



Guide to the Records Review Tool

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Purpose

This Guide to the Records Review Tool is a companion to the Early Achievers Records Review Tool (RRT). The RRT is a planning tool for participants who choose to complete the optional Records Review component of Early Achievers to move beyond Quality Level 3. The Quality Standards that are part of Records Review are detailed in this guide. Participants who request the Records Review component will indicate in CECI (formerly Coaching Companion) which Quality Standards they wish to opt in to or opt out of. The RRT helps participants plan which Quality Standards to opt in to, plan what evidence needs to be provided, and anticipate which recognition level will be awarded.

Organization of the Guide

Each section has an overview of the standard—what it is, why it is important, and what the recommended practices are. This is followed by the criteria and what is needed to earn possible points for each standard. Finally, each section has a checklist to determine if you are ready to opt in to each criteria or standard.

A glossary of terms is available at the end of this document.

Opting In to Standards

You will use CECI to opt in and out of the Quality Standards and Criteria. Opting out should be used when a standard or criteria does not align with your program's philosophy, or if you do not have that standard as a current practice. Current practice means a practice already established for all children, families, caregivers, and/or staff currently in your program.

Before opting out of a Quality Standard or Criteria, it is important to understand the following:

- All Quality Standards and Criteria are used to determine the point total and recognition level. You are only eligible to earn points in the Quality Standards and Criteria you opted in to.
- Once the opt ins and opt outs have been submitted in CECI, you cannot make changes to the submission.
- Each Standard and Criteria you opted in to should reflect a current practice, not a planned future practice.
- Some Quality Standards and Criteria are dependent on others. For example, if there is no evidence of a goal related to the Strengthening Families or similar self-assessment, there can be no evidence of progress toward the goal or evidence of completion of the goal.

How to Use the Records Review Tool (RRT) for Planning

The RRT is used to help plan which Quality Standards and Criteria to opt in to or out of, and to plan the documentation for evidence. You should enter all opt-in and opt-out decisions in CECI.

After reviewing each Quality Standard and Criteria, mark the appropriate columns to indicate which components are in place and prepare the evidence for submission.

To complete the RRT as an Excel document for planning:


- If you are filling out the RRT electronically, double-click in the text box before typing. This will prevent writing over the instructions.
- If you are printing the document, first expand the height of the rows to provide space for writing.

NOTE: The RRT column width cannot be adjusted, as this would affect the ability to print the document.

The first three sections of the RRT cover Child Outcomes, Interactions and Curriculum, and Family Engagement and Partnerships.

Each of these sections contains five columns:

- Column A contains the Quality Standard.
- Column B includes the specific criteria for the standard in Column A. (Note: Detailed information about the criteria is found in this guide.)
- Column C is where you record the location of the evidence for each standard (for example, page number of a policy in a handbook) or clarifying information.
- Column D gives the points possible for each criteria.
- Column E is where you enter the number of projected points for that criteria. Entering a value (1 or 2) in this column indicates a plan to opt in to that criteria. A 0 (zero) should be entered for those Quality Standards that are not yet in place and you are opting out of.



A	B	C	D	E
Screening	Standard Criteria:	Additional Information	Points Possible	Projected Points
Screening 1 A policy ensures all children birth through kindergarten entry are screened with a valid and reliable developmental screening tool.	The policy includes: - The name of the valid developmental screening tool. - Procedures on how children will be screened within 45 calendar days after they first attend the program.	Option for earning points towards a higher quality level.	1	0
	The policy includes: Re-screening will occur annually.	Option for earning points towards a higher quality level.	1	0
	The policy includes; How the provider will attempt to screen in the child's home language.	Option for earning points towards a higher quality level.	1	0

The last section is a recognition calculator that shows the potential result of different quality recognition scenarios, including points for Program Profile, Video Highlights (including the two required cycles and additional cycle submissions), possible School-Age Video Highlight submissions, Accreditation, and Professional Development.

Questions? If there are questions about completing the RRT for planning, please contact your coach.



Child Outcomes

Developmental Screenings

What is it? Developmental screening tools provide a snapshot of a child's health and development across learning domains, such as gross motor, cognitive, social, and emotional skills.

Why is it important? Early identification of potential developmental delays is critical so children get the resources they need to support positive development. Participants who know developmental milestones and use screening tools with children can share information with families/caregivers to facilitate early identification of developmental delays. They can then connect families/caregivers with formal evaluations and services.

What is the recommended practice? Screenings can indicate possible developmental delays but cannot definitively identify the nature or extent of a delay. Screenings must be followed by a more comprehensive and formal evaluation process to confirm any initial red flags. Yearly developmental screenings are advised for all children.

Standard: Screening 1

A policy ensures all children birth through kindergarten entry are screened with a valid and reliable developmental screening tool. (3 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include:

- The name of the valid developmental screening tool.
- Procedures on how children will be screened within 45 calendar days after they first attend the program.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include that re-screening will occur annually.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include how the provider will attempt to screen in the child's home language.

All points can be earned individually and are not dependent on each other.

If you have questions about screenings, please contact the QRIS inbox (dcyf.qris@dcyf.wa.gov) or the Cultivate Learning inbox (cqel@uw.edu).

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written developmental screening policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes the name of the screening used, how and when children are screened, and how we support screening in the child's home language.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:

Standard: Screening 2

Results of a valid screening are shared with families. (3 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include how screening results will be shared with all families/caregivers.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include how screening results will be shared with families/caregivers in their home language.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written developmental screening policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes how we share screening results with families, including support for sharing in a family/caregiver’s home language.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:



Ongoing Assessment

What is it? Assessments are a continual process of observing, gathering, recording, and interpreting child information to make developmental and instructional decisions.

- **An informal** assessment is a procedure for getting information to make judgments about children's learning. Examples of informal assessment include portfolios, checklists, work samples, and anecdotal notes.
- **A formal** assessment may be a commercial product, or one that is created. If it is created, it must be structured and track child progress. It also must be consistently used throughout the year. A screening tool cannot be used as an assessment.

Why is it important? Early learning professionals who regularly gather information about each child's progress are better able to plan and meet their needs through individualized instruction.

What is the recommended practice? Assessments measure children's performance over time, rather than measuring their skills and abilities at just one point. Informal assessments should be done at least monthly, and formal assessments should be done quarterly.

Standard: Ongoing Assessment 1

A policy ensures that all children birth through kindergarten entry receive formal assessment or informal observation and documentation at least three times per year (e.g., child portfolio or work sampling assessments). (2 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include:

- Name(s) of the formal assessment and/or the type of child observation and documentation used.
- Assessment procedures, including how often they are conducted.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written assessment policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes the names of formal and informal assessments used, and how and when children are assessed.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:

Standard: Ongoing Assessment 2

Ongoing informal observation and documentation is on file for all children. (2 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include that ongoing informal observation and documentation is done for all children who have attended the program for at least 90 calendar days.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written assessment policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes how informal observation and documentation is used for all children enrolled more than 90 days.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:

Standard: Ongoing Assessment 3

Facility uses a formal assessment tool that aligns with WaKIDS. (2 points)

The formal assessment tool used is the WaKIDS assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold), OR a completed WaKIDS alignment tool is on file for any formal assessment used in the program.

The assessment tool must apply to all age groups served by the program: infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers.

To earn 2 points:

- If the program uses the WaKIDS assessment tool (Teaching Strategies Gold), evidence can be any one of the following: the assessment box set, copies/screenshots of the dashboard for each learning environment/session, a formal written policy stating that you use the WaKIDS assessment, or evidence that at least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session is trained on the assessment tool.
- If the program does not use the WaKIDS assessment tool, the WaKIDS alignment tool will be used as evidence. You can find the WAKIDS alignment tool here: [WaKIDS Assessment Alignment Tool](#).
 - ▶ The tool must be completed for each age group served.
 - ▶ All sections must be completed.
- If different assessments are used for different age groups or learning environments/sessions, then the WaKIDS assessment alignment tool must be completed for each of those assessments.
- If multiple assessments are used in a learning environment/session, only the main assessment needs to be aligned.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ **Either** my program uses the WaKIDS assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold) for all children, or my program does not use the WaKIDS assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold) for all children and I have completed all sections of the WaKIDS alignment tool for all age groups served.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Ongoing Assessment 4

WaKIDS or aligned formal assessment tool is on file for all children. (2 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include WaKIDS, or an aligned formal assessment is conducted for all children who have attended the program for at least 90 days.

This standard is contingent on Ongoing Assessment 3: the assessment procedures must be for the assessment that is aligned.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted in to Ongoing Assessment 3.
- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written assessment policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes how the aligned assessment in Ongoing Assessment 3 is used for all children who have been enrolled more than 90 days.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Ongoing Assessment 5

At least one lead teacher or FCC lead teacher per classroom is trained and reliable on WaKIDS or aligned formal assessment tool. (1 point)

- If there is a specific training on the aligned assessment tool used by the program, at least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session is required to complete the training
 - ▶ If an FCC participant has multiple learning environments/sessions, then the FCC lead teaching staff for each learning environment/session must be trained to use the aligned assessment tool for their children's age group.
 - ▶ See Appendix A for Teaching Strategies Gold training requirements.
- If no formal training is required or accessible for the assessment tool being used, lead teaching staff must provide evidence of at least four hours of general training in assessment.
 - ▶ If an FCC participant has multiple learning environments/sessions and no formal training is required or accessible for the aligned assessment tool being used, then the FCC lead teaching staff for each learning environment/session must complete at least four hours of general training in assessment.
 - ▶ Training must be on assessment. If the title of the training is not clearly related to assessment, more documentation, such as learning objectives, may be needed.
- Quality Recognition Specialists will review lead teaching staff training to verify documentation:
 - ▶ QRS will review lead teaching staff training in MERIT.
 - ▶ If a training is not in MERIT, please upload your certificate of completion, a dated sign-in sheet, or a college transcript.

To earn 1 point:

- At least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session must meet the requirements for this standard.
- Lead teaching staff who have been employed with the current learning environment/session for more than six months need to meet the training requirements.

This standard is contingent on Ongoing Assessment 3: teacher training must be on the aligned assessment tool.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted in to Ongoing Assessment 3.
- ☐ **Either** formal training is available for the aligned assessment and at least one lead teacher per learning environment/session is trained and reliable, or formal training is not available for the aligned assessment and at least one lead teacher per learning environment/session has attended four hours of general training in assessment.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Ongoing Assessment 6

Share child assessment or observation information with family. (3 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include how children’s formal assessment results or informal observation and documentation are shared with their families/caregivers at least two times per year.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include how children’s formal assessment results or informal observation and documentation are shared with their families/caregivers at least three times per year.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and family/caregivers have access to my written assessment or conference policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes how and when we share formal and informal assessment results with families/caregivers.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:



Individualization

What is it? Individualized instruction is when early learning professionals plan and act with specific goals for each child, based on their interests, development, assessment results, and needs.

Why is it important? When early learning professionals individualize instruction, the experiences in the early learning environment are more likely to engage young learners, making them feel important, confident, capable, and ready for school.

What is the recommended practice? Early learning professionals individualize instruction by using the environment, activities, and experiences to support the development of each child in their care. To make sure you are building the child's knowledge, you can develop goals based on their assessment results, and you can partner with families/caregivers. Assessment and observation help you gather information about children's progress and needs on a regular basis, and families/caregivers provide valuable information about their children's strengths and needs.

Standard: Individualization 1

Policy personalizes instruction for all children. (2 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include how goals will be developed for all children based on formal assessment results and/or informal observation and documentation.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include how programs will partner with families/caregivers to develop individual goals for their children. (For example, program leaders may conduct written questionnaires or hold meetings with families/caregivers to learn about each child's strengths and needs.)

All points can be earned individually and are not dependent on each other.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written individualization policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes how we develop goals for all children using assessment results and partnering with families/caregivers.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:



Interactions and Curriculum

Curriculum

What is it? Curriculum is a road map for planning and implementing a program. It includes goals for children, experiences, and materials to help children achieve those goals, as well as how early learning professionals and families/caregivers work together to support children. A curriculum provides guidance about what to teach (content) and how to teach (learning experiences and teaching strategies). The content is developed from current child development science, the interests and ideas of the children, and the values of the community.

Why is it important? Curriculum that aligns with the Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines helps make sure that children across all age groups and settings receive developmentally appropriate instruction in each area of development.

What is the recommended practice? A high-quality, research-based curriculum plays an important role in supporting the social skills and school readiness of children.

Standard: Curriculum 1

Curriculum used in each classroom and age group aligns with WA Early Learning Guidelines or is on the list of aligned curricula. (2 points)

The curriculum used in each classroom and age group is either on the list of aligned curricula (you can find the list of aligned curricula here: [Aligned Curricula List](#)), OR the curriculum used is aligned to the Washington State Early Learning Guidelines using the [Curricular Alignment Tool \(CAT\)](#).

The curriculum must apply to all age groups in the program: infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers. Multiple curricula can be used to cover the range of ages.

To earn 2 points:

- If the program uses an aligned curriculum, evidence must be present for all age groups. Evidence can be curriculum materials, a policy of curriculum use and training, or evidence of training for at least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session.
- If the program does not use an aligned curriculum, the curricular alignment tool (CAT) will be used as evidence.
 - ▶ The CAT must be completed for each age group served.
 - ▶ All sections of the CAT must be completed.
 - ▶ If a different curriculum is used for different age groups or learning environments/sessions, a separate CAT must be completed for each curriculum.
 - ▶ If multiple curricula are used in a learning environment/session (for example, one for social and emotional, and a different one for math), only the main curriculum needs to be aligned.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ **Either** my program uses a curriculum that is on the list of aligned curricula, or my program does not use a curriculum that is on the list of aligned curricula, and I have completed all sections of the Curricular Alignment Tool for all age groups served.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Curriculum 2

At least one lead teacher or FCC lead teacher per classroom is trained in the Program Curriculum. (2 points)

- If there is a training specific to the curriculum used by the program, at least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session must meet the training requirements of that curriculum.
 - ▶ If an FCC participant has multiple learning environments/sessions, then the lead teaching staff for each learning environment/session is required to complete the curriculum training requirements for their children's age group.
 - ▶ See Appendix A for training requirements for Creative Curriculum and Montessori Curriculum.
- If no formal training is required or accessible for the curriculum being used, then at least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session must provide documentation of at least four hours of training on curriculum development.
 - ▶ If an FCC participant has multiple learning environments/sessions and no formal training is required or accessible for the curriculum being used, then the lead teaching staff for each learning environment/session is required to complete at least four hours of training on curriculum development.
 - ▶ Training must be on curriculum. If the title of the training is not clearly related to curriculum development, additional documentation, such as learning objectives, may be needed.
- If supplemental curriculum is used, lead teaching staff need to show documentation of being trained on the main curriculum. The recommended practice is to complete training on all curricula used, but to meet the criteria, only training on the main curriculum used is required.
- Quality Recognition Specialists review lead teaching staff training to verify documentation.
 - ▶ We will review lead teaching staff training in MERIT.
 - ▶ If a training is not in MERIT, please upload your certificate of completion, a dated sign-in sheet, or a college transcript.

To earn 2 points:

- At least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session must meet the requirements for this standard.
- Lead teaching staff who have been employed with the current learning environment/session for more than six months must meet the training requirements.

This standard is contingent on Curriculum 1: lead teaching staff must be trained on the aligned curriculum.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted in to Curriculum 1.
- ☐ **Either** formal training is available for the aligned curriculum and at least one lead teacher per learning environment/session is trained, or formal training is not available for the aligned curriculum and at least one lead teacher per learning environment/session has attended four hours of curriculum development.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Instructional Leadership

What is it? Instructional Leadership is relationship-based professional development that happens internally within a program. It is strength-based, focused on the learner, and informed by data. This practice is culturally responsive and is grounded in the pursuit of equity. It is measured by improvement in teaching practice and in child and family outcomes. It fosters a culture of reflective practice that builds on self-awareness to increase knowledge and apply skills. Examples include in-house mentoring or working with peer groups.

Who are instructional leaders? Instructional leaders are influential leaders of various roles and are responsible for the “quality of teaching and learning at the site level in early childhood settings. They directly support teachers in their daily work and ongoing improvement” (Ounce of Prevention Fund, 2019, p. 23). Instructional leaders can be in different roles, including:

- Family home licensees
- Center directors
- Assistant directors
- Program supervisors
- Education coordinators
- Curriculum coordinators
- Mentor teachers
- Other administrators

Instructional leaders often partner with other professional development providers—such as coaches, mentors, and trainers—for their own growth and improvement.

Why is it important? Instructional leaders help teachers with teacher–child interactions and curriculum alignment. They also show teachers how to access systems and supports to use data for improving their program. Early learning professionals who receive job-embedded ongoing support in daily teaching are more likely to set up the environment so it focuses on children’s learning. They are also more likely to use a child-centered curriculum, address the needs of individual children, and have stronger partnerships with families (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hirsh, 2009). This component examines how programs use instructional leadership to create ongoing opportunities for staff to improve their practice.

What is the recommended practice? Effective instructional leaders provide ongoing job-embedded learning opportunities, such as supportive supervision that encourages self-reflection and knowledge building. It provides opportunities to learn from one another and apply new knowledge and skills. This means setting goals, managing the curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, and evaluating early learning professionals regularly to promote student learning and growth. The recommended practice is for instructional leaders and teachers to engage in these supportive activities at least monthly.

Standard: Instructional Leadership 1

Early learning program leaders provide annual job-embedded professional development for lead teaching staff to improve curriculum and teacher-child interactions. (1 point)

Job-embedded professional development (JEPD) strategies must be based on day-to-day teaching practices. The teachers must assess and find solutions as part of a constant improvement process. This training may occur shortly before, during, or after the practice takes place. JEPD can include mentoring, one-on-one support, in-service trainings with follow-up support action, peer learning communities, or feedback from an observation.

- You can provide evidence of synchronous or asynchronous activities (see glossary for examples).
- A synchronous peer group or mentoring meeting must be at least one 30-minute session once a month. They do not need to be in person, but back-and-forth communication must take place.
- Family child care licensees who do not supervise staff may partner with other early learning professionals in their area for JEPD. This can include a peer-led group of other FCC providers, or a peer-led Communities of Practice (CoP).
- Instructional leadership practices must be related to the curriculum or to improving teacher–child interactions.
- Evidence for lead teaching staff will be reviewed.
 - ▶ Lead teaching staff must document participation in instructional leadership practices. Documentation may be a sign-in sheet, agenda, or log. Documentation indicates the date, time, name of the instructional leader, participants, whether it was a synchronous or asynchronous interaction, and the content of the instructional leadership.
 - ▶ Only information from the past 12 months will be considered.
 - 12 months is calculated from the date the Records Review component is submitted.

To earn 1 point:

- At least one lead teaching staff per learning environment/session must meet the requirements for this standard.
- If a lead teaching staff has been employed with the current group of children for less than one month, documentation is not required.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ My program provides JEPD to all lead teaching staff.
- ☐ I can provide documentation of JEPD for all lead teaching teams at least once in the last 12 months. Documentation may be a sign-in sheet, agenda, or log. Documentation indicates the date, time, name of the instructional leader, participants, whether it was a synchronous or asynchronous interaction, and the content of the instructional leadership.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Instructional Leadership 2

Early learning program leaders provide job-embedded professional development for lead teaching staff at least three times a year. This training will improve curriculum and teacher–child interactions. (1 point)

On-site early learning program leaders provide annual job-embedded professional development (JEPD) for at least one lead teaching staff member per classroom **at least three times per year**.

To earn 1 point:

See Instructional Leadership 1 for additional requirements for evidence.

- The lead teaching staff team can combine to meet the requirements for this standard, which is three instances of JEPD per learning environment/session in the last 12 months. For example, if there are co-lead teachers in a learning environment/session, one lead teaching staff can have evidence of two instances of JEPD, and the other lead teaching staff can have evidence of a different instance of JEPD.
- If a lead teacher has been employed with the current group of children for less than one month, documentation is not required.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted in to Instructional Leadership 1.
- ☐ I can provide documentation of JEPD for lead teaching teams at least three times in the last 12 months. Documentation may be a sign-in sheet, agenda, or log. Documentation indicates the date, time, name of the instructional leader, participants, whether it was a synchronous or asynchronous interaction, and the content of the instructional leadership.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Instructional Leadership 3

Early learning program leaders provide monthly job-embedded professional development for the lead teaching staff to improve curriculum and teacher–child interactions. (1 point)

On-site early learning program leaders provide **monthly** job-embedded professional development (JEPD) for at least one lead teacher per classroom to improve curriculum and teacher–child interactions.

To earn 1 point:

See Instructional Leadership 1 and 2 for additional requirements for evidence.

- The date of hire as a lead teacher is considered. For example, if the early learning professional has been employed for six –months, then at least four monthly examples of mentoring would be required.
- No more than three months may be missing, without documentation about why it was missed.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted in to Instructional Leadership 1 and 2.
- ☐ I can provide documentation of JEPD for lead teaching teams monthly in the last 12 months. Documentation may be a sign-in sheet, agenda, or log. Documentation indicates the date, time, name of the instructional leader, participants, whether it was a synchronous or asynchronous interaction, and the content of the instructional leadership.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:





Preventing Suspension and Expulsion

What is it? Suspension and expulsion refer to abruptly ending enrollment of a child or family from the regular group setting, due to challenging behaviors or developmental needs. This negatively affects the child and their family/caregivers, who quickly must find alternative care for the child. This does not refer to disenrollment when tuition has not been paid.

Why is it important? Research has shown that children who are expelled or suspended are 10 times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure, have negative attitudes about school, and face incarceration than those who are not expelled or suspended. According to research, the rate of expulsion in early learning programs is estimated to be as high as one in every 36 children enrolled, with 39 percent of all child care classes expelling at least one child per year. The Office of Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (2022) shows that boys are four times more likely than girls to be expelled. Black children are expelled more than Latino and white children by almost double.

What is the recommended practice? To prevent suspension and expulsion, a supportive behavior guidance policy should be in place. If a program is not equipped to meet the needs of children and families, supports must be in place to help families through the transition process to another program.

Standard: Preventing Suspension and Expulsion 1

A policy supports children with challenging behavior and developmental needs through family partnership, staff training, and consultation. (1 point)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include how staff work with families to create and enact a behavior support plan for children whose challenging behaviors persist.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written suspension and expulsion policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes procedures to work with families to create behavior support plans for children whose challenging behaviors persist.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:

Standard: Preventing Suspension and Expulsion 2

The staff has annual training to support positive social and emotional development, reducing challenging behaviors and trauma-informed care. (1 point)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include the procedures for annual staff training to support positive social and emotional development, reducing challenging behaviors and trauma-informed care.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written suspension and expulsion policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes procedures for annual staff training to support positive social and emotional development, reducing challenging behaviors and trauma-informed care.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Preventing Suspension and Expulsion 3

The staff can consult with a mental health consultant, coach or other professional for behavioral or developmental concerns. (1 point)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 1 point, the written policy must include plans to contact a mental health consultant, coach, or other professional for behavioral or developmental concerns.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written suspension and expulsion policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes procedures to contact a mental health consultant, coach, or other professional for behavioral or developmental concerns.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:



Family Engagement and Partnerships

Strengthening and Supporting Families

What is it? The Strengthening Families approach is a framework based on enhancing families' caregivers' protective factors, building upon existing family/caregiver strengths, and promoting positive child development and outcomes.

Why is it important? Families/caregivers are a child's first and most important teachers, and they are more likely to thrive when their families/caregivers have the support they need. By using the Strengthening Families or equivalent framework, early learning professionals can engage, support, and partner with families to achieve the best outcomes.

What is the recommended practice? Family/caregiver involvement is critical to children's positive early learning experiences. Thoughtful planning is a key part of successful relationships between programs and families/caregivers. Family/caregiver engagement activities must be included in a program's practice to help children be healthy and ready for school.

Standard: Strengthening and Supporting Families 1

The family engagement action plan template records goals for supporting families based on Strengthening Families or an equivalent self-assessment. (2 points)

To earn 2 points:

- Goals are recorded on the family engagement plan and dated within the last calendar year.
- The date the action plan was created is documented.
- At least one outcome/goal must be developed and documented on the family engagement action plan within the past 12 months.
 - ▶ 12 months is calculated from the date the Records Review component is submitted.
- The family engagement action plan must be specific to the program and location. The document cannot be generalized for multiple programs.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I documented the date I created the action plan.
- ☐ I created goals on a family engagement action plan, and they are dated within the last 12 months.
- ☐ The goals are specific to my program.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Strengthening and Supporting Families 2

Document progress on the family engagement action plan goals. (2 points)

This standard is contingent on Strengthening and Supporting Families 1: a completed family engagement action plan must be on file.

To earn 2 points:

- Dated documentation of progress toward outcomes/goals from the family engagement action plan is on file. Examples include an invitation to a family event for a goal to increase family involvement; a copy of a newsletter in multiple languages for a goal to increase communication in home languages; or a phone tree to connect families.
- Evidence of progress must be within the past 12 months.
 - ▶ 12 months is calculated from the date the Records Review component is submitted.
- The family engagement action plan must be specific to the program location.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted in to Strengthening and Supporting Families 1.
- ☐ I documented and dated progress toward goals on the family engagement action plan within the last 12 months.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:

Standard: Strengthening and Supporting Families 3

Show evidence of completed goals from the family engagement action plan. (2 points)

This standard is contingent on both Strengthening and Supporting Families 1 and 2: a completed family engagement action plan must be on file, as well as documented progress toward outcomes/goals.

To earn 2 points:

- Documentation of reflection on completed goals from the family engagement action plan is on file. Examples of documentation may include a reflection on how the family event went and its effect on family involvement; parent feedback on the multi-lingual newsletter and next steps; or reflection on how the phone tree is working and next steps to improve the phone tree process.
- Documentation of reflection must include examples of what went well, what did not go well, and how it could be improved next time.
- The family engagement action plan must be specific to the program location.
- Evidence of the completed goals must be within the last 12 months.
 - ▶ 12 months is calculated from the date the Records Review component is submitted.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ I opted into Strengthening and Supporting Families 1 and 2.
- ☐ I documented and dated reflections of completed goals within the last 12 months.
- ☐ This is a current practice in my program.

Notes:



Transitions

What is it? Transition policies and practices ensure that children and families/caregivers have successful, positive transitions from setting to setting. This means moving between learning environments/sessions, to different childcare programs, and into kindergarten.

Why is it important? Transitions can be stressful and disruptive, so it is important to involve children and families/caregivers in the planning process. By providing information and support, programs can minimize the impact of transitions on children's learning.

What is the recommended practice? Transition policies should be in place, including how families/caregivers will be involved in the planning, how information will be provided about children moving to a new program or supportive service programs, and how support will be provided so children and families/caregivers will move successfully into their new environment.

Standard: Transitions 1

Proof of a policy is in place for all applicable transitions. (2 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include details of how the program supports children through the following:

- Transition into the early learning program.
- Transitions within the early learning program (between classes, if applicable).

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written transition policy.
- ☐ My written policy includes how my program supports children through transitions into the program.
- ☐ Either my written policy includes how my program supports children through transitions between learning environments/sessions, or my program does not move children between learning environments/sessions.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:

Standard: Transitions 2

Proof of policy is in place for transition to kindergarten or new program. (2 points)

Evidence must be a formal written policy. Typically, this is a program, staff, or family/caregiver handbook that is easily accessible to both families/caregivers and staff.

To earn 2 points, the written policy must include how families are supported as their child transitions to a new program or kindergarten. This includes informing them about the new program, or kindergarten registration or orientation activities in the local community.

You can include information about kindergarten registration, kindergarten orientation, open house, or enrollment that is shared with parents/caregivers. If children do not transition to kindergarten, you can include information about enrollment for Head Start or ECEAP or contact information for Child Care Aware of Washington Family Center, and how this information is shared with parents/caregivers.

Am I ready to opt in to this standard? (All items should be checked to show you are ready to opt in to this standard.)

- ☐ Staff and families/caregivers have access to my written transition policy.
- ☐ Either my written policy includes how we support children and families/caregivers through the transition to kindergarten, or my program does not have children who transition to kindergarten. My written policy includes how we support children and families/caregivers who transition to a new program.
- ☐ Every learning environment/session follows the written policy.
- ☐ My program currently offers this service to children and families/caregivers.

Notes:

Questions? If you have any questions about the Quality Standards and Criteria, please contact your coach or your community liaison.

Glossary of Terms

All Age Groups – All age groups for Records Review means birth through children not yet in kindergarten. This does not include school age.

Asynchronous – Activities do not take place at the same time. An example for Instructional Leadership is all members of a Community of Practice (CoP) watch a video on their own, and then the instructional leader facilitates a discussion with the group. The group responds at a time that is convenient to them.

Coach/Coaching – Coaching is a long-term continuous service provided within Early Achievers to help participants understand Early Achievers policies and navigate the process successfully. Coaching is designed to:

- Promote Relationship-Based Professional Development.
- Support providers in navigating the Quality Recognition system.
- Engage in conversations that promote equity and positively change practices.
- Help early learning programs understand the Early Achievers Quality Standards.
- Provide resources and recommend Professional Development.
- Help programs understand and use Early Achievers quality recognition and assessment data.
- Support program goals and the creation of QIPs.

Coach Educator Collaborative Interface (CECI, formerly known as Coaching Companion) – Online/ Application (app) platform used to connect participants and facilitate quality improvements led by Early Learning Programs, Coaches, and Community Liaisons.

Community Liaison (CL) – The Community Liaison is the first contact that Early Achievers participants have from the Cultivate Learning Quality Recognition Team. Community Liaisons support and guide participants through the Quality Recognition process and serve as their point of contact with the Quality Recognition team. The Community Liaison will reach out to participants that have been approved for each component of the Quality Recognition process and will:

- Explain the Quality Recognition process and what will occur during each component.
- Provide individualized support during each Quality Recognition component.
- Provide technical support in CECI.
- Provide a line of communication between the program and the Quality Recognition team.

Curriculum (curricula, plural) – Curriculum is composed of lessons and academic content to teach.

Developmental Assessment – A standardized, validated tool used to assess various aspects of the child’s functioning in areas of cognition, communication, behavior, social interaction, motor and sensory abilities and adaptive skills.

Developmental Screening – A tool used to determine a child’s level of development and growth, and to identify possible delays in development. Screening includes questions to see how the child learns, speaks, behaves, and moves.

Early Achievers Participant – Anyone who is actively participating in Early Achievers.

Early Learning Professional(s) – Refers to all who work in Child Care Centers or Family Child Care Homes. Types of Early Learning Professionals:

- **Director** – Typically found in a Child Care Center
- **Owner** – Can be a Child Care Center (CCC) or Family Child Care Home (FCC).
- **Child Care Provider** – A person or participant who provides child care.
- **Early Achievers Primary Contact or Early Achievers Secondary Contact (EAPC)** – This person is often the director of a CCC, the owner/provider in an FCC, or an ECEAP contact for multiple sites.
- **Teaching Staff** – Staff who work directly in the classroom/session with children.
- **Lead Teaching Staff**, includes **FCC Lead Teaching Staff** – early learning providers who are responsible for care of a child or group of children and are responsible for implementing program activities.
- **Co-Lead Teaching Staff** – Multiple lead staff people who are responsible for care of a child or group of children and are responsible for implementing program activities.
- **Assistant Teaching Staff** – A person who assists a lead teacher or licensee to provide a developmentally appropriate program. Carries out assigned tasks under the supervision of a lead teacher, program supervisor, director, assistant director, or licensee.
- **Staff** – Other members of a child care; specify title as needed.

Early Learning and School Age Program – Refers to all programs or facilities that care for children birth to 12 years old. Types of child care providers within Early Achievers:

- Child Care Center (CCC)
- Family Home Child Care Provider or Family Home Early Learning Provider
- School-Age Program
- Head Start Program (HS)

- ECEAP/Early ECEAP Program

Family/Caregiver or Families/Caregivers – A birth parent, custodial parent, foster parent, legal guardian, or those authorized by the parent or other entity legally as responsible for the welfare of the child.

Home Language – The language a child uses first in life or identifies with as a member of an ethnic group. It is sometimes called the first, native, or primary language of the child.

Learning Environment/Session – A space where children are routinely cared for, including but not limited to, a classroom, outdoor learning space, licensed space in family child care, etc. Used instead of “Classroom.”

Example of one session in one (1) learning environment.

- One room with the same group of children is a Session.

Example of two (2) sessions within one (1) learning environment.

- One room with two (2) different teacher/children groups identified by a room divider.
- One room where two (2) different teachers have different groups of children in the AM and another group of children in the PM.

Mentoring – A short- or long-term process based on trust, where a person participates in learning from the experience of a mentor or group.

Policy – A principle of action adopted by an Early Learning and School Age Program.

Preferred Language – The language (including sign language) most preferred by a person for communication.

Professional Development – Opportunities for early learning professionals to gain knowledge and improve skills, attitudes, and beliefs. Professional development can include reading materials, courses, webinars, coaching/mentoring, team building, or other formal or informal learning opportunities.

Quality Recognition Specialist (QRS) – The Quality Recognition Specialist is a member of the UW Quality Recognition team responsible for quality recognition. Quality Recognition Specialists will work with early learning programs to:

- Provide feedback and scoring on Program Profile and Video Highlights.
- Review records and documentation.

Quality Standards – The Early Achievers Quality Recognition and Improvement System Standards (**Quality Standards**) is a comprehensive, research-based framework to support positive outcomes in early learning settings. There are five Quality Standard areas: Child Outcomes; Curriculum and Staff Supports; Learning Environment and Interactions; Professional Development and Training; and Family Engagement and Partnership.

Request for Quality Recognition – When a participant is ready to submit a component for review (e.g., Program Profile, Video Highlights, etc.), they will submit a recognition request to DCYF who then informs Cultivate Learning.

Records Review – Records Review allows providers to submit evidence of Quality Standards.

- Providers can submit evidence in the Quality Standard areas of Child Outcomes, Interactions and Curriculum, and Family Engagement and Partnership by uploading files.
- Supporting documents should include written proof of policies and practices, such as policies in a staff handbook.
- Providers can choose which Quality Standards they would like to submit evidence for; they can choose some or all.

Records Review Tool (RRT) – The **Records Review Tool** is an Excel document for Early Achievers participants to plan which Quality Standards they will opt in to and what evidence they will present. The completion of the RRT can be used by participants to organize the Records Review component before entering information into CECI.

Synchronous – Activities that take place at the same time. An example for Instructional Leadership is a mentor teacher who models a specific activity for a lead teacher. They then discuss the activity live afterward, either in-person or virtually.

Transition – The process or a period of change.

Appendix A

Teaching Strategies Gold Training Requirements for Early Achievers

All Age Groups (12 hours total, plus reliability)

- Introducing MyTeachingStrategies (2 hours)
- Objectives for Development and Learning (10 hours)
- Inter-rater Reliability certification

OR

- Introducción a MyTeachingStrategies (2 hours)
- Objetivos para desarrollo y el aprendizaje (10 hours)
- Inter-rater Reliability certification

Creative Curriculum Training Requirements for Early Achievers

Infant/Toddler/Twos Lead Teaching Staff (20 hours total)

- The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos: Foundation (10 hours)
- The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddler & Twos: Daily Resources (10 hours)

Preschool Lead Teaching Staff (20 hours total)

- The Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Foundation (10 hours)
- The Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Daily Resources (10 hours)

FCC Lead Teaching Staff (20 hours total)

- The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos: Foundation (10 hours) OR The Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Foundation (10 hours)
- The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos: Daily Resources (10 hours) OR The Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Daily Resources (10 hours) OR The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care: Daily Resources (10 hours)

Montessori Curriculum Training Requirements for Early Achievers

If your program is accredited through American Montessori Society (AMS) or Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) you will submit your current national accreditation certificate to receive credit for the Curriculum 1 and Curriculum 2 standards.

If your program is recognized through Pacific Northwest Montessori Association (PNMA) you will submit your current certificate to receive credit for the Curriculum 1 and Curriculum 2 standards.

If your program has already received Early Achievers accreditation recognition you will receive credit for the Curriculum 1 and Curriculum 2 standards.