

EQuIPS: Early Childhood Quality Improvement Pathway System

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University Consortium

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Intent of the New Measure

A review **system** of early childhood program performance and quality that provides a **program portrait** based on information from observations, document review, and interviews. This portrait can be used in varying ways within a QRIS and help identify **pathways** for programs to **improve experiences** for children and families.



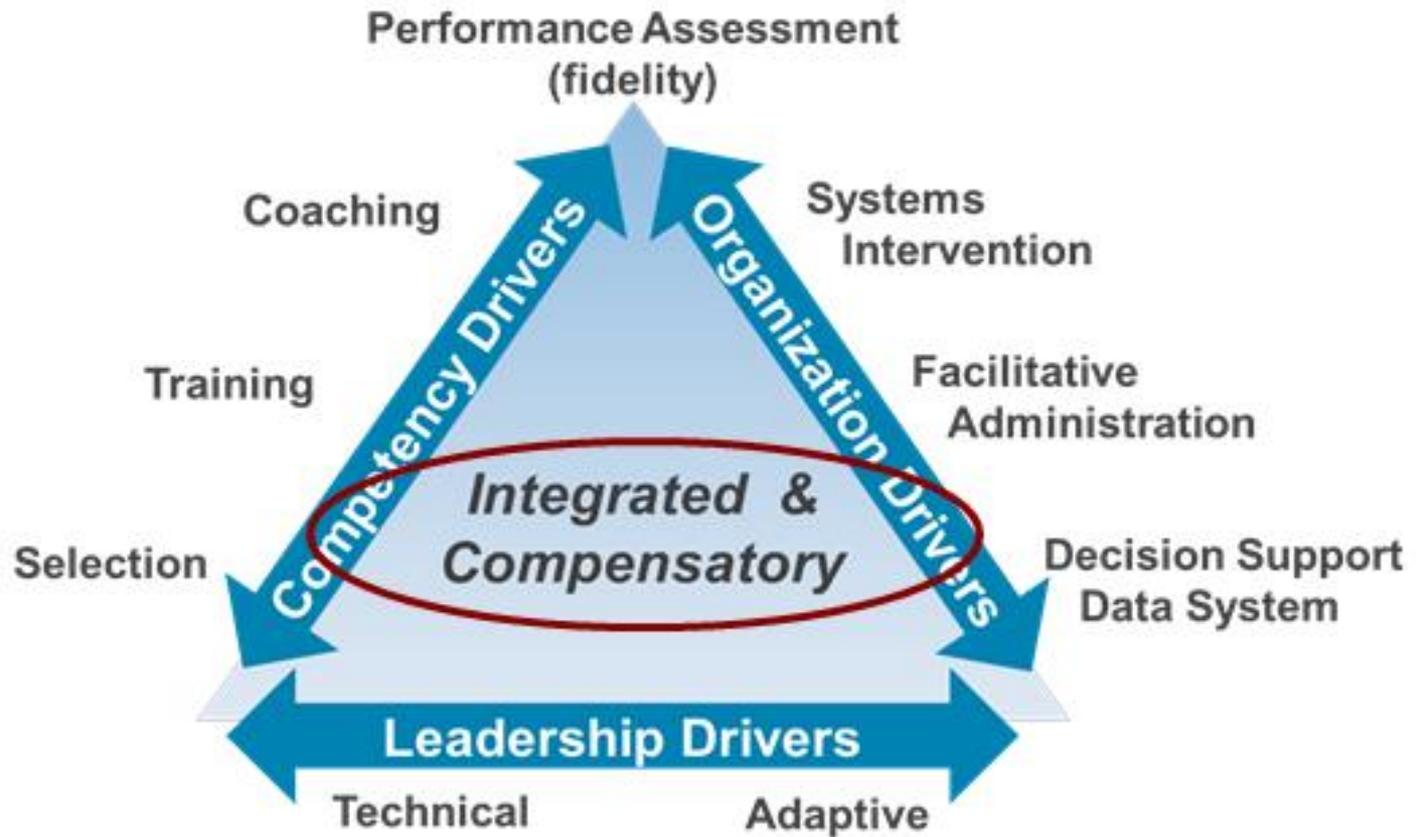
Conceptual Framework

- Child Experiences as the Central Focus
 - Where I spend my time
 - How I spend my time
 - How this relates to the rest of my life
- Factors that Affect Child Experiences
 - Environmental Settings
 - Relationships & Continuity
 - Teaching Practices
- Program Administration & Organizational Climate

High Quality Implementation



Implementation Science



Fixsen & Blase (2008)

The National Implementation Research Network

Sources of Evidence

Document Review

- Content
 - Administrative Practices
 - Staff hiring, Supervision, Support, & Communication
 - Family Communications, Involvement, Outreach
 - Support for Teaching & Learning
 - Operational Policies
 - Classroom Practices
 - Curriculum
 - Lesson/Activity Planning
 - Assessment
- Process
 - Documents evaluated using checklists
 - Informs rubric ratings: exceptional, expected, emerging, or not here yet



Interview

- Content: Includes aspects not observed and verification of practices
 - Directors
 - Quality Improvement Priorities
 - Staff Hiring, Supervision, Support, & Communication
 - Teaching & Learning
 - Families and Communities
 - Teachers
 - Planning & Curriculum
 - Assessment & Individualizing
 - Classroom Community
 - Communication with Families
 - Professional Development
- Process
 - 30-45 minute interview
 - Informs rubric ratings



Observation

- Content
 - Teachers and Children
 - Quality of Interactions
 - Quality of Conversations
 - Supporting Persistence and Learning in Activities and Routines
 - Peer Interactions
 - Curriculum & Pedagogy
 - Classroom/FCCH
 - Usability of Materials
 - Availability of Space
 - Outside space and materials
- Process
 - Time Sampling (presence/absence)
 - Global Ratings
 - Red Flag Items





Key Practice Area 1: Organizational Climate and Program Operations

Focal Areas

- Staff hiring, retention, and supervision
- Communication with staff
- Professional development, supervision, and evaluation

Sources of Evidence



- Administrative Documents
 - Staff Handbook
 - Program Policies
 - Communication Notifications



- Director Interview
- Teacher Interview



Organizational Climate and Program Operations



Possible Documents:

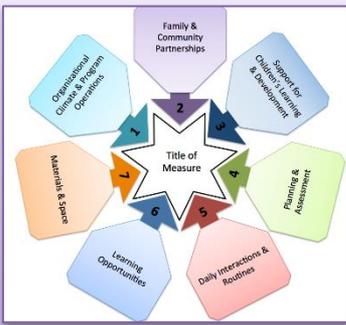
- Staff Meetings



Teacher:

- How do teachers let program administration know about their needs/challenges?
- When you have ideas and feedback for program administration how do you share this?

Topic area	Not Here Yet	Emerging	Expected	Exceptional
Communication Systems between staff and administration	Little or no evidence of communication systems in place between staff and administration.	Communication is inconsistent or primarily uni-directional from administration to staff. May also include some bi-directional.	A consistent system of frequent communication is in place between staff and administration. This system includes a formal structure for ongoing communication (e.g., staff meetings) as well as strategies for informal communication (e.g., emails). Bi-directional communication is primarily used.	A consistent system of frequent communication is in place between staff and administration that includes formal and informal structures (e.g., social events, peer networking, electronic communication systems, small group meetings, etc.). Communication systems also include multiple opportunities for individual staff to share concerns, needs, and ideas for program improvement.



Key Practice Area 2: Family and Community Partnerships

Focal Areas

- Communication with families
- Building relationships with families
- Connecting families to community resources
- Community partnerships

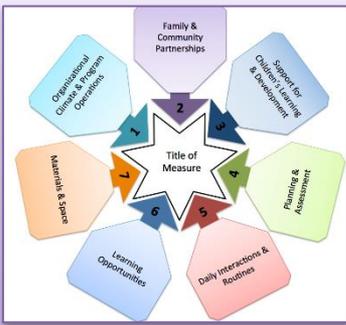
Sources of Evidence



- Administrative Documents



- Director Interview
- Teacher Interview



Family and Community Partnerships



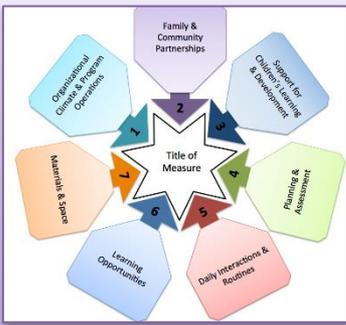
Daily sheets, conferences, enrollment forms, newsletters, policies, procedures, or programs regarding communication with families



Director

- Tell me about how you build relationships with families and support their engagement in your program.
- How do staff in your program communicate with families? What types of information do you share?
- How do families communicate with teachers and other staff?

Area	Not Here Yet	Emerging	Expected	Exceptional
Family Involvement	No opportunities provided for families to share input and feedback about or otherwise be involved in the program.	Program encourages families to share input and feedback about the program and provides opportunities for involvement.	There is a process in place for families to provide feedback to the program. The program has a process in place for involving families in the program in a variety of ways.	There are multiple methods used to encourage all families to provide feedback and input into the program throughout the year. The program uses multiple methods to encourage and support family involvement in the program. These methods are responsive to family needs, interests, diversity, and strengths.



Family and Community Partnerships



Policies, procedures, or programs designed to connect families to other needed or relevant community resources

Director:



- Tell me about how your program connects families to community resources.
- Are there other community organizations you work with? How did these partnerships develop?

Area	Not Here Yet	Emerging	Expected	Exceptional
Connecting families with community resources	Little or no evidence of connecting families with community resources	Program makes written materials available to parents (lobby or resource room) about local resources	A system is in place to provide each family with individualized information about a variety of community resources and to help families connect to these resources.	The program uses multiple strategies to learn about family needs and to link families to available resources (such as those related to housing, education, employment, parenting, child development, etc.)



Key Practice Area 3: Programmatic Support for Children's Learning and Development

Focal Areas

- Staff scheduling
- Transition
- Continuity

Sources of Evidence



- Administrative Documents
 - Professional Development Plans
 - Scheduling charts



- Director Interview
- Teacher Interview

Programmatic Support for Children's Learning and Development



- Scheduling, staffing, or other program documents that evidence stable classroom staffing
- Scheduling, staffing, or other program documents that evidence additional staffing when needed (e.g. floaters, substitutes, etc.)



Director:

Tell me how you handle staff scheduling. When teachers cannot be at work, how are substitutes secured? Are they familiar with the children and the program?

Area	Not Here Yet	Emerging	Expected	Exceptional
Scheduling	Little or no evidence of scheduling to promote stability of children's experiences throughout the day.	A written staffing plan is in place that ensures children have a small group of familiar caregivers throughout the day.	A written staffing plan is in place that ensures children are cared for by a small group of familiar caregivers throughout the day and includes a plan for substitute staff situations.	A written staffing plan is in place assuring children are cared for by a small group of familiar caregivers throughout the day and includes a plan for familiar substitute staff. Staff schedules overlap and there is a system for effective communication between staff members working with the same group of children.

Key Practice Area 4: Planning and Assessment



Focus Areas

- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Developmental Screening

Sources of Evidence



- Classroom Documents
 - Assessment Documents & policies
 - Daily Schedule
 - Lesson Plans



- Teacher Interview



- Observation

Planning and Assessment



Assessment

Topic Area	Not here yet	Emerging	Expected	Exceptional
 Child Assessments	No evidence of child assessment processes in place in the program.	An inconsistent set of assessment practices are in place where some classrooms conduct child assessments and others do not.	A child assessment system is in place that ensures all children are assessed at least twice a year or on an on-going basis with an appropriate assessment tool with needed referrals provided. Procedures for conducting child assessments include: 1) assessments are conducted by someone familiar to the child, 2) assessments occur in child's natural environment, and 3) decisions regarding assessments consider children's home language.	A child assessment system is in place that includes multiple data sources (e.g., teacher observations, portfolios, family observations, checklists, etc.). Program procedures for conducting child assessments include: 1) integrating assessments into planned activities with minimal disruptions to the children's typical daily routines and experiences, and 2) accommodations are made regarding children's primary language or ability level.

 **Teacher:** Tell me how you gather information about your children's learning and development. What do you do with the information you collect? How were you trained on the assessment you are using?

Planning and Assessment



- Policies, procedures, and other evidence of curriculum selection and use
- Classroom activity/lesson plans; planning time
- Professional development policies – initial training and ongoing support



Teacher: Tell me about how you plan for children’s individual interests and needs in your classroom? Can you provide an example of this? Thinking about how you plan for individual children, have you made changes to the environment or materials or schedule?

Area	Emerging	Expected	Exceptional	Current Level
Activity/Lesson planning is individualized	No evidence of individualizing reflected in lesson planning	Planning shows evidence of individualization based on groups of children.	Planning shows evidence of individualized goals/experiences for some children. Modifications are present for children with identified disabilities.	Planning shows individualized goals/experiences for most children in the classroom.

Planning and Assessment



Curriculum



Math

The environment affords rich, developmentally appropriate math experiences

Literacy

The environment affords rich, developmentally appropriate literacy experiences

Science

The environment affords rich, developmentally appropriate science experiences

Pretend play

The environment affords rich, developmentally appropriate pretend play experiences

Physical activity

The environment affords opportunities for rich, developmentally appropriate gross motor experiences

Music

The environment affords rich, developmentally appropriate music experiences



Key Practice Area 5: Daily Interactions and Routines

Focus Areas

- Teacher-child Interactions
- Behavior Guidance
- Routines and Transitions

Sources of Evidence



- Teacher Interview



- Observation



Daily Interactions and Routines

Teacher-Child Interactions **Supporting persistence and learning**



Are almost all children engaged in classroom activities and/or routines?		
Is a teacher providing general encouragement?		
Is a teacher providing specific and authentic feedback?		
Is a teacher actively participating with child(ren) in their play?		
Is a teacher providing physical support or environmental facilitation?		

Teacher:

What is a skill or learning goal you are currently working on with a child/children in your class?

How are you helping children learn this skill or meet this learning goal?





Daily Interactions and Routines

Quality of Conversation/Language



Does a teacher give a directive or instruction to a child or children?		
Does a teacher comment or talk to a child about his or her activity/experience?		
Does a teacher provide a reason or explanation for something that is happening?		
Does a teacher ask a relevant question regarding what children are doing or showing interest in?		
Is at least one open ended question asked to support children's thinking, problem solving, or understanding?		
Is at least one term or phrase defined?		
Is an instance of a teacher actively listening to a child's communication observed?		

Teachers use rich and varied language

Teacher verbalizations are relevant to children's activities and/or interests

Teachers display a balance of talking, pausing, listening or allowing time to respond /process

Key Practice Area 6: Learning Opportunities



Big Ideas

- Play-Based Learning
- Modifying and Adapting Activities
- Using a Variety of Teaching Strategies

Sources of Evidence



- Classroom Documents



- Teacher Interview



- Observation



Learning Opportunities



Small/large group time

Do teachers use appropriate strategies to support participation or provide alternatives for individual students as needed?

Instructional Activities

Teachers vary content of activities to meet the needs of different ages and abilities

Teachers use varied instructional strategies



Teacher:

Tell me about how you plan for children's individual interests and needs in your classroom. Provide an example of this.

Thinking about how you plan for individual children, have you made changes to the environment or materials or schedule?



Key Practice Area 7: Materials and Space

Big Ideas

- Indoor Space and Materials
- Outdoor Space and Materials

Sources of Evidence



- Observation
- Indoor Review
 - Outdoor Review

Key Practice Area 7: Materials and Space



Indoor Setting

Does the amount and arrangement of indoor space permit easy movement for all children and equipment?	
Do indoor traffic pathways and arrangement of learning areas minimize the interruption of activities and play in all areas?	
Are there photos of the children displayed in easy-viewing range showing activities that occurred indoors, outdoors, or on outings, etc.?	
Are children's drawings, writing, or artwork displayed in easy-viewing range in at least two places in the classroom? (N/A allowed for infants)	
Are photos of children's families or other family documents on display in easy-viewing range or in class-made books or other materials?	
Do children have the opportunity for fresh air in the classroom?	
Can the lighting be adjusted in more than one way?	
Do children have opportunities to see the outside through at least 1 window or door at their level?	

Key Practice Area 7: Materials and Space



Outdoor Setting

Is the physical arrangement of outdoor equipment and activity areas set up to permit easy movement and minimize the interruption of activities and play?

Is there ample space is available outdoors for running and group games for older children or active physical movement for younger or non-mobile children?

Is the impression of the outdoor space a natural environment with many different plants and types of vegetation?

Are the following elements available in the outdoor environment (must have at least 3 checked): grass trees vines shrubs flowering plants vegetables other: _____

Does the outdoor environment contain enough shade?

Is there adequate and convenient storage of outdoor materials/loose parts?

Are there sufficient natural materials for children to play with N/A for infants
logs fallen leaves pine needles sticks rounded stones seeds flower parts pine
cones other: _____

In the outdoor play space is there a designed garden or set of pots that grow vegetables and/or flowers? (interview if winter)

Are there solid surfaces available for wheeled toys? (N/A for non-mobile infants)

Red Flags



A child is isolated from peers and opportunities for peer interactions for most of the observation

A teacher is disengaged or disinterested in the children for most of the observation

Children spend significant portions of the observation in transitions.

Teachers do not intervene to stop harmful peer interactions

Children are unsupervised for significant periods of time

Dangerous/harmful situations are not addressed.

Punitive discipline is observed

Teachers interact with children in a very disrespectful manner

Teacher consistently ignores or fails to notice child needs or bids

Current Pilot Study



- Data collection in 87 centers and 43 homes in NC by June
- Research questions:
 1. How does each component of the measure relate to child outcomes?
 2. How does the whole measure relate to child outcomes?
 3. How does the whole measure relate to the comparison measures, ERS and CLASS?
 4. How does each component relate to the comparison measures, ERS and CLASS?
 5. What are the critical elements for document review? Teacher interview? Administrator interview? Observation?



Next Steps

- Developing website to schedule assessments, enter data, and eventually to produce portrait
- Data analyses will inform next iteration of the measure as well as scoring decisions
- Final report and manuals