child well-being indicators and programs seek to improve their effectiveness. The incompleteness of current data sets prevents us from seeing the big picture. For example, BFIS can tell us about children receiving child care financial assistance, but nothing about all children enrolled in early care and education programs or about parents' use of informal care.

Between 1994 and 2007, there was a process (state and regional partnerships) of reporting on ten Vermont state outcomes (three were early childhood and early grades) and its 60 indicators (eighteen were early childhood and early grades) known as the Community Profiles annual report and a Vermont Well-Being: Social Indicators Sourcebook (last published in 2006.) With a five year hiatus of no reporting of early childhood well-being, the Building Bright Futures Council is about to release its first report "How are Vermont's Young Children -2011" which presents an analysis of data collected across systems and agencies that will offer Vermont's lawmakers and policy leaders a comprehensive, up-to-date look at how our youngest Vermonters are doing. The effort to secure data and the paucity of population based data to prepare this report confirms that Vermont's capacity to access, analyze, report and use its early childhood data to support a "plan, do, review culture" as part of an early childhood data system is mediocre at best. While the early childhood data system, BFIS, holds a wealth of care and education information, albeit incomplete, limited staffing capacity and lack of state of the art tools hamper Vermont's ability to analyze data and make it available to parents, providers, programs, administrators and policymakers. Despite this limitation, state and regional data are available on the number, type and quality of early care and education programs such as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Demonstrated Quality Level of All Licensed Centers						
	0 STAR	1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
2007	81.0%	1.0%	2.2%	3.3%	8.5%	4.0%
2008	66.5%	2.1%	3.0%	7.4%	13.3%	7.8%
2009	52.9%	1.7%	2.1%	11.0%	18.8%	13.6%
2010	45.7%	1.9%	3.2%	9.9%	22.4%	17.0%
2011	43.4%	1.9%	3.5%	8.3%	21.0%	22.0%
Source: Vermont Department of Children and Families, Bright Futures Information System						
Note: Analysis conducted by Building Bright Futures						

In 2007, 15.8% (n=106) of licensed centers had 3 or more STARS. This proportion grew to 28.5% in 2008, and by 2011, more than half (51.3%, n=370) of all licensed centers had 3 or more STARS.

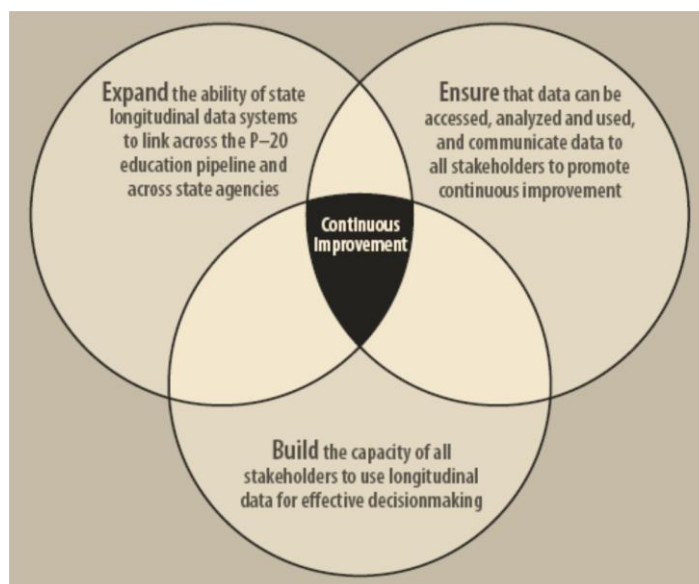
PROMISING DATA DEVELOPMENTS

Participation in Vermont's 11 year-old Kindergarten Readiness Survey declined from 84% of kindergarten enrollment in 2008-2009 to 52% of kindergarten enrollment in 2009-2010. However, there is renewed interest to improve the response rate and the survey as reflected in Vermont's Race to the Top: Early Childhood Challenge grant application. There is also increased interest and capacity to collect and use child assessment data (using a valid and reliable standardized approach - Teaching Strategies™ GOLD) to guide instruction at the classroom level in publicly funded preK and Head Start early care and education programs. Developmental screening at the recommended ages for children under three years of age using valid and reliable tools is also gaining momentum in Vermont in pediatric health care practices in response to the Developmental Screening Project, sponsored by AHS through the Vermont's Child Health Improvement Program at the University of Vermont. Reading assessment scores at 3rd Grade are re-gaining attention among a varied group of stakeholders including the business and philanthropic sectors in Vermont. With the possibility of a Statewide Longitudinal Data System that includes early childhood and early grades data, we expect there will be a strong interest in accessing and using that data. Vermont's tiered quality recognition system, STARS, has reached a pivotal point where participation is not only increasing but has passed the 50% participation rate in center based programs. There is significant interest and effort to increase the participation rate among family-based programs such as the Birth to Three project sponsored by the Permanent Fund.

These promising developments can be viewed as an evolving, comprehensive assessment system for early childhood. The recent Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge grant program describes it as a coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments, each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used. The system will organize information about the process and context of young children's learning and development that conforms to the recommendations of the National Research Council Report on early childhood in order to help early childhood practitioners and programs.

The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) is a national, collaborative effort started in 2005 to encourage and support state policymakers to improve the availability and use of high quality education data to improve student achievement. The DQC initially provided support and information about building robust student-level longitudinal data systems via its the 10 essential elements for schools. Now the campaign's primary focus has shifted towards helping states identify and put in place the necessary policies and practices so that key stakeholders actually use longitudinal data to help students succeed. The DQC provides clear and wise advice for states implementing Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems that the early childhood system would benefit from as well: change the current culture from building data to using data (refer to Figure 4 and for more information go to <http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/files/NextStep.pdf>.)

Figure 4: Changing the Culture around Data Use, DQC



DQC recommends launching role-based, interactive web-based tools based on stakeholder needs that incorporate actionable data. This means putting data in context, presenting information so that users have clean, understandable data that allows for easy interpretation. Many technology experts use the term ‘portal’ to describe this web interface. A web portal is a page that presents information from diverse data sources in a unified way. It is a single web page tailored to the user protected by a username and password allowing the portal to provide data based on the user’s role and need for access to data. Rhode Island’s DataHub described in the next section is a good example of an early childhood portal for multiple users.

LEARNING FROM OTHER STATES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Over the past two years, Vermont’s Early Child Data Reporting System Core Team met with other states working on similar projects through the NGA supported policy academies, meetings, conference calls and shared written resources. Many states have a strong partnership with a university with an applied data and research capacity as well as staff whose primary role is data analyses and reporting. The following are highlights of our shared learning from specific states.

Massachusetts: The MA Readiness Cabinet’s Vision for the Role of Data in a “Readiness” System aligns with Vermont’s and includes four primary roles:

1. Information on a child should be tracked, integrated and shared from birth and continue through the child’s success in college or entry to the workforce
2. Information sharing should occur for all children, not only children who are identified as at-risk at any particular point in time
3. Information sharing should be respectful of a child and family’s privacy while providing key information that education, social services and other providers can use to improve children’s outcomes
4. Data should be used to create meaningful, coordinated prevention and intervention strategies and perform these early on and in a coordinated manner

MA also identifies four initial points where data collection is critical to family support, early school success and inter-agency cooperation in service delivery: at birth, at age 3, at age 5 and at 3rd grade. MA also uses a mix of strategies to engage stakeholders and build partnerships.

California and New York: Both these states provided information on mapping data sources which helped Vermont create a mapping process for the project:

- Identify questions to answer metrics regarding children’s success factors.
- Unpack questions to identify specific data elements that can answer the question.
- Identify the system source and steward of the data elements.
- Answer specific questions when identifying and negotiating a data sharing agreement:
 - Are there restrictions in accessing the data imposed by federal (HIPPA, FERPA) or state statute? Who has access to the data?
 - Is there a data dictionary? Code Book?
 - Name the data elements, characteristics and definitions.
 - Is the data easily retrieved?
 - Where is the first point of entry?
 - What denominator is used to create percentage?
- A governance model must address questions e.g. Who will manage this work? When the data set is created, who will have access to it? Who is responsible for hosting it? Who is the “keeper” or data steward of the data?
- Determine the linking possibility through negotiations.
- Track MOUs/MOAs.
- Create a unified data dictionary as data is identified and brought into the new reporting data set.

Rhode Island: Rhode Island’s DataHub (www.ridatahub.org) is described by David Murphey, Child Trends, in the 2011 winter newsletter as a tour-de-force of data integration. It draws on multiple data sets—federal, state, and local—to facilitate analysis and visualization across many topics of child and adolescent wellbeing. The DataHub includes both aggregate and individual-level (program) data with appropriate confidentiality protections. Tables, charts, and maps, both pre-made and custom-generated, are part of the interface. Essentially a data warehouse, the DataHub, uses visualization software, WEAVE, that is user-friendly. Another feature of the site, Data Stories, presents, through figures and text, succinct, data-based explanations of key issues, such as substance abuse or mathematics test scores.

Virginia: Virginia’s data integration project: Child HANDS (Child Care Subsidy and Early Education: Helping Analyze Needed Data Securely), began as a research capacity grant funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families. The project directors, faculty at Virginia Tech, chose a Federated Data Systems approach (vs a Consolidated Systems-Data Warehouse approach) which interacts with multiple data sources on the back-end and presents itself as a single data source on the front-end. The key to linking up the different data sources is a central linking apparatus. The approach allows for the maintenance of existing privacy protection rules and regulations

and significantly reduces application development time and cost. It uses a de-identified federated data query process where nothing is retained.

Maryland: Maryland administers a school readiness assessment to all kindergarteners in public schools and describes the results by type of care received before kindergarten and family demographics. Maryland also attaches a unique student identifier (since 2007) so this information is included in the state's education longitudinal data system. In the 2010-2011 school year, students who entered kindergarten in 2007 will have completed third grade, allowing, for the first-time, the analysis of kindergarten readiness with academic performance on state standardized reading and math tests.

Pennsylvania: PA's Early Learning Network (ELN) describes itself as a comprehensive unified data system for assessing individual-level child outcomes across multiple programs. ELN was developed to bring together existing demographic and program data with child outcome assessment information in order to guide continuous quality improvement activities. An in-depth discussion with PA's ELN director would benefit Vermont, with particular attention to the collection and use of child outcome assessment information.

Illinois: The Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) (<http://iecam.crc.uiuc.edu/>) housed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign offers users multiple geographic regions within the state of Illinois—House and Senate Districts, ZIP Codes, counties, municipalities, and more—for display of the location of licensed and exempt child care facilities, Head Start programs, and pre-K programs.

Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC) and the National Data Quality Campaign (NQDC): Both the collaborative and the campaign provide essential elements for the early childhood and K-12 school audiences to guide states in the development of longitudinal data systems. For early childhood stakeholders, the collaborative focus is on data-driven decision making to improve the quality of early care and education (ECE) programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve child outcomes. Vermont used these essential elements as a guide to unpack our policy questions. The following ECE essential elements, as well as all other policy questions, reflect Vermont's comprehensive view of its early childhood system:

1. Unique statewide child identifier
2. Child-level demographic and program participation information
3. Child-level data on development
4. Ability to link child-level data with K-12 and other key data systems
5. Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and the ECE workforce
6. Program site data on structure, quality and work environment

7. Unique Early Childhood workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children
8. Individual ECE workforce demographics, education and professional development information
9. State governance body to manage data collection and use
10. Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies

NEXT STEPS

Vermont's Early Childhood Data Reporting System project initiated by the National Governor's Association Ready States Initiative ended November 2011, marking the conclusion of Phase I. The official start of Phase 2 took place at the November 28, 2011 Building Bright Futures Council meeting. Phase 1 of the Project identified 11 agreed upon policy questions that will shape the Early Childhood Data Reporting System, and identified key data points and potential sources to answer these questions.

The following next steps are a synopsis of the focus and action steps for Phase 2. As with Phase 1, this project is evolving and looks to all stakeholders to adjust, refine and improve its approach and strategies. The end goal is meaningful data that can be used by many to support sound decision making so children's health, development and learning flourishes. It is estimated that the following can be accomplished with a \$1,484,160 million budget which was requested but not funded in Vermont's application for Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge grant program. As a result, other sources of funding to accomplish this work will be necessary.

Transition activities

1. Share final report of NGA Early Childhood Data Reporting System Project, Phase 1: 2009-2010 with state and local stakeholders.
2. Assist BBF to establish their BBF Data and Evaluation Committee that will assume the advisory role for this project.

BBF Project Staffing

3. BBF to fill the vacant BBF Senior Research and Statistics Analyst position to be the project manager.
4. BBF to hire and support data and planning personnel (as named in Vermont's Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge grant application) to create and maintain the unified early childhood data reporting system that tracks results and provides consistent reporting of VT's early learning and development outcomes and policy questions.

Mapping Data

5. Complete the following steps carried forward from Phase 1:
 - a. Complete the unpacking of the 11 early childhood policy questions;
 - b. Prioritize the key data points necessary to answer each policy question;
 - c. Continue mapping the data points in the current early childhood and related data systems and Statewide Longitudinal System;
 - d. Confirm enhancements (see steps 10, 13 and 14) or identify and create new solutions to enhance the current early childhood data systems so that the data elements are standardized, collected and linked, and
 - e. Study and select a viable, accurate and proven methodology to link child- level data across early childhood data systems in order to support longitudinal (birth through high school graduation) assessment of children's progress and the impact of state investments.

User Engagement

6. Continue to build and strengthen partnerships with outreach to multiple user groups including parents, providers (including health, early care and education, family support, early intervention, home visitors), schools, local teams and partnerships, district and state administrators, state legislators and other policymakers, higher education, private funders, business associations.

Data System Opportunities

7. Support DOE application (December 2011) to create a Statewide Longitudinal Data System that includes integration of early learning and development data.

Data Governance

8. BBF establishes a Data Governance body that includes policy, data and information technology leadership from Department of Education, Local Education Agencies, the Agency of Human Services, Department of Vermont Health Access/Vermont's Health Information Technology/Exchange state agency, the Vermont Head Start Association and Voices for Vermont Children/Vermont's Annie E. Casey Kids Count grantee.

Data Gaps

9. Enhance BFIS in the following areas to address data gaps:
 - a. Collect enrollment data on all children in VT's early learning and development data system;

- b. Add program descriptor field in BFIS that identifies a program as state funded Pre-K and/or EHS/HS program; and
 - c. Link BFIS program data with Vermont's new Children's Integrated Data System – VT Family and Child Tracking System.
10. Explore the possibility of collecting, de-identifying, aggregating and reporting through Health Information Technology/Exchange efforts (and linked to the Immunization Registry and VT Family and Child Tracking System.) Developmental screening results, referrals and referral outcomes as well as scheduled well child visits can be web-based dashboard (portal.) Note that this periodicity schedule, 9, 18, and 24 and 30 month well child visits follows VT's EPSDT and SCHIP standards.

Using Data

11. Provide training and support the development of a learning community at the state and local levels to improve the capabilities of systems and professionals responsible for collecting and reporting data related to early learning and development as well as use of the data for continuous improvement and shared decision making (population and program based.)

Early Childhood Workforce Registry

12. Enhance BFIS to provide useful and timely workforce, instructor and course registry data through a Workforce Registry web-based, user friendly dashboard (portal) that provides the performance measures. The Workforce Registry would also align with The National Registry Alliance (TNRA) to standardize data elements, definitions and data collection procedures. VT will become a member of the TNRA. Notes: BFIS currently has the data architecture and functionality for a workforce registry. Education Data Warehouse includes the licensed ECE and ECSE educators of the workforce.

Comprehensive Assessment System

13. Enhance data reporting capacity for VT's comprehensive assessment system in the following areas to include outreach and learning opportunities for all users and technical assistance through the BFIS help desk:
- a. Enhance BFIS to provide useful and timely Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) data for programs through a web-based dashboard (portal) user friendly approach, and using visual tools such as mapping with various geographic options as BFIS collects QRIS data at the lowest common denominator of zip code. Note that BFIS currently creates these reports as extracts but not in a user friendly, readily available way to multiple users;

- b. Create a web-based (portal) data collection and reporting capacity in a readily available, user friendly and secure data environment that meets confidentiality requirements for early learning and development programs using VT's formative assessment tool, Teaching Strategies© GOLD;
- c. Assure a secure environment for the Kindergarten Entry Readiness Assessment that will support the collection and reporting of child-level, program-level and community-level data and protects the privacy of the data; and
- d. Create a web-based dashboard (portal) to monitor progress in achieving the early childhood goal that 95% of children have a documented developmental screening using a validated tool at the 9, 18, and 24 and 30 month well child visits. This includes results, referrals and referral outcomes.

-
- 1. Includes developmental delay, impairments in vision or hearing, special health need, and/or toxic stress from recurrent child abuse or neglect, as well as parental challenges such as lack of resources, isolation, little education, mental health problems, substance abuse, and/or family violence. This question addresses vulnerable young children who are at risk for poor life outcomes (Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child, "A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy")
 - 2. Workforce includes early educators, child care providers, early interventionists, early childhood program directors, personal care attendants, individual assistants, playgroup facilitators, summer camp staff and other professionals who care for, teach, and/or support young children?
 - 3. No. 104. An Act Relating to the Building Bright Futures Council, May 2010, Vermont Legislature

References

- Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning Research and Evaluation. (2010). *Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations*. Retrieved from: http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/earlychildhood/qrs_compendium_final.pdf.
- Alliance for Child Care Financing. (2007). *Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: A Powerful Policy for Improving and Unifying Early Care and Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.qrisnetwork.org/our-framework>.
- American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2011). *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs. 3rd edition*. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). *Kids Count Data Book*. Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/files/2013KIDSCOUNTDataBook.pdf>.
- Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M.E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2012). *The state of preschool 2012: State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.
- Barry, S.E., Paul, K., Aarke, K., and Drake-Burh, S. (2009). Development & Autism Screening in Primary Care. *Vermont Child Health Improvement Program*. Retrieved from <http://dvha.vermont.gov/for-providers/dev-scn-baseline-survey-report-11-30-09.pdf>.
- Boots, S.W. (2005). Building a 21st century economy: The case for investing in early education reform. *New America Foundation Early Education Initiative, 1*, 1-8.
- Bransford, J.D., Brown, A. L., and Cocking, R.R., editors. (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Campilan, D. (2000). Participatory Evaluation of Participatory Research. Forum on Evaluation of International Cooperation Projects: Centering on Development of Human Resources in the Field of Agriculture. Nagoya, Japan, International Potato Center. Retrieved from <http://ir.nul.nagoya-u.ac.jp/jspui/bitstream/2237/8890/1/39-56.pdf>.
- Center for the Study of Social Policy. (No date). The Protective Factors Framework. Retrieved from <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/basic-one-pagers/Strengthening-Families-Protective-Factors.pdf>
- Donovan, M. S., Bransford, J.D., and Pellegrino, J.W., editors. (2013). Committee on Learning Research and Educational Practice, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Early Childhood Curriculum Assessment, and Program Evaluation: Building an Effective, Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8. Joint Position Statement of National Assessment for Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) 2003

Vermont RTT-ELC Application for Funding [CFDA 84.412A]
Proposal and State Plan

- Fox, Conn-Powers & Ross-Allen. (1988). *Manual to Support the Transition of Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families from Preschool into Kindergarten and Other Regular Education Environments*.
- Friedman, Marc. (No date). *Results Based Accountability: How To Produce Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities*. Trafford Press.
- Grantmakers for Education (2007). *Making the most of our investments: How PK-3 alignment can close the achievement gap from the start*. Grantmakers for Education.
- Guernsey, L. and Mead, S. (2010). *A next social contract for the primary years of education*. Washington, DC: New America Foundation.
- Harms, T., Clifford, R.M. & Cryer, D. (1998). *The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale: Revised Edition*. Teacher's College Press, N.Y.
- Heckman, James J. (2013 September 25). *Lifelines for Poor Children* New York Times. Retrieved from <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/14/lifelines-for-poor-children/?partner=rss&emc=rss&r=1>.
- John Snow, Inc. (2011). Final Report: Evaluation of Vermont's Early Childhood Professional System.
- Karge, B., Phillips, K. M., Jessee, T., & McCabe, M. (2011). Effective Strategies for Engaging Adult Learners. *Journal Of College Teaching & Learning*, 8(12), 53-56.
- Langwell, N. and Besio, S. (2011). *Medicaid and Global Commitment*. Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office. Retrieved from [http://www.leg.state.vt.us/jfo/healthcare/2011 Medicaid & GC Overview.pdf](http://www.leg.state.vt.us/jfo/healthcare/2011_Medicaid_%20GC_Overview.pdf).
- Lichter, D., Parisi, D. (2008). *Concentrated Rural Poverty and the Geography of Exclusion*. Durham, NH: Carsey Institute Reports on Rural America.
- Mace, Nicole (2010). *The State of Vermont's Children: Challenging Poverty: Supporting Children and Families in Difficult Times*. Montpelier, VT: A Vermont KIDS COUNT Report.
- NACCRRA. (2009). *We Can Do Better: 2009 Update from the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies*. Retrieved from <http://www.naccrra.org/node/3025>.
- NACCRRA. (2013). *We Can Do Better: 2013 Update from the National Association of Resource and Referral Agencies*. Retrieved from <http://www.naccrra.org/node/3025>.
- National Center for Children in Poverty. (2011). *Vermont Early Childhood Profile*. Retrieved from http://www.nccp.org/profiles/pdf/profile_early_childhood_VT.pdf.
- Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. (2009). *Supportive Evidence for Child Care Health Consultation*. Retrieved from <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Documents/CCHCSupportiveEvidence.pdf>.
- Newlin, C. (2011). Overview of the Adverse Experiences in Childhood (ACE) Study. National Children's Advocacy Center.
- Paterson, K.E., Constantino, B., Dillenbeck, A., Fonseca, M., Rouelle, A., Santarcangelo, S., Ventris, L. (2012). *The Key to Good Policy, Smart Decisions and Wise Investments: Vermont's Roadmap for an Early Childhood Data Reporting System*.

Vermont RTT-ELC Application for Funding [CFDA 84.412A]
Proposal and State Plan

- Retrieved from http://cdn.buildingbrightfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/key_to_good_policy_finalreportjan2012final.pdf.
- Pianta, R.C., LaParo, K.M. & Harme, B. K. (2008). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System*. Teachstone.
- Popkin, S., Acs, G., and Smith R. (2010). *Understanding how place matters for kids*. The Urban Institute. Community Investments, Spring 2010.
- Price, C., Graham, C., Hobbs, J. (1997). Workplace Mentoring: Considerations and Exemplary Practices. *New Directions For Community Colleges*, 1997(97), 49
- Sabol, T.J., Soliday Hong, S.L., Pianta, R.C., & M.R. Burchinal, M.R. (2013). Can rating Pre-K programs predict children's learning? *Science*, 341, 845-846.
- Schulman, K. and Blank, H. (2012). *Downward slide: State Child Care Assistance Policies, 2012*. National Women's Law Center report.
- Shumlin, Peter. (2013). Second Inaugural Address.
- Stoney, L. (2012). *Unlocking the Potential of QRIS: Trends and Opportunities in the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Applications*. QRIS National Learning Network.
- Raver, C. (2002). Emotions Matter: Making the case for the role of young children's emotional development for early school readiness. *Social Policy Report of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 16 (3), 1-20).
- Rhode Island KIDS Count (2005). *Findings from the National School Readiness Initiative: A 17 state partnership*.
- T.E.A.C.H. (2013). T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Technical Assistance & Quality Assurance Center. Retrieved from http://www.childcareservices.org/ps/teach_ta_qac.html.
- Tough, Paul. (2008). *Whatever It Takes, Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America*. New York, N.Y.: Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Vermont Agency of Education. (2013). *NAEP Assessment Report*. NAEP Report. Retrieved from http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_assessment/data.html.
- Vermont Agency of Education. (2013). *NECAP Assessment Report*. NECAP Science Grade 11. Retrieved from http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_assessment/data.html.
- Vermont Child Poverty Council. (2009). *Improving the Odds for Kids*. Retrieved from http://www.leg.state.vt.us/WorkGroups/ChildPoverty/Child_Poverty_Council_Report_Final.pdf.
- Vermont Department of Children and Families. (2013). *STARS Annual Report*. Retrieved from <http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/pdf/cdd/stars/STARS%20%20annual%20Report%20FY2013.pdf>
- Vermont Department of Children and Families. (2013 March) *Vermont Child Care Financial Assistance Co-Payment Survey*. Retrieved from <http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/pdf/cdd/care/fap/Co-payment%20Survey.pdf>
- Vermont Department of Labor. (2013). *Economic-Demographic Profile Series*. Retrieved from <http://www.vtlmi.info/profile2013.pdf>.

Vermont RTT-ELC Application for Funding [CFDA 84.412A]
Proposal and State Plan

- Voices for Vermont's Children. (no date). *Affordable housing and homelessness*. Retrieved from <http://www.voicesforvtkids.org/economic-well-being/affordable-housing-and-homelessness/>.
- University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. (no date). Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. *Environmental Rating Scales*. Retrieved from <http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/>.
- University of Vermont James M Jeffords Center. (2013) *Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program: Recommendations Report*. Burlington, VT: Rogers and Swindlehurst.
- U.S. Census. (2010, 2012). *American Fact Finder*. Retrieved from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Service. Leslie A. Whitener, R. Gibbs, and L. Kusmin. *Rural Welfare Reform: Lessons Learned*. Amber Waves. June 2003.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Service. Robert Gibbs, L. Kusmin. *Low-Skill Employment and the Changing Economy of Rural America*. ERR-10. October 2005.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2012). *Toward the Identification of Features of Effective Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators, Literature Review*. Washington, DC.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2012 October). Early Head Start Home Visiting. Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness. Retrieved from <http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/document.aspx?sid=8&rid=1&mid=1>.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013 March). *Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting Program. Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness*. Retrieved from <http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/document.aspx?sid=47&rid=1&mid=1>.