



COLORADO

Department of Early Childhood

Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Center Directors and Related Administrators

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Introduction and Use

Early childhood center directors need a specialized and diverse set of skills and knowledge to support the broad range of their responsibilities. These leaders engage in a variety of duties that include ensuring compliance with licensing rules, supervising center operations, making the program's vision and philosophy come to life, and inspiring staff to provide a positive, culturally responsive, and healthy care and learning environment for young children and their families.

The actual duties of each director will vary based upon the child care delivery type their program offers and their employer's organizational structure. Programs that are part of a larger school system, corporation, or shared services program may have administrative support for several operational functions while the leader of an independently owned program may be responsible for all operations.

This competency set strives to address the skills and knowledge needed to effectively and successfully lead all program operation areas for child care centers providing less than 24-hour care as defined in [Colorado General Rules for Child Care Facilities and Rules Regulating Child Care Centers that Provide Less than 24-Hour Care](#). Directors with business and other administrative support built into their organizations may not need to gain all of the listed competencies to do their current job. However, they may wish to gain general knowledge in all competency areas to broaden their skill set or support continuous quality improvement. All directors can use the competency set to identify supportive resources to help them in their current position. Directors qualified through one of the [pathways](#) not including the ten college-level courses needed to fulfill director qualifications may find the competency set particularly useful in helping them fill any gaps in knowledge or skills.

Related administrators, such as assistant directors or those administrators responsible for specific business operation areas, may use the competencies that apply to their positions. The competency set can be used by professionals for their career planning and to design a personal professional development plan. Institutes of higher education, training organizations, apprenticeship programs, and mentorship programs can align their offerings to the competency set to help prepare and support directors and related administrators in their roles.

The goal of this competency set is to provide a supportive framework of the specialized skills and knowledge needed to successfully lead an early childhood care center. Emphasis is placed on planning and creating organized systems to support all aspects of a program. A secondary but no less important goal is to recognize the broad range of duties directors engage in and acknowledge the tremendous amount of wonderful work they do on behalf of Colorado's children and families.

This competency set works in complement to [Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Professionals](#). There may be some areas of overlap between competency sets but effort was made not to duplicate competencies. Early childhood educators, care

specialists, and other professionals that work directly with young children may access the educators and professionals set to support their career development.

It is important to point out this competency set may not meet the specific needs of Family Child Care Home providers. This essential group of child care professionals needs a competency set that supports their particular needs and circumstances. A work group involving the input of Family Child Care Home providers to create a competency set that supports their needs will be forthcoming.

Foundational Knowledge: The foundation needed to achieve the competencies outlined in this document include knowledge of:

- [Colorado General Rules for Child Care Facilities and Rules Regulating Child Care Centers that Provide Less than 24-Hour Care](#) (Referred to in this document as Colorado Rules and Regulations.)
- [Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Professionals](#) and/or [NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators](#)
- [Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines](#) and/or other widely accepted early learning and development framework that describes the path of children's learning and development from birth to eight years.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Care

Within this set of competencies emphasis is placed on diversity, equity, inclusion, and culturally and linguistically responsive care. Directors are key to ensuring all aspects of an early childhood program promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and provide culturally and linguistically responsive care, education, and support for children and their families. While these concepts are frequently called out in individual competencies, it is the expectation that directors will lead the review of policies, procedures, materials, and activities for such practices and authentically support their real implementation throughout the program so that all children, families, and staff members are given the full opportunity to thrive in meaningful ways. Resources have been provided throughout the competency set to assist directors with this important aspect of their leadership.

Gaining the Skills and Knowledge of the Competencies

Ongoing professional development such as college and university courses, in-person and virtual training events, and online self-paced courses help professionals to gain the knowledge and skills within the competencies. Working regularly with a mentor or coach and participating in a community of practice or apprenticeship program can also significantly increase one's confidence and abilities in the competencies while providing a reassuring system of support.

Resources and Collaborative Leadership

It is important for directors to know they are supported in their mission to provide quality care and learning opportunities for children and their families. There are many resources available through state departments, federal agencies, regional and national organizations, and others to help support directors in the leadership of their programs. Links to supporting organizations and resources have been provided within the first level of competencies with additional resources to aid implementation to be added as they become available. These resources, when used with collaborative leadership, can help reduce the load of everyday duties. Directors are not expected to be experts in each competency domain. It is anticipated they will delegate some responsibilities and work in collaboration with staff members, stakeholders, community organizations, consultants, a shared services organization, and perhaps use childcare management software to support operations.

What are the content areas of Colorado's Competencies for Early Child Care Center Directors and Related Administrators?

There are five different content areas, also called domains, in Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Center Directors and Related Administrators. All domains are important and work as a system to help directors build upon their foundational knowledge as early childhood educators and professionals and successfully lead their unique programs. It is recognized there may be some competencies that have been missed and that this is a working document open to regular review and adjustment.

The five domains of Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Center Directors and Related Administrators are:

1. [Early Childhood Center Planning and Leadership \(ECCPL\)](#)
2. [Early Childhood Center Operations and Business Administration \(ECCOBA\)](#)
3. [Early Childhood Center Curriculum and Instruction \(ECCCI\)](#)
4. [Early Childhood Center Partnership with Families and the Community \(ECCPFC\)](#)
5. [Early Childhood Center Health, Safety, and Nutrition \(ECCHSN\)](#)

What Are the Three Levels of Competence?

Colorado's Competencies for Early Childhood Center Directors and Related Administrators are based on a framework of three levels of competence. The first level addresses the foundational knowledge needed at the director entry level. This level often involves identifying, locating, defining, and describing. The next two levels consider the knowledge needed at the first level to then effectively apply, implement, create, and then evaluate and further develop systems to successfully manage the whole of a program and operate with continuous improvement in mind. The levels are cumulative, meaning that directors with competence at the last level have the knowledge and skills to meet all the competencies in the same category at the first two levels.

Description of the competency levels

Level 1 - Foundation: Describes the essential knowledge needed prior to beginning work as or at the entry level of being a center director.

Level 2 - Application: Demonstrates the knowledge at level one and can also apply it to develop and implement plans, systems, and practice to support the overall program and its everyday operations with the goal of creating a high quality and culturally responsive early childhood environment and experience for children, their families, and staff.

Level 3 - Development: Demonstrates and applies the skills and knowledge of levels one and two while also focusing on reflective review and continual improvement in program planning, systems, and practice to support the highest quality environment and experience for children, their families, and staff.

How to Get Started with Competencies

There is quite a bit of information in this competency set so where do you begin? You can start by taking the director's self-assessment on Colorado Shines PDIS. The self-assessment will help you identify your areas of strength and where you may have some knowledge or skill gaps. Focus on the competency areas related to the knowledge and skills you most need to develop. Read through those competencies and link to the provided resources. Consider if you need further support through formal coursework, training events, or online self-paced learning. The professional development plan in Colorado Shines PDIS can further help you to set-up goals and timelines. You may always speak with a career navigator, coach, or mentor if you need additional guidance.

If you are just starting your journey as a director or are considering becoming director qualified, you may wish to start by linking to the foundational level of competencies. The foundational level of competencies has been pulled into its own document to make it more digestible and to support those who may find a multi-leveled competency set a bit overwhelming. Please [click here](#) to view the foundational level competencies.

Additionally, while all of the competencies are important, those that focus on Colorado Rules and Regulations and being in compliance with all licensing, health, safety, and nutrition regulations and codes are essential to operating a child care center. It is highly recommended that you start with competencies associated with Colorado Rules and Regulations and the Early Childhood Center Health, Safety, and Nutrition competency domain if you are unfamiliar with these areas.

Building knowledge and skills takes time. Directors, like all professionals, will be engaged in continual learning throughout their careers. You are encouraged to enjoy your learning journey and embrace the process of your professional growth and development.

Glossary of Terms

A glossary of terms is included at the end of this document so readers may familiarize themselves as necessary to further support their achievement of the competencies.

Competency Domains

Domain #1: Early Childhood Center Planning and Leadership (ECCPL)

Rationale: This domain addresses the competencies needed to establish, plan, and lead a successful early childhood center. Strategically planning to make the program vision into a daily reality for the children and families served is essential to providing a high-quality care environment. Understanding their role as a team leader and using the many resources available to support a program helps a director to balance responsibilities and create a positive environment for all involved with the program.

Category: Foundations - Rules Regulating Child Care Facilities, Program Licensing, and Support		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPL 1.1 A. Locates and demonstrates familiarity of the Colorado General Rules for Child Care Facilities and Rules Regulating Child Care Centers That Provide Less than 24-Hour Care (Colorado Rules and Regulations). B. Identifies the types of child care facilities and applicable rules and regulations by facility type and ages of children. C. Describes the center licensing application process, changes requiring a new application, and defines governing body. See competency ECCOBA 7.1 E to	ECCPL 1.2 A. Applies and abides by Colorado Rules and Regulations by child care facility type in the licensing application for and operation of a child care center. B. Locates and utilizes the Colorado Department of Early Childhood Provider Hub for its various functions.	ECCPL 1.3 A. Reviews and evaluates application of Colorado Rules and Regulations by child care facility type in the operation of a child care center on at least an annual or more frequent basis as necessary.

<i>determine when a business license is also needed.</i> D. Describes the function of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood Provider Hub.		
ECCPL 2.1 A. Describes the function of the Division of Early Learning Licensing and Administration (DELLA) - Colorado Department of Early Childhood, role of the licensing specialist, inspection process, and how to identify licensing specialists assigned to child care facilities by county and zip code (caseload assignment list). B. Describes the functions of the Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System (PDIS) , how it is used by licensing specialists during the inspection process, identifies the different roles center administrators may have on the system, functionality available to directors, and locates navigation guides.	ECCPL 2.2 A. Identifies the licensing specialist assigned to a child care facility and establishes a working relationship. B. Utilizes the various functions of the PDIS on a regular basis to support the inspection process and keep current the verification of employees.	ECCPL 2.3 A. Establishes a regular, at least annual if not more frequent, check-in with the licensing specialist to review, discuss, and analyze licensing and compliance needs. B. Reviews and maintains verification status of employees on at least an annual basis if not more frequently or as required.
ECCPL 3.1 A. Identifies and explains the purpose and function of various support organizations for establishing and	ECCPL 3.2 A. Locates the websites of various support organizations, identifies the resources available, and	ECCPL 3.3 A. Reviews and evaluates engagement opportunities with support organizations on at least an annual

maintaining an early childhood care center. These may include but are not limited to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) , Colorado Early Childhood Councils , shared services programs , small business development centers , federal supports , and specialized consultants.	engages in support opportunities as needed and appropriate. B. Signs-up to receive Colorado Department of Early Childhood updates .	basis to note any updates in resources, guidelines or rules and makes appropriate adjustments to the early childhood program or modifies engagement as necessary.
Category: Planning to Establish and Maintain an Early Childhood Care Center		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPL 4.1 A. Explains purpose of a business plan and its components. B. Defines strategic planning, identifies strategic planning models and their components to include but not limited to vision, mission, goals, objectives, and situational (SWOT) analysis. C. Identifies similarities and differences between business plan and strategic plan.	ECCPL 4.2 A. Works with stakeholders to develop a business plan, if necessary, for the establishment and maintenance of the center and initiates the process. B. Facilitates the program strategic planning process and development of a strategic plan with input from key stakeholders using relevant data when possible. C. Participates in identifying stakeholder roles and duties in developing a business plan and/or strategic plan. <i>See competency ECCPL 5.1 A for information on stakeholders.</i>	ECCPL 4.3 A. Works with stakeholders to determine if the business plan needs updating. B. Leads and monitors implementation of strategic plan to include identifying areas where support is needed and reviewing the plan with key stakeholders on at least an annual basis adjusting as necessary. C. Analyzes stakeholder roles and duties adjusting as necessary.

ECCPL 5.1 A. Defines the meaning of stakeholder, identifies types of stakeholders important to early childhood programs, and describes importance of stakeholder equity, diversity, and inclusion as representative of the families, children, and neighborhood served by the program. B. Describes ways to build stakeholder relationships to include components of a stakeholder outreach plan. C. Explains purpose and benefits of establishing a board of directors and/or an advisory board composed of stakeholders.	ECCPL 5.2 A. Identifies relevant stakeholders of the early childhood program, ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion representative of families, children, and neighborhood served. B. Applies knowledge of building stakeholder relationships to create and implement a stakeholder outreach plan. C. Works with the governing body to establish a board of directors and/or advisory board.	ECCPL 5.3 A. Reviews and analyzes stakeholder representation and effectiveness on at least an annual basis adjusting as necessary. B. Evaluates stakeholder outreach plan on at least an annual basis adjusting as necessary.
Category: Leadership and Work Environment		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPL 6.1 A. Defines leadership and describes the role it plays in strategic plan implementation, daily operations, and business administration.	ECCPL 6.2 A. Applies knowledge of leadership style to implement program strategic plans, manage daily operations, and business administration.	ECCPL 6.3 A. Evaluates leadership strengths and areas of needed improvement through utilization of various tools to determine steps to improve leadership on at least an annual basis.

B. Names and describes leadership styles to include benefits and drawbacks of each. C. Identifies own leadership style through use of an assessment tool.		
ECCPL 7.1 A. Describes facilitative and collaborative leadership styles and how these styles may benefit early childhood programs in promoting a positive and empowering work environment.	ECCPL 7.2 A. Applies leadership techniques to facilitate effective and collaborative teamwork among administrators, staff, substitutes, volunteers, and other key stakeholders that is inclusive, anti-racist/anti-bias and culturally and linguistically responsive.	ECCPL 7.3 A. Gathers and reflects on staff and stakeholder input concerning collaborative teamwork implementation on at least an annual basis making changes as needed.
ECCPL 8.1 A. Names characteristics of and describes a positive and supportive work environment. B. Defines meaning and types of workplace culture. C. Describes how leadership style affects workplace culture. D. Identifies practices that support effective internal communication, conflict resolution strategies, and teaming.	ECCPL 8.2 A. Applies knowledge of a positive work environment and culture to create and implement policies, procedures, and processes that create a positive, motivating, supportive, and welcoming anti-racist/anti-bias and culturally responsive work environment. Includes practices which support effective communication, conflict resolution strategies, and teaming.	ECCPL 8.3 A. Monitors work environment, gathers feedback from staff, and addresses any conflicts or issues.

ECCPL 9.1 A. Describes and explains the need for collaboration among staff, respectful internal and external communication, and confidentiality of community stakeholders, staff, children, families, and volunteer information.	ECCPL 9.2 A. Plans and monitors practices that demonstrate collaboration among staff, respectful internal and external communication, and confidentiality of community stakeholders, staff, families, and volunteers.	ECCPL 9.3 A. Designs and/or provides training on confidentiality, collaboration among staff, and respectful internal and external communication as needed.
ECCPL 10.1 A. Defines diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and linguistically and culturally responsive practice to include describing the value of supporting these ideals. B. Reflects on own culture and unconscious bias. C. Identifies strategies to promote and respect DEI throughout an early childhood care program.	ECCPL 10.2 A. Works with key stakeholders to develop and implement strategies ensuring the authentic promotion and embedding of DEI policies and practices throughout the program and to ensure the program is culturally and linguistically responsive to the families and community it serves.	ECCPL 10.3 A. Conducts DEI audits annually or more frequently and adjusts strategies, policies, and procedures to ensure the program authentically promotes DEI and is culturally and linguistically responsive to the families and community it serves.
ECCPL 11.1 A. Locates and summarizes NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment describing application throughout	ECCPL 11.2 A. Plans and implements guidelines that support ethical and professional conduct in the workplace according to NAEYC	ECCPL 11.3 A. Annually reviews plans and guidelines that support ethical and professional conduct in the workplace. Provides enhanced

early childhood program components.	Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment; oversees ethical dilemmas to determine appropriate course of action.	training opportunities to support ethical and professional conduct as necessary.
Category: Quality Improvement		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPL 12.1 A. Identifies and describes components of state and national standards that promote continuous quality improvement to include identifying research-based program observation and evaluation tools that assess the process quality of a program and the administration of a program. (ex. Environment Rating Scales, Program Administration Scale, etc.). B. Locates and describes Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and/or other alternative quality improvement frameworks. C. Identifies quality improvement supportive resources such as local	ECCPL 12.2 A. Applies knowledge of quality improvement to plan for embedded continuous quality improvement efforts including program assessment, evaluation, and improvement activity plans. Plan includes gaining input from families, program staff, and other stakeholders and to engage with quality improvement supportive resources.	ECCPL 12.3 A. Utilizes evaluation data to create an improvement plan, in cooperation with stakeholders, and make positive changes to program design, policies, administration, and family/community engagement. Maintains awareness of potential funding support from state quality initiatives and non-profits.

early childhood councils, quality improvement navigators, and funding resources.		
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Domain #2: Early Childhood Center Operations and Business Administration (ECCOBA)

Rationale: Directors are responsible for the overall operation of their early childhood care center. This competency domain focuses on organizing all operations including business administration functions such as accounting and staffing. Early childhood staff are vital to the experience of children and families served by the program. A supportive work environment can equate to a better experience for children and families as it supports a positive relationship-based atmosphere, greater retention of staff, and continuity of care. Programs that are part of a larger system, namely public school districts or corporations, may have access to business administration and facility maintenance services that carry out some of these tasks. Business functions that require large amounts of time to maintain, like accounting and staffing, benefit from having a designated specialist such as a staff member, consultant, or [shared services organization](#) to support them. CDEC has created a [Business Guide for Child Care Centers](#) to help support directors with the business side of running an early childhood care center.

Category: Organizing Operations		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCOBA 1.1 A. Defines operations planning and components as related to early childhood programs, to include but not limited to operational requirements as defined in Colorado Rules and Regulations. B. Identifies tools, such as child care management software, Gantt charts, planning checklists and timelines, etc., to organize and support early childhood program operations management.	ECCOBA 1.2 A. Applies knowledge of operations planning to work with key stakeholders to create, organize, and implement plans to address all operational aspects of the early childhood program. Includes identifying operational areas that may benefit from specialized staff roles, consultants, or shared services arrangements (e.g. finance, accounting, marketing, curriculum implementation, etc.).	ECCOBA 1.3 A. Works with key stakeholders to review operations management plans on an annual basis, if not more frequently, and determine necessary changes. B. Analyzes the effectiveness of operations management tools. <i>*Note that some components of an operations plan, such as accounting and</i>

	B. Utilizes tools, such as child care management software, Gantt charts, planning checklists and timelines, etc., to organize and support program operations.	<i>finance, may need to be attended to and reviewed on a more frequent basis.</i>
ECCOBA 2.1 A. Identifies the required components of a program policies and procedures statement (often referred to as a parent handbook) that includes the overall promotion of safety and an environment that is healthy, trauma-informed, equitable, anti-racist/anti-bias, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive to the families and community served by the program. See Colorado Rules and Regulations 2.206.	ECCOBA 2.2 A. Applies knowledge of required components to develop a program policies and procedure manual that includes the overall promotion of safety and an environment that is healthy, trauma-informed, equitable, anti-racist/anti-bias, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive while reflecting the program vision, mission, philosophy, and goals.	ECCOBA 2.3 A. On at least an annual basis, analyzes with input from stakeholders, program policies and procedures for compliance with Colorado Rules and Regulations, best practices, and effectiveness, adjusting as necessary.
Category: Budget and Financial Planning		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCOBA 3.1	ECCOBA 3.2	ECCOBA 3.3

A. Defines and explains the importance of budgeting, accounting, and financial planning and how they differ but support each other. Includes identifying components and forms/tools to support each element. B. Identifies frequency at which certain budgeting, accounting and financial planning activities must be maintained. Includes identifying child care management software tools and/or accounting software or other resources, such as consultants, to support child attendance tracking, online billing, payroll, and taxes, etc. C. Describes how enrollment, fee collection, and rates/tuition charged affects income and supports the program's financial position.	A. Working with key stakeholders and utilizing supporting resources, applies knowledge of budgeting, accounting, and financial planning to develop and maintain an overall program budget and financial plan. B. Develops a system, using generally accepted bookkeeping/accounting practices, to track financial transactions. May include use of a child care software management tool to effectively monitor enrollment numbers and fee collection to support full enrollment and timely receipt of fees.	A. Monitors and analyzes program financials utilizing supporting resources on a monthly basis making adjustments necessary. B. Working with key stakeholders and utilizing supporting resources, reviews, analyzes, and adjusts financial business plans on at least an annual basis.
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ECCOBA 4.1 A. Identifies sources of public funding (e.g., Colorado Child Care Assistance Program, Colorado Universal Preschool Program, Colorado Preschool Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, grant opportunities, Colorado Child Care Contribution Tax Credit, etc.), recognizes various requirements, and describes how to combine funding streams to support program funding. B. Describes grant proposal writing practices.	ECCOBA 4.2 A. Develops and implements systems to determine program and families' eligibility for public funding sources. B. Applies for grants.	ECCOBA 4.3 A. Maintains knowledge of public funding and grant funding opportunities and seeks out funding partnerships that support the vision, mission, and goals of the program.
Category: Marketing		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCOBA 5.1 A. Identifies components of a marketing plan and supporting resources.	ECCOBA 5.2 A. Develops a marketing plan utilizing supporting resources in collaboration with families, early childhood staff, community organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders.	ECCOBA 5.3 A. Analyzes effectiveness of marketing plan and adjusts as necessary.

Category: Risk Management, Legal Structure, Business License, and Facility Maintenance		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCOBA 6.1 A. Identifies potential risks of operating an early childhood program and describes strategies to minimize and/or eliminate the various risks and hazards to include but not limited to those outlined in the Colorado Rules and Regulations. B. Identifies need for and types of insurance coverage when owning and/or operating an early childhood center. C. Identifies supporting resources and key stakeholders to consult on identifying risks and minimizing hazards to include but not necessarily limited to licensing specialists, local fire department, local health department, and local building and zoning departments. D. Names and describes legal structures of for-profit and nonprofit business ownership and how they relate to strategic	ECCOBA 6.2 A. Applies knowledge to develop and implement a program risk management plan with assistance from key stakeholders and in compliance with Colorado Rules and Regulations and all other applicable codes and regulations. Includes setting-up legal structure of business, purchasing appropriate insurance coverage, and obtaining business license.	ECCOBA 6.3 A. Monitors and reviews program risk management plan, involving key stakeholders and resources, for effectiveness on at least an annual basis, if not more frequently, and adjusts as necessary.

planning, liability, taxes, and risk management. E. Locates information on determining if a business license is needed and how to obtain a business license.		
ECCOBA 7.1 A. Identifies Colorado Rules and Regulations pertaining to physical facility requirements and maintenance and describes how this relates to safety, risk management planning, and supporting the program mission and vision. (May utilize Child Care Resource Packet and General Resource Materials.)	ECCOBA 7.2 A. Develops procedures and schedules to maintain physical facilities in compliance with Colorado Rules and Regulations, to reduce risk to hazards, increase safety, and support program mission and vision.	ECCOBA 7.3 A. Evaluates physical facilities maintenance procedures and schedules for effectiveness to reduce risk, increase safety, and supports the program mission and vision, adjusting as necessary.
Category: Staffing		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCOBA 8.1 A. Identifies and describes components of a staff policy and	ECCOBA 8.2 A. With involvement of key stakeholders, applies knowledge to	ECCOBA 8.3 A. Annually reviews and adjusts personnel policy, procedures,

procedures handbook in compliance with all Colorado Rules and Regulations and includes diversity, equity, and inclusion practices, salary scale, and benefits. Example 2 Handbook B. Identifies and describes how to embed diversity, equity, and inclusion into staff policies, procedures, and practices.	develop an employee handbook with personnel policies, procedures, budget, salary scale, and benefits package that includes practices that support diversity, equity, and inclusion.	budget, salary scale, and benefits package working with key stakeholders to maintain relevant policies and ensure authentic practices in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
ECCOBA 9.1 A. Identifies and describes Colorado Rules and Regulations staffing requirements and records, roles, qualifications, staff-child ratios, needed background checks, and supervision to include utilization of substitute early childhood professionals and volunteers and the specialized requirements for staff providing infant and toddler care. • Large Center Director Verification Worksheet • Early Childhood Teacher Qualification Pathway Verification Worksheet	ECCOBA 9.2 A. Applies knowledge of Colorado Rules and Regulations for staffing patterns, ratios, and requirements to analyze needed staffing patterns and develops staff scheduling in compliance with government regulations and to support program philosophy and quality.	ECCOBA 9.3 A. Monitors, evaluates, and adjusts staffing patterns, ratios, requirements, and scheduling on a basis compliant with government rules and regulations and to support program philosophy and quality.

ECCOBA 10.1 A. Describes the current early childhood professional labor market to include issues of a diverse, culturally, and linguistically representative workforce. B. Identifies components of strategic recruitment and retention plans to include developing a pool of qualified substitutes. C. Identifies recruitment and retention resources that include supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and culturally/linguistically representative program staff. D. Identifies hiring and employment laws and resources (includes obtaining an employer identification number from the IRS and applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.)	ECCOBA 10.2 A. Applies knowledge of the current early childhood professional labor market and laws to develop and implement a strategic recruitment and retention plan with input from current staff members, key stakeholders, and considerations to ensure equitable, diverse, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically representative practices. Includes hiring process strategies for advertising positions, screening, interviewing, onboarding, developing a pool of qualified substitutes, and utilizing resources and supports.	ECCOBA 10.3 A. Analyzes and evaluates recruitment and retention plan adjusting as necessary. B. Advocates for recruitment and retention of early childhood professionals at the local, state, and national level.

ECCOBA 11.1 A. Names and describes components of an effective phased employee onboarding and orientation process that is inclusive and welcoming. Includes identifying training requirements for various staff that needs to be completed prior to caring for children, within 30 calendar days of employment, and within 90 calendar days of employment. B. Names and describes components of an effective offboarding process.	ECCOBA 11.2 A. Designs an inclusive and welcoming new employee phased onboarding and orientation process that includes substitute early childhood professionals and ensures each employee can explain their own job description, the professional expectations of the job, is knowledgeable about Colorado Rules and Regulations, and program policies and procedures. B. Designs offboarding process.	ECCOBA 11.3 A. Analyzes phased onboarding and orientation process using feedback from employees, observation, and data. Provides training and adjusts plans as necessary. B. Analyzes information received through the offboarding process to determine and implement any needed changes.
ECCOBA 12.1 A. Describes career navigation and personal professional development planning. Includes investigating career navigation tools and supports, such as but not limited to the Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System (PDIS) competency self-assessment and professional development plan, and funding opportunities to support staff in their career and professional development.	ECCOBA 12.2 A. Develops and implements a system for staff personal professional development planning and career navigation that includes an annual self-assessment of early childhood professional competencies, goal setting, and an annual review of plan with program director, career navigator, coach, mentor, or trainer.	ECCOBA 12.3 A. Annually reviews and adjusts the system for staff personal professional development planning taking into consideration feedback from staff.
ECCOBA 13.1	ECCOBA 13.2	ECCOBA 13.3

A. Lists requirements of state required annual professional development for early childhood professionals. B. Identifies Colorado Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Professionals, or other professional standards, describing how they may be used to enhance professional skills and knowledge and how this benefits children and families. C. Explains the importance of including staff training on the topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, unconscious bias, and anti-racist/anti-bias strategies to promote environments and interactions that are inclusive and supportive of all children and families. D. Identifies sources of local, state, and national professional development including but not limited to Colorado Shines PDIS, Colorado Early Childhood Councils, higher education courses and degrees, local/national conferences, and in-person or virtual training opportunities.	A. Includes policies on and creates an annual program professional development plan offering professional development opportunities and resources that align with and support staff's personal goals, align with professional competencies, supports team growth, and program improvement. B. Implements staff professional development to support their on-going knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, unconscious bias, and anti-racist/anti-bias strategies so they may provide activities, environments, and interactions that are inclusive and supportive of all children and their families.	A. Reviews, at least annually, the program professional development plan and policies, assessing if they helped program staff meet personal professional development goals, supported team growth, and program improvement, adjusting as necessary. B. Assesses staff knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, and observes program activities, environments, and interactions for authentic implementation of such as part of DEI audits to determine where further supports and training are necessary.
ECCOBA 14.1	ECCOBA 14.2	ECCOBA 14.3

A. Explains the importance of and describes elements of early childhood professional and director self-care and well-being. B. Names symptoms of professional burnout and strategies to support the overall well-being and resilience of all staff.	A. Develops, implements, and monitors a self-care and well-being plan to support the early childhood staff and director's mental health and resilience. Plan includes steps to support staff and self if experiencing symptoms of professional burnout.	A. Reviews and evaluates self-care and well-being plans based on employee feedback. Adjusts plan and implementation to ensure continuous support of staff and self.
ECCOBA 15.1 A. Defines, describes, and names benefits of relationship-based coaching, reflective supervision, and mentoring.	ECCOBA 15.2 A. Plans and supports opportunities for staff to participate in coaching/mentoring and other reflective practice activities.	ECCOBA 15.3 A. Analyzes program schedules and staff feedback to ensure staff have adequate time for coaching/mentoring and reflective practice activities.
ECCOBA 16.1 A. Names and describes elements of supportive supervision.	ECCOBA 16.2 A. Creates a supportive supervision plan to include, at minimum, an annual performance appraisal utilizing observation of practice and reflective practice activities.	ECCOBA 16.3 A. Annually reviews the supportive supervision plan utilizing staff feedback. Adjusts as necessary.

Domain #3: Early Childhood Center Curriculum and Instruction (ECCCI)

Rationale: Competencies in this domain address the skills and knowledge needed to select curriculum that supports the philosophy of the program and lead its practice among staff to promote positive outcomes for children, birth through age 8. Key to successful curriculum selection and leading implementation is knowledge of recognized child development guidelines, early learning standards, and developmentally appropriate practices that support positive relationships and interactions among

children, families, and the program’s early childhood professionals. More detailed information on child development and curriculum implementation by educators may be found in Colorado’s Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Professionals.

Category: Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Standards, and Guidelines		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
ECCCI 1.1 A. Identifies sections of Colorado Rules and Regulations related to curriculum and instruction such as, but not limited to, Activities and Child Care Equipment and Materials, noting special requirements for infant and toddler programs. B. Defines and describes the elements of developmentally appropriate practice and its application by early childhood professionals with emphasis on understanding each child has a unique development with various learning needs. Includes describing the purpose of the Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care Initiative and resources to support responsive care for infants and toddlers. C. Locates state and national early learning and development	ECCCI 1.2 A. Applies Colorado Rules and Regulations related to curriculum and instruction and uses state/national standards and guidelines to support overall program and curriculum choices, ideal indoor and outdoor learning environments, and activities that are developmentally appropriate, inclusive, equitable, anti-racist/anti-bias, and culturally and linguistically responsive for children enrolled in program. B. Applies knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice to lead a system of implementation and reflective supervision to include feedback and training for staff.	ECCCI 1.3 A. Designs a system to frequently assess program indoor and outdoor environments, materials, equipment, daily schedules, and activities to ensure developmentally appropriate practice occurs consistently throughout program, is supportive of program goals, and is anti-racist/anti-bias, equitable, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive for children and families. B. Evaluates the system used to provide implementation and reflective supervision of developmentally appropriate practice adjusting as necessary.

guidelines and early learning standards describing their connection to developmentally appropriate practice, and how they may be used to support curriculum choices, ideal indoor and outdoor learning environments, and activities that support program goals and children’s growth, development, and learning. D. Locates developmentally appropriate curricula that are research- and evidence-based. <i>(CDEC and CDE does not endorse any specific curriculum, but do encourage centers to implement research-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum. Centers participating in Colorado Shines QRIS need to select a curriculum that aligns with Colorado’s Early Learning and Development Guidelines.)</i>		
ECCCI 2.1 A. Identifies and defines components of developmentally appropriate teaching practice cycle (observing, assessing, documenting, reflecting, planning, teaching) that is anti-racist/anti-bias, and culturally and linguistically responsive. Includes describing the importance of staff planning time in this process.	ECCCI 2.2 A. Provides guidance, resources, and support, including scheduled planning time, to program early childhood professionals in their knowledge and implementation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum cycle that is anti-racist/anti-bias, and culturally and linguistically responsive.	ECCCI 2.3 A. Evaluates program curriculum cycle to include feedback from staff, on an annual or more frequent basis and adjusts as necessary and/or provides further training.

Category: Developmental Screening and Universal Design for Learning		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCCI 3.1 A. Names and describes common early childhood developmental delays, disabilities, and disorders. B. Defines developmental monitoring, screening, and evaluation and identifies developmental screening resources and tools. C. Identifies contact information, describes the purpose of Early Intervention Colorado, Child Find, Preschool Special Education Services, and Colorado Community Centered Boards, and describes referral process. D. Describes components of Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP).	ECCCI 3.2 A. Develops a program specific system for screening, documentation, and referral. Provides resources, to include training, for all program early childhood professionals to implement culturally responsive support for all children and those working with IFSP and IEP teams.	ECCCI 3.3 A. Reviews system for screening, documentation, and referral on a regular basis and adjusts as necessary. Analyzes the program's current support for children with delays, disabilities, or disorders. B. Investigates funding resources and organizations that may enhance program support.

ECCCI 4.1 A. Defines inclusion and universal design for learning describing the benefits for all children and why programs should strive to provide these practices. B. Identifies core principles of universal design for learning. C. Identifies resources to support inclusion (infants and toddlers and preschoolers) and universal design for learning throughout the program.	ECCCI 4.2 A. Applies knowledge to develop strategies and policies of inclusion and universal design for learning to guide and strategically support program's early childhood professionals in integrating and embedding these concepts when implementing program curriculum, ideal learning environments, and activities.	ECCCI 4.3 A. Designs a system to assess for the embedding and effectiveness of inclusive and universal design for learning practices throughout the program adjusting as necessary.
Category: Behavioral Guidance and Social Emotional Learning		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCCI 5.1 A. Identifies section(s) of Colorado Rules and Regulations related to behavioral guidance. B. Describes the importance of social emotional learning on a child's development and components of a social emotional learning program that is developmentally appropriate emphasizing positive behavior support, relationship-based care,	ECCCI 5.2 A. Develops and implements program policies and procedures that reflect rules on guidance practices and best practices to support developmentally appropriate social emotional learning and development. B. Applies knowledge to lead a program of social emotional learning that emphasizes positive supportive relationship-based care,	ECCCI 5.3 A. Annually assesses program policies and procedures on guidance and program of social emotional learning utilizing staff and family feedback, observation, and any relevant data adjusting as necessary.

trauma-informed care, and is anti-racist/anti-bias, culturally and linguistically responsive, and equitable. C. Identifies curricula and resources, such as working with an infant and early childhood mental health specialist or Pyramid trainer, that support social emotional learning and development.	trauma-informed care, is anti-racist/anti-bias, culturally responsive, and equitable, and engages family support. C. Advises and provides social emotional training for staff that emphasizes positive supportive relationship-based care, trauma-informed care, is anti-racist/anti-bias, culturally responsive, equitable, and engages family support.	
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Domain #4: Early Childhood Center Partnership with Families and the Community (ECCPFC)

Rationale: Children learn and develop in context of their relationships with their family, community, and greater society. Directors work to create a welcoming and positive early childhood program that reflects and embraces the cultures of the community it serves, identifies resources that are supportive of families, and leads the program in partnering with families in their child's learning and development. Positive relationship-based care that focuses on children and their families is a mainstay of early childhood programs.

Category: Engagement Planning and Identifying Community Resources		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPFC 1.1 A. Describes how family, neighborhood, community, and society contribute to a child's development. B. Identifies strategies for developing successful family and community engagement that is relationship-based, collaborative, respectful, supports families in their efforts to raise their children, is anti-racist/anti-bias and culturally and linguistically inclusive of all families served by the program. C. Names elements of and describes the Strengthening Families and Protective Factors Framework.	ECCPFC 1.2 A. Involve families in analyzing needs to create and implement an annual family/ community engagement and communication plan that respectfully supports families efforts to raise their children and includes elements of the Strengthening Families and Protective Factors Framework. Plan emphasizes collaboration and applies knowledge of anti-bias and anti-racist strategies, honors diversity in family practices, is linguistically and culturally responsive, inclusive, and addresses potential communication barriers.	ECCPFC 1.3 A. Gather feedback to evaluate effectiveness of engagement and communication plan and adjust as necessary. Works with program staff to identify and implement support for staff to develop effective communication and collaboration skills, including the use of tools that are linguistically and culturally responsive, encourage on-going information sharing, joint decision-making, and problem solving with all families regardless of technology access, reading ability, and language differences.

D. Lists components of effective communication and identifies resources to support the needs of family linguistic diversity and potential communication barriers such as lack of access to technology.		
ECCPFC 2.1 A. Describes community asset mapping and identifies neighborhood and greater community resources that support children and families. B. Names strategies to determine family and community needs.	ECCPFC 2.2 A. Implements strategies to determine family and community needs. B. Develops relationships with neighborhood and greater community resource organizations connecting families with them in a variety of ways such as through community asset mapping, materials, parent presentations, referrals, coordinating services, enhancing curriculum, etc.	ECCPFC 2.3 A. Reviews strategies to determine family and community needs and works with staff and other stakeholders to determine additional community resources and methods of outreach.
Category: Supporting Transitions		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPFC 3.1	ECCPFC 3.2	ECCPFC 3.3

A. Names the various types of transitions young children may experience as part of attending a program. B. Describes strategies for continuity of care and smooth supportive transitions that provide a sense of security and well-being for children and families.	A. Implements procedures and activities for successful transitions and continuity of care for children and families when entering a program, before/after care, moving between classes, entering kindergarten, and other types of transitions.	A. Reviews transition and continuity of care procedures on an annual or more frequent basis to identify and implement areas of improvement. Identifies additional strategies and community resources to enhance continuity of care.
Category: Advocacy		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCPFC 4.1 A. Can describe basic advocacy skills within the early childhood context to increase awareness and/or prompt change. B. Identifies early childhood advocacy organizations and opportunities at the local, state, and national level.	ECCPFC 4.2 A. Uses advocacy knowledge and skills to increase awareness and/or promote change that supports young children, families, early childhood professionals, and the overall early childhood care and learning field.	ECCPFC 4.3 A. Integrates advocacy skills to promote change throughout professional practices.

Domain # 5: Early Childhood Center Health, Safety, and Nutrition (ECCHSN)

Rationale: Health, safety, and nutrition are paramount to children’s growth, learning, development, and ability to thrive. Directors ensure that program health, safety, and nutrition policies and procedures are followed and positively promoted with the aim of preventing injury, preparing everyone for emergencies, and allowing children, families, and staff to feel safe and secure. Health, safety, and nutrition policies and procedures should be culturally and linguistically responsive and created through an anti-racist/anti-bias lens.

Category: Regulatory Agencies, Rules, Regulations, and Codes		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCHSN 1.1 A. Identifies all regulatory agencies that affect the administration of early childhood programs (i.e., Division of Early Learning Licensing and Administration (DELLA) - Colorado Department of Early Childhood, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and local health departments, Child Welfare - Colorado Department of Human Services, local fire department, and local building planning and zoning agencies, etc.), their functions, and supporting resources. B. Locates rules, regulations, and codes that apply to early childhood programs related to physical facility requirements, maintenance	ECCHSN 1.2 A. Develops program health, safety, and nutrition policies, procedures, and practices in compliance with current regulatory agency rules, regulations, and codes. B. Develops a plan to ensure staff is knowledgeable about and implements all regulatory rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices as related to health, safety, and nutrition. C. Maintains awareness of any regulatory changes and revises program policies, procedures, and practices as necessary.	ECCHSN 1.3 A. Influences proposed updates to regulatory rules, regulations, and codes by participating in local, state, and/or national working groups and committees.

planning, health, safety, and nutrition noting special requirements for infants and toddlers. C. Names and describes strategies to ensure staff is knowledgeable about and implements all regulatory rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices as related to health, safety, supervision, and nutrition.		
ECCHSN 2.1 A. Describe need for and components of security and emergency evacuation plan and procedures, and a disaster preparedness plan in compliance with all applicable rules, regulations, and codes. Explains the importance of having an alternative care delivery plan due to unforeseen circumstances such as a pandemic, natural disaster, etc. Sample Template See training requirements for Emergency and Disaster Preparedness for Child Care Providers. B. Identifies key stakeholders and resources to support the creation and implementation of security, emergency, evacuation, and disaster preparedness plans.	ECCHSN 2.2 A. Develops and implements security and emergency procedures and a disaster preparedness plan in collaboration with staff and community professionals. Plan addresses staff ongoing training and ensures staff and children regularly practice emergency and disaster drills in compliance with all applicable rules, regulations, and codes.	ECCHSN 2.3 A. After completing practice emergency and disaster drills, analyzes appropriateness and effectiveness of security, emergency, and disaster preparedness plans and adjusts as necessary working with emergency preparedness officials and using resources as needed.

ECCHSN 3.1 A. Identifies required training and describes procedures for responding to suspected child abuse and neglect in compliance with Colorado Rules and Regulations and as a state mandated reporter.	ECCHSN 3.2 A. Develops procedures to ensure all staff understand their reporting responsibility and are trained as outlined in Colorado Rules and Regulations in responding to suspected child abuse and neglect.	ECCHSN 3.3 A. Works with staff to analyze effectiveness of procedures ensuring all staff understand their reporting responsibility and are trained as outlined in Colorado Rules and Regulations in responding to suspected child abuse and neglect. Adjusts as necessary.
ECCHSN 4.1 A. Identifies rules, regulations, and codes related to the review of indoor and outdoor equipment, materials, and environments to ensure health, hygiene, and safety of children and staff. B. Explains the importance of a Certified Playground Safety Inspection and identifies resources that provide inspection. C. Identifies sources of funding to replace or enhance safety of equipment, materials, and environments. D. Identifies outdoor environment measurement tools to assess the quality of outdoor environments.	ECCHSN 4.2 A. Creates a system of review, repair, and updates of equipment, materials, and environments to ensure health, hygiene, and safety of children and staff and to meet or exceed standards outlined in rules, regulations, and codes.	ECCHSN 4.3 A. Applies for sources of funding to replace or enhance safety of equipment, materials, and environments.

Category: Health and Sanitation Equipment		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCHSN 5.1 A. Identifies necessary health and sanitation equipment and supplies in compliance with all regulatory rules, regulations, and codes noting special considerations for infants and toddlers.	ECCHSN 5.2 A. Creates and implements a plan to keep health and sanitation equipment and supplies in stock, available for use, and ensure staff is trained in their use in compliance with all regulatory rules, regulations, and codes.	ECCHSN 5.3 A. Regularly analyzes the plan and adjusts as necessary in compliance with all regulatory rules, regulations, and codes.
Category: Safe and Inclusive Environments		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development
ECCHSN 6.1 Identifies and describes adaptations to program environments to ensure safety and inclusion of all children including those with special needs. Includes describing the benefits for all children and why programs should strive to provide these practices.	ECCHSN 6.2 A. Evaluates and adapts environments to ensure the safety and inclusion of all children including those with special needs. Initiates feedback from families with children with special needs and adjusts environments as necessary.	ECCHSN 6.3 A. Works with specialists to identify further program adaptations to create a safe, welcoming, and fully engaging environment for all children.
Category: Consultants		
Level 1 - Foundation	Level 2 - Application	Level 3 - Development

ECCHSN 7.1 A. Describes role of program child care health consultant and required qualifications of position. B. Identifies child care health consultant duties, required documentation of visits, director/staff medication administration tasks, and required training for staff members. C. Locates statewide hub for Child Care Health Consultation and identifies available services.	ECCHSN 7.2 A. Develops a schedule of regular visits by the child care health consultant in compliance with Colorado Rules and Regulations and complies with required documentation of visits. B. Creates and monitors policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that all medical, nutritional, and physical care plans for enrolled children are fully implemented in partnership with families, child care health consultant, specialists, and staff.	ECCHSN 7.3 A. Reviews, in collaboration with the child care health consultant and staff, policies, procedures, and practices surrounding medical, nutritional, and physical care plans to determine effectiveness, adjusting as necessary.
ECCHSN 8.1 A. Describes role of infant and early childhood mental health consultants, benefits of engaging their services, and how to begin services through use of the Colorado Early Childhood Mental Health Support Line.	ECCHSN 8.2 A. Collaborates with infant and early childhood mental health consultants to create a plan of mental health support and training to benefit children, their families, and staff.	ECCHSN 8.3 A. Reviews, in collaboration with infant and early childhood mental health consultants and staff, plan on an annual or more frequent basis adjusting as necessary.

Glossary of Terms

Accounting: The recording of financial transactions and information using financial statements (also known as forms or reports) to keep track of assets, expenses, liabilities, equity, and revenue. Financial statements include balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement, statement of equity, etc. Many small businesses use accounting software and/or hire a certified accountant to support their accounting practice. Some child care management software systems may offer accounting functions.

Advocacy: Families, organizations, or volunteers working on behalf of the rights and interests of others (such as children or people with disabilities).

Anti-Bias: Increasing understanding and embracing and honoring differences. To be anti-bias is to actively oppose biased ideas, actions, and behaviors.

Anti-Racist: The action of opposing racism and promoting acceptance and inclusion. To be anti-racist is to actively oppose biased ideas, actions, and behaviors.

Assessment: A process used to determine an individual child's present level of performance and their possible need for early intervention or educational support. Assessments rely on evidence-based instruments. There are also assessment tools available to evaluate an early childhood program.

Budget: An organized estimation of income and expenses to help with business planning. Income and expenses are categorized in a budget. Budget components include estimated revenue, fixed costs, variable costs, one-time expenses, cash flow, and profit.

Burnout: Emotional conditions marked by tiredness, loss of interest, or frustration that interferes with job performance. Burnout can be the result of prolonged stress.

Career Navigation: Exploring and understanding job and career opportunities available in the early childhood field and learning about the qualifications and competencies needed and resources available to interested professionals.

Child Care Management Software: A pre-packaged electronic system to help track daily operations and accounting functions of an early childhood center. Functions may include staff scheduling, signing children in and out, child attendance, payroll, billing, etc.

Child Development: The social-emotional, linguistic, cognitive, and perceptual and motor changes and growth that occur between birth and the end of adolescence. Individuals develop at different rates and in a variety of ways, but usually in a predictable sequence.

Collaborative Leadership: A management style where all members of the staff participate in decision making and may take on leadership responsibilities for specific functions. Collaborative leadership may contribute to a more positive work environment, greater job satisfaction and employee retention.

Code of Ethical Conduct: Behavior that is tied to the shared values that people in a profession are committed to uphold. A code of ethical conduct serves as a guide for everyday professional conduct.

Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines: Based on the latest early childhood research and understanding, the ELDG provides practical tips and points of reference that professionals and families can use to help children grow physically, intellectually, and emotionally from birth to age 8.

Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System (PDIS): Colorado's online registry and learning management system for early childhood professionals. This free resource is where early childhood professionals apply for qualifications and credentials, house documents, complete required training, and learn about available training.

Community Asset Mapping: Documenting and sharing with families the existing community resources available to them. Identifying gaps in services to meet family needs and working to provide needed resources.

Competency: The skill or knowledge needed to perform an activity.

Confidentiality: Ensuring that information is kept private and is accessible only to authorized people.

Conflict Resolution: The process of resolving a dispute or a conflict by providing for each side's needs and addressing each side's interests. The goal of conflict resolution is for both parties to be satisfied with the outcome.

Continuity of Care: Providing care to children by the same consistent early childhood professionals in consistent locations throughout the day and/or year. Consistency and continuity of care help to ensure a stable and nurturing environment (Child Care and Early Education Research Connections, 2012).

Culture: The way of life of different groups of people. Culture includes the characteristic features of everyday life (such as food, language, customs, and traditions) that are shared by members of a particular culture.

Culturally Responsive: Cultural responsiveness requires people to have a level of cultural competence. This means having awareness of one's own cultural identity and one's own views about difference. Being culturally responsive means that a person is able to learn about, honor, and promote the diverse cultural and community norms of children and their families.

Curriculum: A blueprint for planning and implementing the environment and activities of an early childhood program. A curriculum generally addresses all aspects of development and includes building partnerships with families.

Daily Transitions: All movement from one activity or place to the next within one day (drop off, activity to activity, outside to inside, etc.).

Developmentally Appropriate: A term that describes a set of best-practice principles and guidelines for the care and education of young children from birth through age eight. Developmentally appropriate practice is grounded in the research on how young children develop and learn and in what is known about educational effectiveness. Principles and guidelines of developmentally appropriate practice outline practices that promote young children's optimal learning and development (National Association for the Education of Young Children 2009).

Development Delays: Areas of development where a child is not growing or developing in a pattern that is consistent with 'typical developing children'.

Developmental Evaluation: The most formal of developmental observations completed by a pediatrician or child development specialist to identify and diagnose developmental delays and conditions.

Developmental Milestones: Describes memorable accomplishments in a child's growth. Examples include rolling over, crawling, walking, and talking.

Developmental Monitoring: A less formal observation of how a child is developing. Parents and other caregivers generally use checklists as they monitor development.

Developmental Screening: A brief assessment designed to identify children who are at risk for health problems, developmental problems, and/or disabling conditions. These children may need to receive helpful intervention services as soon as possible. Checklists or questionnaires are generally the tools used by healthcare or early childhood professionals to complete a developmental screening.

Director: The person appointed by an early childhood care center governing body who is responsible to the governing body and who is delegated the authority and responsibility for the operation of the center according to its defined purpose and policies. Director duties will vary based on care center type and organizational structure.

Diversity: Refers to differences and/or sameness of human qualities that are present in individuals, groups, society, and institutions. Qualities of diversity include age, race, ethnicity, language, culture, socio-economic status, educational background, learning styles, and abilities.

Early Childhood Educator: People who provide direct care and education for children from birth to age eight. Includes licensed child care professionals in centers or family child care homes preschool teachers, kindergarten through third grade teachers, as well as paraprofessionals, and school-age care providers.

Early Learning: Early learning includes all learning and development for a child from birth to third grade.

Equity: Being fair and impartial to ensure that all people have what they need to thrive.

Family Engagement: A shared responsibility in which early childhood settings, schools, and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways that help to actively support children's learning and development.

Financial Planning: An organized way to view the financial status of a business and determine how it will financially achieve short- and long-term goals. Components of a financial plan may include budget, taxes, accounting, savings, insurance, paying off debt, etc. Some small businesses work with a certified financial planner.

Gantt Chart - A diagram of tasks or activities with start and end dates to help with planning.

Inclusion: The practice that has children with special needs spending most or all of their time with typically developing children. Inclusion is about the child's right to participate and the program or school's duty to accept the child. Inclusion rejects the use of special programs or classrooms to separate children with disabilities from children without disabilities. Core beliefs of inclusion are: 1) All children can learn and benefit from education; 2) School and program should adapt to the needs of children rather than children adapting to the needs of the program or school; 3) Individual differences between children are a source of richness and diversity.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written education plan for a school-aged child with disabilities that is developed by a team of early childhood professionals (teachers, therapists, etc.) and the child's family. IEPs are based on a multidisciplinary evaluation of the child and describe how the child is presently doing, what the child's learning needs are, and what services the child will need. They are reviewed and updated yearly. IEPs are required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A document that guides the early intervention process for children, birth to age three, and their families. The IFSP is the means for the implementation of effective early intervention in accordance with Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IFSPs contain information about the services necessary to facilitate a child's development as well as to enhance the family's capacity to facilitate the child's development. Through the IFSP process, family members and service providers work as a team to plan, implement, and evaluate services tailored to the family's unique concerns, priorities, and resources.

Leadership: Guiding and inspiring staff and other stakeholders in the planning and carrying out of various tasks, responsibilities, and operations to achieve the vision, mission, and goals of an early childhood program.

Linguistically Responsive: Incorporating a child's and their family's first language into various aspects of the early childhood program to promote a connection between the child's home, care, and learning environments.

Mandated Reporter: Individuals who, in the ordinary course of their work and because they have regular contact with children, are required to report (or cause a report to be made)

wherever physical, sexual, or other types of abuse have been observed or suspected. Reports must also be made by mandated reporters when there is evidence of neglect, knowledge of an incident, or an imminent risk of serious harm.

Marketing: Activities to promote a business or service leading to income generation.

Observation: Formal and informal processes designed to pay attention to and learn about the development and progress of a child, an adult, or a program.

Onboarding/Offboarding: Onboarding is the process of introducing and integrating new employees into all aspects of the early childhood program so they have a thorough understanding of the program's mission, culture, and their role as a contributing team member. Onboarding activities generally occur over a period of time and may include orientation, mentoring, team building events, and activities to introduce and reinforce program policies and procedures. Offboarding is the group of activities that occurs when an employee leaves the program. Offboarding activities may include an exit interview to gather feedback, the turning in of equipment, removing access to systems and buildings, etc.

Operations Planning: The detailed planning of daily activities necessary to the successful running of the early childhood care center. The plan includes information on who is responsible for what and when and what success looks like.

Public Relations: The overall public recognition of your brand or business.

Professional Development: Refers to the skill and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Professional development includes all types of facilitated learning opportunities, such as college degrees, formal coursework, conferences, online training, and informal learning opportunities that take place in the program setting or elsewhere. There are many approaches to professional development including coaching, communities of practice, study, mentoring, reflective supervision, and technical assistance.

Program Transitions: Movement between programs (i.e., preschool to kindergarten, Part C to Part B, switching to a new school, etc.)

Protective Factors: Characteristics, variables, and/or conditions present in individuals or groups that enhance resiliency, increase resistance to risk, and fortify against the development of a disorder or adverse outcomes.

Recruitment: The process of identifying, attracting, interviewing, selecting, hiring, and onboarding staff members.

Referral: In the early childhood field, the process of helping a family or child care provider access a service. Referrals include connecting a child or family to a lead agency or school district for special education services.

Reflective Practices: Considering one's thoughts, feelings, actions, and experiences when applying knowledge to professional practice. Reflective practice helps one learn from experiences and systematically explores other approaches or behaviors. Reflective practice

may be the most effective when supported by peer collaboration or a coaching relationship. Reflective practices may be applied to supervision.

Relationship-Based Care: A cohesive approach to high-quality care and education using a framework for promoting strong relationships that support positive early learning and development outcomes for young children. (Child Care State Capacity Building Center: Infant/Toddler Specialist Network, (n.d.).

Retention: A strategic plan to motivate, engage, and support staff so they remain employed with the organization.

Risk Factors: Characteristics, variables, and/or conditions that present in individuals or groups that increase the likelihood of that individual or group developing a disorder or adverse outcome.

Risk Management: Identifying potential risks of operating an early childhood program and strategies to minimize and/or eliminate the various risks and hazards.

Self-Care: Activities to support one's physical and mental health so they may successfully do their job, take care of others, accomplish daily tasks, and achieve a state of well-being.

Self-Regulation: The ability to recognize and control one's emotions and behaviors.

Service Providers: Early childhood professionals who work primarily with children and families who have special needs or who need services beyond what is typically provided by an early childhood educator. These providers are often early childhood special educators, but they also might include occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech therapists.

Shared Services: An organization that provides various business support services to early childhood programs. Shared services often offer child care management software and discounts on purchasing food and supplies. Benefits include saving time and money when it comes to business administration tasks.

Special Needs: Refers to the needs of children with social, emotional, communication, intellectual, or physical delays or disabilities. The "special" is borrowed from the field of special education.

Social-Emotional Development: A domain of child development that includes learning about, recognizing, and managing emotions; developing care and concern for others; establishing positive relationships; making responsible decisions; and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically. This involves the development of skills that allow children to calm themselves when angry, make friends, resolve conflicts respectfully, and make safe, ethical choices (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning 2010).

Stakeholder: A person with an interest in the early childhood center. Stakeholders include families, neighbors, community members, staff, board members, service providers, local school district staff, etc.

Strategic Planning: A document outlining a program's vision, mission, goals and objectives and the purposeful organization of the actions and timeline needed to achieve them.

Strengthening Families Protective Factors: The five protective factors at the foundation of Strengthening Families are characteristics that have been shown to make positive outcomes more likely for young children and their families, and to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. The five protective factors are Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Social Emotional Competence of Children, and Concrete Support in Time of Need.

Supportive Supervision: A respectful and relationship-based approach to employee supervision. Seen as a joint-problem solving approach to address problems and increase employee knowledge, skills, and engagement.

Teacher: An adult with responsibility for the education and care of children from birth to age eight.

Teaching Practice Cycle: The process of observing, assessing, documenting, planning, and teaching to meet the needs of children.

Trauma: The response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope.

Transition: A change from one thing to another such as when a child moves from one care center to another.

Typical Development: Development of a child who develops along known timelines and with no major delays.

Universal Design: The design of an environment so it may be accessed and used to the fullest extent by all learners regardless of disability or ability. Universal design benefits all learners.

Well-Being: A general feeling of comfort and good health.

Workplace Culture: The attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values that make-up the everyday work environment and experience of employees.

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