

Professional Development System Frameworks

Setting the Context

State and territory professional development systems consist of interrelated efforts, services, and supports that address the continuum of workforce needs with a common goal of building and sustaining an effective workforce. As states and territories work to strengthen these systems, considerations must be made for how the professional development system fits within in the larger early care and education context. Professional development system frameworks can serve as a roadmap for the professionals that live and work in the state or territory. A professional development system is always a work in progress, continually evolving, and must be refined to meet the needs of the population it serves. This is recognized in the 2014 Reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) Fund (CCDF). In fact, a strong professional development system framework is key in meeting many of the provisions in the CCDF Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) authorized by the Act such as health and safety training, access to quality services, supporting children’s development, preventing expulsions, etc. This resource compilation provides background information to states and territories as they work to define, describe, build and sustain the professional development system framework that is created for the early care and education workforce. It also includes links to existing resources and state professional development framework examples.

CCDF Regulations

The CCDF Regulations state that:

45 CFR 98.44 Training and professional development

(a) The Lead Agency must describe in the Plan the State or Territory framework for training, professional development, and postsecondary education for caregivers, teachers, and directors, including those working in school-age care, that:

- (1) Is developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B (b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b (b)(1)(A)(i)) or similar coordinating body;
- (2) May engage training and professional development providers, including higher education, in aligning training and education opportunities with the State’s framework;
- (3) Addresses professional standards and competencies, career pathways, advisory structure, articulation, and workforce information and financing;
- (4) Establishes qualifications in accordance with § 98.41(d)(3) designed to enable child care and school-age care providers that provide services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this part to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and improve the knowledge and skills of caregivers, teachers and directors in working with children and their families;
- (5) Includes professional development conducted on an ongoing basis, providing a progression of professional development (which may include encouraging the pursuit of postsecondary education);
- (6) Reflects current research and best practices relating to the skills necessary for caregivers, teachers, and directors to meet the developmental needs of participating children and engage families, including culturally and linguistically appropriate practices; and
- (7) Improves the quality, diversity, stability, and retention (including financial incentives and compensation improvements) of caregivers, teachers, and directors.

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/ccdf-final-regulations>

As indicated in 45 CFR 98.44 (3), the six key components that should be included in the State Professional Development Framework are

1. professional standards and competencies;
2. career pathways;
3. advisory structure;
4. articulation;
5. workforce information; and
6. financing.

Related Resources

Below are a sample of general resources related to the professional development system framework requirements. These resources may be helpful for lead agencies as they work to define, develop, and strengthen the professional development system in their state or territory. For example, state or territory leaders may want to share these resources with stakeholder groups that are working to plan for professional development activities in the years ahead.

Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation;

The Institute of Medicine and National Research Council were commissioned to explore the implications of the science of child development for the professionals who work with children birth through age 8. In the resulting report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, the committee finds that much is known about what professionals who provide care and education for children need to know and be able to do and what professional learning supports they need. The report offers recommendations to build a workforce that is unified by the foundation of the science of child development and early learning and the shared knowledge and competencies that are needed to provide consistent, high-quality support for the development and early learning of children from birth through age 8.

<http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/Reports/2015/Birth-To-Eight.aspx>

Brief Series on the Early Childhood Workforce: Pathways to Progress

In 2015, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) released the report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth to Eight*. It offers recommendations for building a high-quality early childhood workforce with the knowledge, competencies, education, and support to promote children's development and learning. This series of briefs summarizes the findings in the report. Use them to inform early childhood programs, states, institutes of higher education, and other interested stakeholders to strengthen the support they offer the early childhood workforce.

<https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/brief-series-early-childhood-workforce-pathways-progress>

Build It Better: Indicators of Progress to Support Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development Systems

This resource, which builds on the six components within the Professional Development Framework requirement and the National Association for the Education of Young Children Workforce Designs Blueprint's four principles and six policy areas, provides a set of indicators that look across early childhood education settings, sectors and roles. The intent is to use the indicators to build a better system - one that can integrate professional development regulations and initiatives, raise professional development quality, address workforce equity and diversity and make the case for compensation parity.

http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Build%20It%20Better_For%20Web.pdf

Aligned Professional Development Systems Planning and Implementation Guide

This resource is a planning and implementation guide for state or territory teams as they develop and strengthen an aligned professional development system. It defines the key elements of an aligned state or territory professional

development system, as set out by the CCDF regulations, common national models, as well as guiding principles that have emerged as states and territories move to develop aligned professional development systems. A developmental continuum of systems alignment is also included in this guide.

https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/pdwcenter_alignedpds_considerations.pdf

Strengthening the Early Childhood and School-Age Workforce

The Strengthening the Early Childhood and School Age Workforce briefs, guide, presentation, and tool support the Office of Child Care’s and the Office of Head Start’s priority of a strong early childhood and school-age workforce. These resources are designed to help state and territory decision makers increase and retain a skilled workforce by improving their workplace conditions, compensation, and access to professional development.

<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/strengthening-early-childhood-and-school-age-workforce>

As states and territories work to develop a framework, or revise an existing framework, the following resources related to the six key components may be useful.

Professional standards and competencies

Early Learning Career Pathways Initiative: Credentialing in the Early Care and Education Field

This report, Credentialing in the Early Care and Education Field, draws a national landscape of all of the 50 states’ requirements for ECE staff. The report documents many notable practices which comprise a strong set of recommendations for states and the field as they work to improve and design strong, comprehensive pathway systems intended to meet the skill, employment, and advancement needs of low-income, low-skilled adults who are in or entering the ECE field. In addition, the report offers 14 recommendations illuminated with state examples.

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/pathways/elpathways.pdf>

State/Territory Infant/Toddler and Preschool Credentials

These documents are designed to inform the development or enhancement of State/Territory Professional Development systems. They provide a snapshot (current as of 2014) of Infant/Toddler and Preschool credentialing and professional development efforts across the nation by capturing the information available online about the various approaches used by states and territories.

<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/stateterritory-infanttoddler-and-preschool-credentials>

Core Knowledge and Competencies Planning and Implementation Guide

This resource is a planning and implementation guide for state and territory teams as they develop or revise and then implement core knowledge and competencies. It also describes an aligned state and territory professional development system, and defines core knowledge and competencies as a foundational part of an aligned professional development system.

<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/core-knowledge-and-competencies-planning-and-implementation-guide-0>

Workforce Knowledge, Competencies, and Educational Practices

This brief summarizes critical workforce knowledge and competencies to effective education practices in early childhood settings. This brief also organizes the foundational knowledge essential to working with very young children and the specialized knowledge and competencies needed to provide high quality learning experiences.

<https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/WorkforceKnowledge.pdf>

Career pathways

Assessing Career Pathways to Education and Training for Early Childhood Professionals

This report explores how career pathways can offer an effective approach to address some of these challenges and support the current and evolving landscape of the ECE sector and its most disadvantaged professionals.

Comprehensive and flexible education and training programs can make it easier for individuals to acquire industry-recognized credentials and higher education degrees to advance on a career trajectory. Effective career pathways approaches can also better serve workers that may experience significant barriers to education and employment advancement (i.e., low-skilled adults, and adults with limited English proficiency).

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ece/elcpi_accessibility_10_28_ada.pdf

Early Childhood Career Pathways

Career pathways operate on two levels—a systems approach for the workforce at large and an individual approach for each professional seeking advancement. This paper focuses on teachers and program directors, with state and local recommendations.

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ece/early-childhood-career-pathways>

Early Learning Career Pathways Initiative: Credentialing in the Early Care and Education Field

The Early Learning Career Pathways Initiative, supported by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, examines the current state of career pathways in the early learning industry intended to meet the skill, employment, and advancement needs of low-income, low-skilled adults who are in or entering this field.

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ece/altcredentialingelcpi_06_16_2016_ada.pdf

Advisory structure

The Big Picture Planning Guide: Building Cross-Sector Professional Development Systems In Early Childhood, 3rd Ed

The Big Picture Planning Guide is designed to support a cross-sector, state-level planning process that leads to a single, integrated, professional development system, across all early childhood sectors. The planning guide provides a four-step sequence for considering the key components and contexts of a statewide early childhood professional development system. A definition and conceptual framework for professional development are included, as well as suggestions for facilitation, guiding questions, key considerations, and planning forms.

<http://www.qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/gscobb/2011-09-22%2007%3A01/Report.pdf>

Comprehensive Early Childhood System-Building: A Tool to Inform Discussions On Collaborative, Cross-Sector Planning

A systems planning tool that provides a guide for states in using the framework to inform their day-to-day decision-making. This tool was developed with the understanding that states and territories find their own path to building a comprehensive early childhood system. System-building is dynamic; therefore, this tool is intended to be used throughout the stages of the system-building process.

http://www.buildinitiative.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/ECSWG%20Systems%20Planning%20Tool_2014.pdf

Articulation

Early Childhood Articulation Project Compendium

This Articulation Compendium is a result of the very impressive efforts made by ten state teams to advance articulation between early childhood education associate and baccalaureate degree programs in their state. More than ninety stakeholders and T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood state program staff worked in state-based teams on this project over a two-year period.

<http://teachecnationalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Articulation-Compendium-Update-10-20-15.pdf>

Supporting Successful Degree Completion by Early Childhood Professionals

This article explores the intertwined goals of successful early childhood degree completion, transfer, and the inclusion of early childhood content and practice at each degree level. In addition, the article provides evidence-based strategies toward achieving these goals, and delineates the four major features of strong articulation agreements.

<https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/supporting-degree-completion.pdf>

Getting Started with Articulation: What State Partners Need to Know

An introduction for state partners and leaders to current issues surrounding articulation in support of early childhood degree attainment.

<https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/Getting%20Started%20with%20Articulation.pdf>

A Perspective on Early Childhood Education and Articulation

Practical guidance and tips about successfully negotiating articulation agreements.

<https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/A%20Perspective%20on%20Early%20Childhood%20Education%20and%20Articulation.pdf>

Workforce information (data systems)

Workforce Data Planning and Implementation Guide

This guide provides considerations for states and territories as they plan for how workforce data will be collected, tracked and analyzed. Alignment of data systems and development or enhancement of workforce data systems is a key component of an aligned professional development system.

<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/workforce-data-planning-and-implementation-guide>

Early Childhood Workforce Index

The Early Childhood Workforce Index represents the first effort to establish a baseline description of early childhood employment conditions and policies in every state and to track progress on a state-by-state basis to improve early childhood jobs. Providing states with periodic appraisals of their efforts based on measurable status and policy indicators, the index is aimed at encouraging states to step up their efforts to address these persistent workforce challenges and at supporting related advocacy efforts.

<http://cscce.berkeley.edu/early-childhood-workforce-index/>

Financing

Professional Development System Cost Analysis Tool

The Professional Development System Cost Analysis Tool helps states/territories understand current investments and target resources for professional development systems and initiatives that result in a well-qualified early childhood and school-age workforce. The tool can help professional development system funders analyze and align investments with the state or territory priorities, and forecast budget needs to advance workforce goals.

<https://earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov/pdtool/>

Blending and Braiding Early Childhood Program Funding Streams Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to provide state advocates and policymakers with strategies, tools, resources, and options to make policy choices that facilitate the blending and braiding of funding streams to improve access to and length of children’s participation in full-workday, full-year, high-quality early learning programs that benefit vulnerable young children and working families.

<https://qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/resources/mrobinson@buildinitiative.org/2014-01-17%2011:36/Blending%20and%20Braiding%20Early%20Childhood%20Program%20Funding%20Streams%20Toolkit.pdf>

State Professional Development Framework Examples

Colorado: *Colorado’s Early Learning Professional Development System Plan*

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/early/copdplan>

Arizona: *Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network: Two-Year Strategic Plan*

http://azearlychildhood.org/uploads/sites/1/PDWG_Strategic_Plan_April_2015.pdf

Illinois: *Illinois Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) Strategic Plan*

<http://www.ilgateways.com/docman-docs/professional-development/pdac/strategic-plans/36-pdac-strategic-plan-vii/file>

Iowa: *A Policy Framework for an Early Childhood Iowa Professional Development System*

http://www.iowaaecyc.org/ECI_Prof_Dev_Framework.pdf

Rhode Island: *Rhode Island’s Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan*

http://www.brightstars.org/uploads/RI_PDSsystemPlan_2012.pdf



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