
Standard 10: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

A Guide to the NAEYC Early Childhood
Program Standard and Related
Accreditation Criteria

**National Association
for the Education
of Young Children**



Standard 10: Leadership and Management: A Guide to the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standard and Related Accreditation Criteria

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Introduction to the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards

Since its founding in 1926, NAEYC has strived to improve the quality of group programs for young children by defining a vision for high quality and then providing tools and resources to achieve that vision. For more than 20 years, NAEYC Accreditation has been one of the Association's most powerful mechanisms in this regard. The system sets the standard for excellence—for families and the public as well as the early childhood profession—and, through the Self-Study process, offers support to programs to meet the standard.

Beginning in 2000, NAEYC launched a comprehensive review of its accreditation system, resulting in the design and implementation of a reinvented system. A new set of 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 Accreditation Criteria were adopted by the Association in 2005. Each of the 10 standards is a broad statement that describes a critical component of early childhood program functioning. How programs meet that standard is defined by specific accreditation criteria. The criteria are organized by topic areas that highlight the key issues within that standard. Some of the criteria are “universal,” meaning that they apply to all children, while others apply to particular age categories: infant, toddler/two, preschool, and kindergarten. Many criteria apply to more than one age category. Programs use only the criteria that apply to the age categories they serve.

Together, the standards and their criteria define what NAEYC believes every early childhood education program should be. The standards are set high to match the vision for NAEYC Accreditation: that NAEYC Accreditation and NAEYC-Accredited programs are leading the way to higher quality in all programs. Setting standards for high quality and having NAEYC-Accredited programs meet those standards will help many more people recognize the value of early childhood education.

As one of the results of reinvention, NAEYC is increasing its support to programs in Self-Study and is encouraging programs to enroll in Self-Study even if they have no intention of pursuing NAEYC Accreditation. Ideally, all programs will think about how they can create a better place for children to grow and learn. As part of this effort, the Self-Study resources have been greatly expanded. Separate books have been created for each standard and are available independent of the Self-Study Kit. Thus, you may be reading this volume from one of several perspectives:

- as a teacher or administrator in an NAEYC-Accredited program seeking re-accreditation under the new standards;
- as a teacher or administrator enrolled in Self-Study for the first time;
- as a teacher or administrator interested in learning more about this standard and possibly thinking about the accreditation process; or

-
- as a student of early childhood education, learning about the importance of the standard on leadership and management.

Whatever your perspective, we hope that you find this resource to be a helpful tool in improving the quality of the early childhood programs that you touch and, thus, in enhancing the quality of life for young children.

Each of the program standard books follows a similar format. They are organized around a basic framework of four questions for programs:

- What do you need **to know** to study your practices in this standard? (i.e., What is the standard and why is it important to quality?)
- What do you need **to think about** as you study how your program performs the criteria in this standard? (i.e., What does it mean for your program?)
- What do you need to do **to improve** your ability to meet the criteria for this standard and to gather evidence of your progress? (i.e., What do you need to do for Self-Study?)
- What do you need to do **to demonstrate** that your program meets the 10 standards, if you want to formally pursue NAEYC Accreditation after completing Self-Study? (i.e., What do you need to do for Self-Assessment?)

The book provides information and resources to help you consider each of these questions in relation to the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria. Each book provides

resources that are related to a standard and that are based on tools used in the assessment process for NAEYC Accreditation. Note: the tools themselves are provided at TORCH—The Online Resource Center Headquarters for program improvement through NAEYC Accreditation; see www.naeyc.org/selfstudy. As you use the framework to consider changes to your program, you will be encouraged to follow six tasks for Self-Study:

- Create shared understandings of key concepts about accreditation, the standards, the criteria, and implications for the program.
- Gather evidence using the Self-Study tools.
- Determine strengths and weaknesses using the standards and criteria as your measure of quality.
- Develop improvement plans as needed.
- Make improvements and document your progress.
- Evaluate results and determine next steps.

Before becoming Applicants for NAEYC Accreditation, programs will find it helpful to complete these tasks, considering each standard. As a program evaluates its results and determines next steps, it may find that further study and improvements are needed for some standards. Programs are ready to apply for NAEYC Accreditation when they are confident that they can demonstrate that each standard is met. Programs not intending to seek accreditation at this time are encouraged to use the tasks to address specific areas, perhaps subgroups of criteria within a particular standard, to make improvements.

Overview of Steps to Achieve NAEYC Accreditation

Steps

Tasks for Programs

Step 1:
Enrollment/
Self-Study

- Complete enrollment form and submit enrollment fee
- Review the Self-Study Kit and online resources at TORCH (see www.naeyc.org/selfstudy)
- Engage in Self-Study, considering these suggestions:
 - Create shared understandings of key concepts about accreditation, the standards, the criteria, and implications for the program
 - Gather information
 - Determine strengths and weaknesses
 - Develop improvement plans as needed
 - Make improvements and document progress
 - Evaluate results and determine next steps
- Prepare to meet eligibility requirements
- Currently NAEYC Accredited? To maintain accreditation status, verify deadlines for Step 2: Application/Self-Assessment and Step 3: Candidacy

Step 2:
Application/
Self-Assessment

- Complete application, selecting a due date for submission of Candidacy Materials, and pay application fee
- Meet eligibility requirements
- Engage in formal Self-Assessment—Must complete all requirements in the Guide to Self-Assessment available online to enrolled programs:
 - Plan formal Self-Assessment, involving families, teaching staff members, and program administrators
 - Document evidence that all standards are met, building on results of Self-Study
 - “Fine-tune” program performance, making improvements as needed to make sure that all required criteria and at least 80 percent of criteria within each standard are met by the program overall and that every classroom consistently performs at least 70 percent of all applicable criteria
- Prepare to meet all Candidacy Requirements
- Complete Candidacy Materials, including documentation of performance on selected criteria as requested by the NAEYC Academy

Step 3: Candidacy

- Submit Candidacy Materials and fee by chosen due date
- Meet Candidacy Requirements
- Prepare for site visit by NAEYC Assessors
- Continue to gather evidence of performance and make improvements

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Overview of Steps to Achieve NAEYC Accreditation

(continued from page 7)

Steps

Step 4: Meeting the Standards/Accreditation Decision

Maintaining the Standards

Tasks for Programs

- Participate in site visit
- Complete site visit evaluation and submit it to the NAEYC Academy
- Deferred programs—May choose to return to Step 2: Application/Self-Assessment or Step 3: Candidacy
- Denied programs—May choose to return to Step 2: Application/Self-Assessment
- Accredited programs: Sustain quality over the five-year term—as documented through annual reports, reports of program changes, and results of unannounced visits if randomly selected—and pay applicable fees

Program Requirements for Each Step of NAEYC Accreditation

Steps

Step 1:
Enrollment/
Self-Study

Program Requirements

- No requirements
- Open to any program interested in using the Self-Study Kit and tools for program improvement

Step 2:
Application/
Self-Assessment

- Open to any center- or school-based program serving children birth through kindergarten that also:
 - Serves a minimum of 10 children
 - Is in operation for at least one year before submitting materials for Step 3: Candidacy
 - Is regulated by the appropriate licensing or regulatory body (or alternative if ineligible for licensing/regulation)
 - Is located in the United States or its territories, unless affiliated with U.S. government
- Program is willing to meet each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards
- Leaders demonstrate knowledge of the NAEYC Accreditation process
- Program completes the formal, comprehensive Self-Assessment following requirements in the Guide to Self-Assessment available online to enrolled programs

Step 3: Candidacy

The program must do the following:

- Maintain good standing in its licensing or regulatory status within the last year or since its last inspection
- Demonstrate necessary early childhood and management and leadership expertise among members of its teaching and leadership staff
- Provide documentation of a collaborative process used to complete its Candidacy Materials, which has actively engaged the program administrator, the teaching staff, families, and the program's governing body (when applicable)
- Believe that it can meet each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and that it can document satisfactory performance on at least 80 percent of the NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for each standard

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Program Requirements for Each Step of NAEYC Accreditation

(continued from page 9)

| Steps | Program Requirements |
|--|--|
| Step 4: Meeting the Standards/ Accreditation Decision | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Meet all applicable required criteria and continue to meet all Candidacy and eligibility requirements■ Meet each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards by demonstrating proficiency in at least 80 percent of each standard's associated accreditation criteria assessed during the site visit, with no individual classroom scoring below 70 percent on its assessed criteria |
| Maintaining the Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Maintain level of quality expected of NAEYC-Accredited programs■ Self report any major changes to the program within 90 days■ Submit to unannounced visits if randomly selected or verification visits in response to program changes, complaints, or questions about the program's continued ability to meet the requirements of NAEYC Accreditation■ Submit annual reports on each anniversary with applicable fees |

NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards

- 1. Relationships:** The program promotes positive relationships among all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth and belonging as part of a community and to foster each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member.
- 2. Curriculum:** The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.
- 3. Teaching:** The program uses developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the program's curriculum goals.
- 4. Assessment of Child Progress:** The program is informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children's learning and development. These assessments occur within the context of reciprocal communications with families and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children develop. Assessment results are used to benefit children by informing sound decisions about children, teaching, and program improvement.
- 5. Health:** The program promotes the nutrition and health of children and protects children and staff from illness and injury.
- 6. Teachers:** The program employs and supports a teaching staff that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
- 7. Families:** The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.
- 8. Community Relationships:** The program establishes relationships with and uses the resources of the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals.
- 9. Physical Environment:** The program has a safe and healthful environment that provides appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments. The environment includes facilities, equipment, and materials to facilitate child and staff learning and development.
- 10. Leadership and Management:** The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

What Do You Need to Know about the Leadership and Management Standard?

Why Are a Program’s Leadership and Management Important to Quality?

Although the argument can be made that many of the standards reflect the “heart” of NAEYC Accreditation and program excellence, the argument is particularly clear for the Leadership and Management Standard. The criteria for this standard encompass the wide variety of skills that effective and

difficult, if not impossible, to provide comprehensive quality service and to support staff efforts to meet the needs of children and families who come to them for care and education.

Rosalynn Carter said, “A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they do not necessarily want to go, but ought to be.” Her words are about inspiration, about people knowing and trusting that, in the case of early childhood education programs, their leader has knowledge gained through both formal education and experience, empathy for the families and children served by the program, and a view of staff as being both capable and creative. The field of early childhood is in great need of leadership—people who can continue to advocate for young children and their families, people who have a voice and conscience about what is good for all children. Armed with real information about what works for children, what helps them while they are in programs for young children, and what results in positive outcomes for them as they enter into formal schooling, leaders can strongly affect the future of early childhood care.

Quality programs require administrators who demonstrate the ability to do a wide variety of challenging tasks:

- *Lead*—Leaders must execute the program mission in an atmosphere of trust, collaboration, and inclusion. They must have the ability to think strategically, build consensus, create change, meet the

- Why are a program’s leadership and management important to quality?
- What is the standard for leadership and management?
- What are the NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for the Leadership and Management Standard?
- What are the connections between the Leadership and Management Standard and the other standards?

successful program administrators must possess to run high-quality programs. In essence, high-quality, effective leadership and management refer to the oversight, organization, and execution of the content of Program 1 through 9.

The job of an early childhood program administrator is complex and demanding. It requires a remarkable combination of skills and talents to organize, direct, guide, and manage an early childhood program. Without strong leadership and management, it is

needs of working professionals, encourage and support professional advancement, and influence better outcomes for children, families, and the profession.

- *Learn and grow*—Leaders must demonstrate commitment to a high level of continuing professional development and competence.
- *Mentor*—Leaders need to share their expertise, listen carefully to their staff, respond to their staff member's professional and personal needs, and support their staff's efforts to grow and learn.
- *Manage*—Managers must develop and carry out policies and procedures that support the program mission and provide for all program operations.
- *Remain fiscally accountable*—Leaders need to be knowledgeable and in charge of fiscal planning, budget preparation, and budget oversight to establish priorities based on program mission and philosophy and to provide long-term resources to sustain the operation of the program.
- *Maintain healthy, nutritious, and safe environments and practices*—Leaders must support conditions and practices that are safe and healthy for children and staff.
- *Maintain positive professional and personal relationships with staff*—Leaders must maintain a well-trained, well-educated, and committed staff. This effort requires careful attention to the development needs of staff that is carefully balanced with recognition and response to the personal needs of staff. Similar to the needs of children in their care, frontline staff, those who work with children all day long, need care and attention. No one can be asked to give all of the time and not have their own needs attended to on occasion.
- *Evaluate programs for accountability and continuous improvement*—Leaders need to ensure program accountability, continu-

ous program improvement, and enhanced outcomes for children. This effort requires increased attention to systematic assessment and evaluation of program performance, staff abilities, and community and family needs. The results of careful program assessment conducted by talented leaders is important to individual programs and even more important for the continued improvement of the field.

- *Collaborate*—Team leaders work with staff, families, community members, funders, and other stakeholders to implement the program's vision and mission, achieve outcomes desired for children, and maintain high-quality services to children and families.

What Is the Standard for Leadership and Management?

Program Standard: The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

Rationale: Excellent programming requires effective governance structures, competent and knowledgeable leadership, as well as comprehensive and well-functioning administrative policies, procedures, and systems. Effective leadership and management create the environment for high-quality care and education by (a) ensuring compliance with relevant regulations and guidelines; (b) promoting fiscal soundness, program accountability, effective communication, helpful consultative services, positive community relations; and comfortable and supportive workplaces; (c) maintaining stable staff; and (d) instituting ongoing program planning and career development opportunities for staff as well as continuous program improvement.

Topic Areas within the Leadership and Management Standard

The Leadership and Management Standard comprises six topic areas (10.A–10.F). These topic areas are described briefly here.

10.A. Leadership—This topic area addresses the presence of a mission and philosophy that guides programs toward achieving their goals. It describes expectations for the education and training of program administrators as well as expectations for their leadership, including executing the program mission and fostering a climate of trust, collaboration, and inclusion.

10.B. Management Policies and Procedures—This topic area addresses written policies that undergird mission-driven practice, program operations, and continuous program improvement.

10.C. Fiscal Accountability Policies and Procedures—This topic area addresses

policies and procedures that provide evidence of sound fiscal accountability, including the program administrator’s role in fiscal planning, budget preparation, and budget oversight.

10.D. Health, Nutrition, and Safety Policies and Procedures—This topic area addresses policies, systems, and procedures that are needed to support safe and healthy conditions and practices.

10.E. Personnel Policies—This topic area addresses personnel policies and procedures applicable to maintaining a professional and committed staff.

10.F. Program Evaluation, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement—This topic area addresses policies, systems, and procedures related to routine monitoring of program performance to ensure program accountability, continuous program improvement, and enhanced outcomes for children.

A Guide to the Standards and Criteria Chart

Standard: There are 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. Each standard describes an essential element that together with the other nine standards provide a definition of quality for child care, preschools, and kindergarten programs. Standards are numbered 1 to 10.

Topic areas: Within each standard are topic areas that highlight the big ideas to more fully express the meaning and value of the standard. Each topic area includes criteria that further define the meaning of quality in that area. The topic areas are identified by capital letters (A, B, C, etc.). The number of topic areas within a standard vary.

Criteria: Each criterion provides specific details to guide program plans, policies, and practices. The criteria are numbered (01, 02, 03, etc.) within their topic area.

Indicators: Many of the criteria are straightforward statements such as “Teachers use their understanding of children’s ideas to plan new learning experiences.” Other criteria have multiple indicators that define very specific aspects of more complex criteria. Each indicator is identified by a lower-case letter (a, b, c, etc.).

Age category: Each criterion within each program standard is identified by its relevant age category (or categories). Many

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A Guide to the Standards and Criteria Chart

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criteria are identified as “universal” (U), meaning that all classrooms and programs pursuing NAEYC Accreditation must address these criteria. These aspects of quality should be seen in any programs or classrooms serving children birth through kindergarten, though they may look somewhat different in practice depending on the children’s age.

Other criteria apply to specific age categories:

I = infant = birth to 15 months

T = toddler/two = 12 to 36 months

P = preschool = 30 months to 5 years

K = kindergarten = children enrolled in a public or private kindergarten program

The age categories for each criterion are indicated by an X.

Note that there is some overlap among the age ranges for each category, especially for infant and toddler/two. This overlap is purposeful to allow programs some flexibility in grouping children. When a group consists only of children whose ages are listed in two different age categories, for example, 12 to 15 months, the group may be designated as serving either category (e.g., infant or toddler/two). The designation chosen by the program will determine which age category is used for assessment purposes. If a group includes children whose ages range beyond the overlapping portion of two age categories, then the group is a mixed-age group. For mixed-age groups, universal criteria and criteria relevant to the age categories for that group apply. For

example, a group of children 24 to 48 months must meet universal, toddler/two, and preschool criteria.

Assessment category: The Assessment Category column in the criteria informs programs of how the criterion is considered in scoring after the site visit to determine NAEYC Accreditation. Although programs will consider all the criteria during Self-Study and need to be prepared to be assessed on any criteria, the site visit will include only a sample of the more than 400 criteria.¹ Criteria are grouped by the following categories for the purposes of the site visit:

- *Required*—Required criteria are so fundamental to program quality that they must be fulfilled to achieve NAEYC Accreditation. *The Leadership and Management Standard includes two required criteria:*

- **10.A.02**—The program administrator has the educational qualifications and personal commitment required to serve as the program’s operational and pedagogical leader. The criterion can be met in one of three ways.

Option A: The administrator

- has at least a baccalaureate degree.²
- has at least 9 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in administration, leadership, and

continued on next page

¹ The determination of which criteria are used in specific site visits is based on the results of an extensive series of field tests conducted to establish valid and reliable measures of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards.

² Degrees and college course work are from regionally accredited institutions of higher education that may have been earned through online course work, distance learning, degree completion programs, or some combination that offer credit as part of a formal assessment of prior learning.

A Guide to the Standards and Criteria Chart

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- management (which can be in school administration, business management, communication, technology, early childhood management or administration, or some combination of these areas), and
- has at least 24 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education, or early childhood special education that encompasses child development and children's learning from birth through kindergarten; family and community relationships; the practices of observing, documenting, and assessing young children; teaching and learning processes; and professional practices and development.

OR

Option B: The administrator

- documents that a plan is in place to meet the above indicators within five years.

OR

Option C: The administrator

- can provide documentation of having achieved a combination of relevant formal education and experience as specified in table 2, Alternative Pathways to Achieve Qualifications as a Program Administrator.
- **10.B.04**—The program and facility are licensed to operate or are regulated by the applicable state and local regulatory systems. The

program maintains documentation showing that it is considered in good standing by its regulatory bodies, and it can document all certifications, approvals, and corrections of violations and deficiencies.

- *Always Assessed (Always)*—These criteria will be assessed during each site visit and are considered as part of the overall score to determine accreditation status.
- *Randomly Assessed (Random)*—These criteria could be assessed during a site visit, and programs should be prepared to be assessed on any of the random criteria.
- *Emerging Practice (Emerging)*—These criteria are ones that are important to program quality but are not yet widely practiced, and time is needed for the early childhood field and individual programs to develop the capacity (through additional training, major facility renovations, or other significant steps) to meet them. Programs may be assessed on emerging practice criteria. When programs are assessed on these criteria and they meet them, then the program will receive credit for doing so. However, a program will not be penalized for failing to meet an emerging practice criterion. NAEYC will assess overall performance of all programs on the emerging practice criteria to determine how those criteria will be considered in the future. *There are three Emerging Practice Criteria related to the Leadership and Management Standard:*
 - **10.B.03**—Technology-based information management systems are

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A Guide to the Standards and Criteria Chart

(continued from page 16)

in place. Procedures guide staff in collecting and analyzing data that are used to monitor the operation of the program and to inform program improvement.

- **10.B.10**—Policies guide the appropriate use of specialized consultants to support staff’s efforts to meet the needs of children and families to participate fully in the program, including children with disabilities, behavior challenges, or other special needs. Procedures address expected consultant skills, payment, access, availability, and working relationships with staff as well as how the program will arrange with other agencies to use their consultants for children who are eligible for their services.
- **10.F.05**—The program has an ongoing monitoring system to ensure that all program goals and requirements are met. The program has a data system that is used to collect evidence that goals and objectives are met; this evidence is incorporated in the annual program evaluation.

Sources of evidence: Evidence is a critical concept for NAEYC Accreditation. The process is designed to focus on evidence of the program’s ability to meet the standards and criteria consistently over time, not simply on the day of the site visit. Specific tools are provided online at TORCH (www.naeyc.org/selfstudy) to help you gather documentation of your program’s past, present, and future performance related to each standard.

The sources of evidence are:

- O = Observable Criteria
- FS = Family Survey
- TS = Teaching Staff Survey
- PP = Program Portfolio
- CP = Classroom Portfolio

Additional tips for understanding the standards and criteria chart:

- Text in bold is provided to highlight particular concepts within the criterion when helpful to aid understanding.
- The term *teaching staff* is used to refer to all members of the teaching team, including teachers and assistant teachers–teacher aides. For more information about definitions of teaching staff and their qualifications, see *Getting Started*, included in the Self-Study Kit.
- *Leadership and management staff* is a term used to refer to all members of the leadership and management team.
- The following example will illustrate the various features of the criteria chart.

EXAMPLE: the number 10.E.09 found in the far left column of the criteria indicates the following:

- 10—the number of the standard; Standard 10 is the Leadership and Management Standard
- E—Topic Area, in this case, “Personnel Policies”
- 09—Criterion, in this case, “All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the governing body.” Indicators for age categories with respect to the criterion are marked by an X in each appropriate age category (U, I, T, P, K).

What Are the Accreditation Criteria for the Leadership and Management Standard?

The following chart presents the topic areas and criteria for the Leadership and Management Standard. It also shows the age categories for which each criterion is relevant, the assessment category for each criterion, and the sources of evidence that are used to assess each criterion.

NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Leadership and Management Standard

| Number | Age Category | | | | | NAEYC Accreditation Criterion | Assessment Category | Sources of Evidence |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| | U | I | T | P | K | | | |
| 10.A. Leadership | | | | | | | | |
| 10.A.01 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has a well-articulated mission and philosophy of program excellence that guide its operation. The goals and objectives relate to the mission, philosophy, and all program operations and include child and family desired outcomes. | Random | PP |
| 10.A.02 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The program administrator has the educational qualifications and personal commitment required to serve as the program’s operational and pedagogical leader. This criterion can be met in one of three ways:</p> <p>Option A: The administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ has at least a baccalaureate degree.³ ■ has at least 9 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in administration, leadership, and management (which can be in school administration, business management, communication, technology, early childhood management or administration, or some combination of these areas) ■ has at least 24 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education, or early childhood special education that encompasses child development and children’s learning from birth through kindergarten; family and community relationships; the practices of observing, documenting, and assessing young children; teaching and learning processes; and professional practices and development. <p>OR</p> <p>Option B: The administrator documents that a plan is in place to meet the above qualifications within five years.</p> | Required | PP ⁴ |

AGE CATEGORIES

U = universal
 I = infant
 T = toddler/two
 P = preschool
 K = kindergarten

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

O = Observable Criteria
 FS = Family Survey
 TS = Teaching Staff Survey
 PP = Program Portfolio
 CP = Classroom Portfolio

When a program is subject to a governmental rule or regulation that prohibits or exceeds the expectation outlined in a criterion, that rule or regulation takes precedence. When a governmental rule or regulation differs in other ways, or sets a lower threshold of performance, NAEYC Accreditation Criteria take precedence.

³ Degrees and college course work are from regionally accredited institutions of higher education that may have been earned through online course work, distance learning, degree completion programs, or some combination that offer credit as part of a formal assessment of prior learning.

⁴ Documentation of program administrator and teaching staff qualifications is submitted to NAEYC for review by NAEYC Academy Staff and is not reviewed by the assessor during the site visit.

NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Leadership and Management Standard

| Number | Age Category | | | | | NAEYC Accreditation Criterion | Assessment Category | Sources of Evidence |
|---------|--------------|---|---|---|---|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| | U | I | T | P | K | | | |
| | | | | | | <p>OR</p> <p>Option C: The administrator can provide documentation of having achieved a combination of relevant formal education and experience as specified in Table 3, Alternative Pathways to Achieve Qualifications as a Program Administrator.</p> <p>(This is a required criterion.)</p> | | |
| 10.A.03 | X | X | X | X | X | The program administrator demonstrates commitment to a high level of continuing professional competence (see appendix A, Program Administrator Definition and Competencies) and an ability to promote teamwork. | Random | PP |
| 10.A.04 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The program, regardless of its size or funding auspices, has a designated program administrator with the educational qualifications detailed in Criterion 10.A.02.</p> <p>When a program has a <i>total enrollment of fewer than 60</i> full-time equivalent (FTE) children, employs fewer than eight FTE staff, or both, the program may have a part-time administrator or an administrator who fulfills a dual role (e.g., teacher-administrator), or in multi-site programs with fewer than 60 FTE children or fewer than 8 FTE staff, the sites may share an off-site administrator.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>When a program has a <i>total enrollment of 60 or more</i> FTE children and employs eight or more FTE staff the program has a full-time administrator, or in multi-site programs with 60 or more FTE children and 8 or more FTE staff, individual facilities have on-site a full-time administrator or full-time manager under the direct supervision of an individual who meets the qualifications outlined for the program administrator.</p> <p>Note: When more than one person share administrative responsibilities, at least one person must meet the qualifications detailed in criterion 10.A.02. This person is considered the designated administrator, and her or his contributions will be included in the assessment of criteria within the Leadership topic area.</p> | Random | PP |
| 10.A.05 | X | X | X | X | X | The program administrator provides leadership to staff to implement the program mission. | Random | TS; PP |
| 10.A.06 | X | X | X | X | X | The program administrator responds proactively to changing conditions to enhance program quality. | Random | O; TS; FS |

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| 10.A.07 | X | X | X | X | X | The program administrator and other program leaders systematically support an organizational climate that fosters trust, collaboration, and inclusion. | Random | TS; FS; PP |
| 10.B. Management Policies and Procedures | | | | | | | | |
| 10.B.01 | X | X | X | X | X | Policies detail staff responsibilities, planning time, and training and resources, address the importance of families and professionals across disciplines, and emphasize the need to work as teams and to build community partnerships. | Random | PP |
| 10.B.02 | X | X | X | X | X | All components of program operation are guided by written policies and are carried out through articulated plans, systems, and procedures that enable the program to run smoothly and effectively and that guide the program toward achieving its goals. | Random | PP |
| 10.B.03 | X | X | X | X | X | Technology-based information management systems are in place. Procedures guide staff in collecting and analyzing data that are used to monitor the operation of the program and to inform program improvement. (This criterion is an Emerging Practice.) | Emerging | PP |
| 10.B.04 | X | X | X | X | X | The program and facility are licensed to operate or are regulated by the applicable state and local regulatory systems. The program maintains documentation showing that it is considered in good standing by its regulatory bodies, and it can document all certifications, approvals, and corrections of violations and deficiencies. (This is a required criterion.) | Required | PP |
| 10.B.05 | X | X | X | X | X | Accident and liability insurance coverage is maintained for children and adults. A certificate of insurance is available for review. | Random | PP |
| 10.B.06 | X | X | X | X | X | If a program is led or governed by a board of directors, advisory group, council, or other similar group, written policies define their roles and responsibilities along with those of the program staff who work directly with those entities. | Random | PP |
| 10.B.07 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has a strategic planning process that outlines actions the program will take to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> implement the program's vision and mission. achieve outcomes desired for children. maintain high-quality services to children and families. provide long-term resources to sustain the operation of the program. | Random | PP |

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| 10.B.08 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The program has written policies and procedures that demonstrate how the program prepares for, orients, and welcomes children and families. These policies and procedures are shared verbally and in writing with families of enrolled children and are available in languages that families use and understand.</p> <p>Policies address</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the program’s philosophy and b. curriculum goals and objectives, c. the program’s commitment to welcome children and families; and d. guidance and discipline. <p>Procedures address</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> e. the variety of strategies used by the program for ongoing communication with families, including communication in their preferred language or through translation; f. how IFSPs, IEPs, and other individualized plans will be addressed for children with disabilities and other special learning needs; g. health and safety precautions and requirements that affect families and their children, including building security and access, medications, inclusion or exclusion of ill children, and emergency plans; h. the variety of techniques used by the program to negotiate difficulties and differences that arise in interactions between families and program staff; i. payment, meals and snacks, and sleeping arrangements; j. how the program ensures confidentiality of child and family information; k. how and when children are scheduled for field trips; l. safety precautions that will be used to safeguard the children on trips, including having a communication device to call for help whenever necessary while on the trip, having first-aid supplies on the trip, and alternate transportation arrangements if there is a problem with the transportation vehicles during the trip. | Random | PP |
| 10.B.09 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The program has plans and policies to attract and maintain a consistently qualified, well-trained staff and to reduce staff turnover.</p> | Always | PP |

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| 10.B.10 | X | X | X | X | X | Policies guide the appropriate use of specialized consultants to support staff’s efforts to meet the needs of children and families to participate fully in the program, including children with disabilities, behavior challenges, or other special needs. Procedures address expected consultant skills, payment, access, availability, and working relationships with staff as well as how the program will arrange with other agencies to use their consultants for children who are eligible for their services. (This criterion is an Emerging Practice.) | Emerging | PP |
| 10.B.11 | X | X | X | X | X | Policies prescribe that each group be assigned teaching staff who have primary responsibility for working with that group of children. These teaching staff provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and immediate care as needed to protect children’s well-being. | Random | O; PP |
| 10.B.12 | X | X | X | X | X | Written procedures address the maintenance of developmentally appropriate teaching staff-child ratios within group size to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among children. Teaching staff-child ratios within group size (see table 4) are maintained during all hours of operation, including a. indoor time, b. outdoor time, and c. during transportation and field trips (when transporting children, the teaching staff-child ratio is used to guide the adult-child ratio). Groups of children may be limited to one age or may include multiple ages. (A group or classroom consists of the children who are assigned to a teacher or a team of teaching staff for most of the day and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area. For more information, please refer to <i>Clarification on Groups</i> , later in this section.) | Always | O; PP |

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| | U | I | T | P | K | | | |
| 10.B.13 | X | X | X | X | X | The program is organized and staffed to minimize the number of a. group, b. teaching staff, and c. classroom transitions experienced by an individual child during the day and program year. Every attempt is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children. | Always | O; TS; PP |
| 10.B.14 | X | X | X | X | X | Procedures address transition planning by administrators, teachers, and families to facilitate children's transition from one teacher to another, from one group to another, from one classroom to another, and from one program to another. | Random | TS; PP |
| 10.B.15 | | X | X | | | Policies encourage keeping infants and toddler/twos together with their teaching staff for nine months or longer. | Random | PP |
| 10.C. | <i>Fiscal Accountability Policies and Procedures</i> | | | | | | | |
| 10.C.01 | X | X | X | X | X | Financial policies and the procedures to implement them provide evidence of sound fiscal accountability using standard accounting practices. Financial policies and procedures are consistent with the program's vision, philosophy, mission, goals, and expected child outcomes. Operating budgets are prepared annually, and there is at least quarterly reconciliation of expenses to budget. A system exists to review or adjust the budget if circumstances change, and it includes a yearly audit. Budgets are reviewed and amended as needed. Fiscal records (such as revenue and expenditure statements, balance sheets, banking reconciliation, etc.) are kept as evidence of sound financial management. | Random | PP |
| 10.C.02 | X | X | X | X | X | The person directly responsible for program implementation (administrator, site manager, program manager, or supervising teacher) is included in long-range fiscal planning and in operating budget preparation, reconciliation, and review. | Random | PP |
| 10.C.03 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has resources to support the program's vision, philosophy, mission, goals, operation, and expected child outcomes. Program administrators and other program leaders actively work to generate and manage the resources needed to support a program of excellence. | Random | PP |

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| 10.D. | | | | | | <i>Health, Nutrition, and Safety Policies and Procedures</i> | | |
| 10.D.01 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has written policies to promote wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults. Procedures are in place that address <ol style="list-style-type: none"> steps to reduce occupational hazards such as infectious diseases (e.g., exposure of pregnant staff to CMV [cytomegalovirus], chicken pox), injuries (e.g., back strain, falls), environmental exposure (e.g., indoor air pollution, noise, stress); management plans and reporting requirements for staff and children with illness, including administration of medication and criteria for their inclusion or exclusion; supervision of children in instances when teaching staff are assigned to specific areas that are near equipment where injury could occur; the providing of space, supervision, and comfort for a child waiting for pick up because of illness; the providing of adequate nutrition for children and adults; sleeping and napping arrangements, including sleep positioning for infants; sanitation and hygiene, including food handling and feeding; maintenance of the facility and equipment; prohibition of smoking, firearms, and other significant hazards that pose risks to children and adults; and the providing of referrals for staff to resources that support them in wellness, prevention and treatment of depression, and stress management. | Random | TS; PP |
| 10.D.02 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has written procedures to protect children and adults from environmental hazards such as air pollution, lead, and asbestos, according to public health requirements. | Random | PP |
| 10.D.03 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has a written policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious. | Random | PP |

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| 10.D.04 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has written procedures to be followed if a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect of a child in the program that protect the rights of the accused staff person as well as protect the children in the program. | Random | PP |
| 10.D.05 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has written procedures that outline the health and safety information to be collected from families and to be maintained on file for each child in one central location within the facility. The files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parents or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, on request. | Random | O; PP |
| 10.D.06 | X | X | X | X | X | Written procedures address all aspects of the arrival, departure, and transportation of children. The procedures <ol style="list-style-type: none"> facilitate family-staff interaction. ensure that all children transported during the program day are accounted for before, during, and after transport. ensure the safety of all children as pedestrians and as passengers. address specific procedures for children with disabilities. address special circumstances in picking up children at the end of the day. | Random | FS; PP |
| 10.D.07 | X | X | X | X | X | Transportation services are managed and program vehicles are licensed and insured in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Certification of licensing and insurance is available on-site. | Random | PP |
| 10.D.08 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has written and posted disaster preparedness and emergency evacuation procedures. The procedures <ol style="list-style-type: none"> designate an appropriate person to assume authority and take action in an emergency when the administrator is not on-site. The procedures include <ol style="list-style-type: none"> plans that designate how and when to either shelter in place or evacuate and that specify a location for the evacuation; plans for handling lost or missing children, security threats, utility failure, and natural disasters; | Random | O; PP |

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| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. arrangements for emergency transport and escort from the program; and e. monthly practice of evacuation procedures with at least yearly practice of other emergency procedures. | | |
| 10.D.09 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The program has written, up-to-date, comprehensive procedures to prepare for and respond to medical and dental emergencies for children and adult staff. The procedures include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. identification of a hospital or other source of medical care as the primary site for emergency care (program staff have informed the facility of their intent to use their services in an emergency); b. immediate access to written familial-consent forms to relevant health insurance information for emergency medical treatment and transportation arrangements; c. arrangements for emergency transport and escort from the program for individuals who require immediate medical attention; d. presence of an adult with current pediatric first-aid training certification on-site at all times (training includes providing rescue breathing, management of a blocked airway, and any special procedures that physicians of enrolled children have documented that the children require); and e. individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support) | Random | PP |
| 10.D.10 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>Policies address the use of medications and special medical procedures needed by enrolled children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Medications are labeled with the child's first and last name, name of clinician, expiration date, and manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication as well as directions on administering and storing. b. Medication is administered only with written permission of the parent or legal guardian and as prescribed or as recommended in writing or by another form of direct communication with a licensed health care provider for a specific child. A standing order from a licensed health care provider may guide the use of over-the-counter medications with children in the program when that order details the specific | Random | PP |

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| | | | | | | <p>circumstances and provides specific instructions for individual dosing of the medication.</p> <p>c. Teaching staff who administer care to children requiring special medical procedures are competent in the procedure and guided in writing by the prescribing health care provider.</p> | | |
| 10.E. Personnel Policies | | | | | | | | |
| 10.E.01 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The program has written personnel policies that define the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. roles and responsibilities, b. qualifications, and c. specialized training required of d. staff and e. volunteer positions. <p>The policies outline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and g. policies for staff evaluation. <p>Policies detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> h. job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; i. salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; j. benefits; and k. resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. l. Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. m. The policies are provided to each employee on hiring. | Random | PP; TS |
| 10.E.02 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>Hiring procedures ensure that all employees in the program (including bus drivers, bus monitors, custodians, cooks, clerical and other support staff) who come into contact with children in the program or who have responsibility for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have passed a criminal-record check. b. are free from any history of substantiated child abuse or neglect. c. are at least 18 years old (except vehicle drivers, who must be at least 21). d. have completed high school or the equivalent. e. have provided personal references and a current health assessment that attest to the prospective employee's ability to perform the tasks required to carry out the responsibilities of his or her position. | Random | PP |

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| | U | I | T | P | K | | | |
| 10.E.03 | X | X | X | X | X | Efforts are made and documented to hire and maintain staff with the cultural and racial characteristics of the families served. Policies are in place for obtaining staff or volunteers who speak the language of the children served, and these individuals regularly interact with the children and families. | Random | PP |
| 10.E.04 | X | X | X | X | X | Programs maintain current health information from documented health assessments for all paid staff and for all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children. A current health assessment (not more than one year old) is received by the program before an employee starts work or before a volunteer has contact with children. The health assessment is updated every two years. Documented health assessments include <ol style="list-style-type: none"> immunization status, capacities and limitations that may affect job performance, and documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have positive TB skin tests and who develop a persistent cough or unexplained fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease. | Random | PP |
| 10.E.05 | X | X | X | X | X | New staff members serve an introductory period of employment during which the administrator or other qualified person makes a professional judgment as to their physical and psychological competence for working with children. | Random | PP |
| 10.E.06 | X | X | X | X | X | The programs offer benefits packages for full-time staff who have satisfactorily completed their introductory period of employment. Written policies detail employee benefits and include <ol style="list-style-type: none"> health insurance; employee leave, including sick, vacation, holiday, and personal leave; education benefits; and retirement. | Random | TS; PP |

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| | | | | | | The written policies are shared with each employee. Benefits for part-time employees are available on a prorated basis. If some or all of these benefits are not available, a written plan for improving benefits is developed and implemented. | | |
| 10.E.07 | X | X | X | X | X | Staff are provided space and time away from children during the day. When staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff are provided breaks of at least 15 minutes in each four-hour period. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties. | Random | TS; PP |
| 10.E.08 | X | X | X | X | X | Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a secure location. | Random | O; PP |
| 10.E.09 | X | X | X | X | X | All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the governing body. | Random | TS; PP |
| 10.E.10 | X | X | X | X | X | An individual professional development plan is generated from the staff-evaluation process and is updated at least annually and ongoing as needed. | Random | PP |
| 10.E.11 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has an implementation plan for professional development, including orientations for new staff. Credit-bearing course work is included in the professional development plan whenever possible. The plan improves staff credentials and competencies. It is updated at least annually or as needed based on the evaluation process, the need to keep staff's knowledge current, or other identified needs. | Random | TS; PP |
| 10.E.12 | X | X | X | X | X | The program's professional development plan a. is based on needs identified through staff evaluation and from other information from program evaluation processes. b. is written and shared with staff. c. includes mentoring, coaching, and other professional development opportunities for all staff. d. includes discussions of ethical issues. | Random | TS; PP |

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| | U | I | T | P | K | | | |
| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. includes training in the policies and procedures of the program. f. includes training in skills for building positive relationships, all aspects of the curriculum, teaching practices, skills for partnering with families and communities, and skills for collaborating and participating as a member of a team. | | |
| 10.F. Program Evaluation, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement | | | | | | | | |
| 10.F.01 | X | X | X | X | X | At least annually, administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults are involved in a comprehensive program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. Valid and reliable processes are used to gather data and evidence. | Random | TS; FS; PP |
| 10.F.02 | X | X | X | X | X | <p>The annual evaluation processes include gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. policies and procedures; b. program quality; c. children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. d. A report of the annual evaluation findings is shared with families, staff, and appropriate advisory and governance boards, and the results are used as a basis for continuing successful activities and for changing those that need improvement. | Random | TS; FS; PP |
| 10.F.03 | X | X | X | X | X | The program establishes goals for continuous improvement and innovation using information from the annual program evaluation. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies. | Random | PP |
| 10.F.04 | X | X | X | X | X | The program offers staff and families opportunities to assist in making decisions to improve the program. Collaborative and shared decision making is used with all participants to build trust and enthusiasm for making program changes. Staff and families meet at least annually to consult on program planning and ongoing program operations. | Random | TS; FS; PP |
| 10.F.05 | X | X | X | X | X | The program has an ongoing monitoring system to ensure that all program goals and requirements are met. The program has a data system that is used to collect evidence that goals and objectives are met; this evidence is incorporated in the annual program evaluation. (This criterion is an Emerging Practice.) | Emerging | PP |

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Table 1. Candidacy Requirements for Educational Qualifications of Program Administrators and Teaching Staff

| Position | Required Educational Qualifications |
|-----------------------|---|
| Program Administrator | <p>Must have at least a baccalaureate degree with at least 9 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in administration, leadership, or management and at least 24 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education or early childhood special education that address child development and learning from birth through kindergarten (see Table 2 for more information)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Documents that a plan is in place to meet the above qualifications within five years</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Documents meeting an appropriate combination of formal education, work experience, and relevant training and credentials as outlined in Table 3.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Note:</i> The Candidacy Requirement for a program administrator is the same as the qualifications outlined in Criterion 10.A.02, which is a required criterion.</p> |
| Teacher | <p>If the criteria related to qualifications of teaching staff members (teachers and assistant teachers–teacher aides) are not met, then the program must describe in a detailed professional development plan how it is ensuring that early childhood expertise is being provided to guide curriculum and learning. In addition, 75 percent of the teachers must meet one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a minimum of a CDA credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition or equivalent • Be working on an associate’s or higher degree in early childhood education, child development–family studies, early childhood special education, or elementary education with a concentration in early childhood education or the equivalent • Have a degree (associate’s or higher) outside of the early childhood field and three or more years of work experience in an NAEYC–Accredited program • Have a degree (associate’s or higher) outside of the early childhood field with three or more years of work experience in a nonaccredited program and at least 30 contact hours of relevant training during that past three years <hr/> <p><i>Note:</i> The Candidacy Requirement for teachers sets a lower threshold of qualifications for teachers than Criterion 6.A.05, which is always assessed, but is not a required criterion.</p> |

continued on next page

Table 1. Candidacy Requirements for Educational Qualifications of Program Administrators and Teaching Staff

(continued from page 31)

| Position | Required Educational Qualifications |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Assistant Teacher–Teacher Aide | <p>If the criteria related to qualifications of teaching staff (teachers and assistant teachers–teacher aides) are not met, then the program must describe in a detailed professional development plan how it is ensuring that early childhood expertise is being provided to guide curriculum and learning. In addition, 50 percent of all assistant teachers–teacher aides must have or be working on either a CDA credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition or equivalent or meet one of the Candidacy Requirements for teachers, listed on the previous page.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Note:</i> The Candidacy Requirement for assistant teachers–teacher aides sets a lower threshold of qualifications for assistant teachers–teacher aides than Criterion 6.A.06, which is always assessed, but is not a required criterion.</p> |

Note: The Candidacy Requirements apply to programs seeking NAEYC Accreditation or reaccreditation. They are used in the annual reporting process and in verification visits of programs accredited (or reaccredited) after September 16, 2006. For a definition of working on a CDA credential or degree and for a definition of equivalencies to a CDA credential or degree, see the *Standard 6: Teachers* book that is included in the Self-Study Kit.

Clarification on the Designated Program Administrator

When more than one person shares the responsibilities of a program administrator, the program must designate an individual whose position includes responsibilities in program management *and* early childhood as the designated program administrator. This administrator may have a different role title depending on the program type or sponsorship of the program. Common titles include director, site manager, administrator, program manager, early childhood coordinator, and principal. The designated program administrator must meet the Candidacy Requirement for the program administrator and the qualifications outlined in Criterion 10.A.02. This individual's contributions will be included in the assessment of criteria within Topic Area 10.A. Leadership.

Table 2. Program Administrator Qualifications (Candidacy Requirements and Option A of Criterion 10.A.02)

Individuals who can provide documentation of meeting all aspects of Option A are considered to meet Criterion 10.A.02. If an individual does not meet all aspects of Option A, please refer to either Option B or Option C for alternative ways to meet this criterion.

| Option A Requirement | Questions to Ask With Respect to the Designated Program Administrator | Documentation |
|---|---|--|
| At least a baccalaureate degree ^a | <p>Has the program administrator successfully completed at least a baccalaureate (i.e., bachelor of art, science, or education) degree^a?</p> <p>If <i>yes</i>, then go on to the next question below.</p> <p>If <i>no</i>, please see Option B or Option C of Criterion 10.A.02 for alternative ways to meet the criterion.</p> | The program administrator must be able to document completion of a baccalaureate degree ^a by providing a copy of a degree (if it lists the major field of study) or a copy of college transcripts indicating completion of at least a baccalaureate degree. ^a |
| At least 9 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in administration, leadership, and management (which can be in school administration, business management, communication, technology, early childhood management or administration, or some combination of these areas) | <p>Does the program administrator have at least 9 college credits in administration, leadership or management (which can be in school administration, business management, communication, technology, early childhood management or administration, or some combination of these areas)? You may need to refer to the program administrator's college transcripts to answer this question.</p> <p>If <i>yes</i>, then go on to the question on the next page.</p> <p>If <i>no</i>, please see Option B or Option C of Criterion 10.A.02 for alternative ways to meet the criterion.</p> | <p>If the program administrator has a degree^a in administration or management (for example a master of business administration), then the individual may document that this indicator is met by providing a copy of a degree^a (if it lists the major field of study) or a copy of college transcripts that indicate the completion of the degree.^a</p> <p>If the program administrator does not have a degree in administration or management, then the individual must be able to provide a college transcript that documents at least 9 college credits in leadership, administration, or management.</p> |

^a Degrees and college course work are from accredited institutions of higher education recognized by the U. S. Department of Education (for more information, please see <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation>) that may have been earned through online course work, distance learning, degree completion programs, or some combination that offers credits as part of a formal assessment of prior learning. Individuals who hold an international degree must submit an evaluation and verification of U.S. equivalencies.

continued on next page

Table 2. Program Administrator Qualifications

(continued from page 33)

| Option A Requirement | Questions to Ask With Respect to the Designated Program Administrator | Documentation |
|---|--|---|
| <p>At least 24 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in early childhood education (ECE), child development (CD), elementary education (EEd), or early childhood special education (EC Spec Ed) that encompasses child development and children’s learning from birth through kindergarten; family and community relationships; the practices of observing, documenting, and assessing young children; teaching and learning processes; and professional practices and development.</p> | <p>Does the program administrator have at least 24 college credits in ECE, CD, EEd or EC Spec Ed? Credit bearing college courses that cover topics in young children, families, or both will meet this requirement. You may need to refer to the program administrator’s college transcripts to answer this question.</p> <p>If you have answered <i>yes</i> to all three questions, then the program administrator meets Option A of Criterion 10.A.02.</p> | <p>If the program administrator has a degree^a in ECE, CD, EEd or EC Spec Ed, then the individual may document that this is met by providing a copy of a degree^a (if it lists the major field of study) or a copy of college transcripts that indicate the completion of the degree.^a</p> <p>If the program administrator has a degree^a that is not in ECE, CD, EEd or EC Spec Ed (for example, a degree in Psychology, Sociology, or Secondary Education), then the individual must be able to provide a college transcript that documents at least 24 college credits in ECE, CD, EEd or EC Spec Ed. Credit bearing college courses that cover topics in young children, families, or both will meet this requirement.</p> |

Plan in Place for Program Administrator Qualifications (Candidacy Requirements and Option B of Criterion 10.A.02)

Please note that to meet Option B of 10.A.02, the program administrator must document that a plan is in place to meet Option A of 10.A.02 within five years from the program’s Candidacy due date. This option means that the program administrator must have a plan in place to obtain at least a baccalaureate degree with at least 9 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in administration, leadership, or management and at least 24 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education, or early childhood special education that addresses child development and learning from birth through kindergarten.

Documenting that a plan is in place to meet Option C, described in **Table 3, Alternative Pathways to Achieve Educational Qualifications of a Program Administrator**, will *not* meet Criterion 10.A.02.

Table 3. Alternative Pathways to Achieve Educational Qualifications of a Program Administrator (Candidacy Requirement and Option C of Criterion 10.A.02)

Individuals who can provide documentation of having achieved a combination of formal education, experience, and relevant training and credentials equaling at least 100 points by the values assigned below are considered to meet Criterion 10.A.02.

| Formal Education <i>Must be able to document educational experiences equaling a minimum of 50 points and a maximum of 70 points from this column</i> | | Experience <i>Must be able to document work experiences equaling a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 50 points from this column</i> | | Relevant Training & Credentials <i>Must be able to document a minimum of 5 points and a maximum of 35 points from this column</i> | |
|--|-----------|---|-----------|---|-----------|
| Has a baccalaureate degree or higher in early childhood education, child development and family studies, early childhood special education, or elementary education any of which encompasses development and learning of children birth through kindergarten but is lacking 9 credit hours in leadership, management or administration | 70 | At least five years of experience ^a as a program administrator that includes leading a program through the NAEYC Accreditation process and maintaining NAEYC Accreditation for at least two years | 50 | College credits or training hours that are related to management knowledge or skills and to early childhood knowledge or skills | |
| | | At least three years of experience ^a as a program administrator that includes successfully leading the program through the NAEYC Accreditation process (at least 12 months before the accreditation visit) | 40 | One college credit equals 4 points | 4 |
| Has a baccalaureate degree or higher in educational leadership, management, or a related field (human services administration, business administration, organizational development, public administration) but is lacking 24 credit hours that encompass development and learning of children birth through kindergarten | 65 | At least three years experience ^a as a program administrator in a NAEYC-accredited program during which accreditation has been consistently maintained | 30 | Four contact hours ^b of training within the past five years equals 1 point | 1 |
| | | At least five years of experience ^a as a program administrator in a program not accredited by NAEYC | 25 | State director credential ^c approved by NAEYC equals 35 points | 35 |
| Has a baccalaureate degree or higher in a field such as social work or psychology but is lacking 24 credit hours that encompass development and learning of children birth through kindergarten and is lacking 9 credit hours in leadership, management or administration | 60 | At least three years of experience ^a as a program administrator in a program not accredited by NAEYC | 15 | | |
| | | | | | |
| Has an associate's degree in ECE-CD | 55 | | | | |
| Has a baccalaureate degree or higher in any other field | 50 | | | | |

^a Years in a position that includes responsibilities in both program management and early childhood may be counted as program administrator experience.

^b Contact hours refer to training hours rather than to hours in a classroom. For administrators, the training needs to be related either to management knowledge or skills or to early childhood knowledge or skills.

^c State Director Credentials approved by NAEYC can be found at TORCH (www.naeyc.org/selfstudy).

**Table 4. Teacher^a-Child Ratios within Group Size
(Assessed in Criterion 10.B.12)**

| Age Category | Group Size | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|
| | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 |
| <i>Infant</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Birth to 15 months ^b | 1:3 | 1:4 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Toddler/Two (12–36 months)^b</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 to 28 months | 1:3 | 1:4 | 1:4 ^c | 1:4 | | | | | | |
| 21 to 36 months | | 1:4 | 1:5 | 1:6 | | | | | | |
| <i>Preschool^b</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2½-year-olds to 3-year-olds (30–48 months) | | | | 1:6 | 1:7 | 1:8 | 1:9 | | | |
| 4-year-olds | | | | | | 1:8 | 1:9 | 1:10 | | |
| 5-year-olds | | | | | | 1:8 | 1:9 | 1:10 | | |
| <i>Kindergarten^d</i> | | | | | | | | 1:10 | 1:11 | 1:12 |

Notes: In a mixed-age preschool class of 2½-year-olds to 5-year-olds, no more than four children between the ages of 30 months and 36 months may be enrolled. The ratios within group size for the predominant age category apply. If infants or toddlers are in a mixed-age group, then the ratio for the youngest child applies.

Ratios are to be lowered when one or more children in the group need additional adult assistance to fully participate in the program (1) because of ability, language fluency, developmental age or stage, or other factors or (2) to meet other requirements of NAEYC Accreditation.

A group refers to the number of children who are assigned for most of the day to a teacher or a team of teaching staff and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area.

Group sizes as stated are ceilings regardless of the number of staff.

Ratios and group sizes are always assessed during site visits for NAEYC Accreditation in criterion 10.B.12, which is not a required criterion. The more these numbers are exceeded, the more difficult it will be to meet each standard.

^a Includes teachers, assistant teachers–teacher’s aides; some exceptions apply. See Table 5.

^b These age ranges purposefully overlap. If a group includes children whose ages range beyond the overlapping portion of two age categories, then the group is a mixed-age group. For mixed-age groups, universal criteria and criteria relevant to the age categories for that group apply.

^c Group sizes of 10 for this age category would require an additional adult.

^d Kindergarten refers to children enrolled in a public or private kindergarten program.

Table 5. Determining Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size

Individuals should be classified as teaching staff members based on the role they fill in the program, following the definitions outlined in the *Standard 6: Teachers* book. With some exceptions (as noted below), only teaching staff members (teachers and assistant teachers–teacher aides) are considered when determining whether a program is meeting teacher-child ratios within group size, which is assessed in criterion 10.B.12.

Criterion 10.B.12 states, “Written procedures address the maintenance of developmentally appropriate teaching staff-child ratios within group size to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among children. Teaching staff-child ratios within group size are maintained during all hours of operation, including indoor time, outdoor time, and during transportation and field trips (when transporting children, the teaching staff-child ratio is used to guide the adult-child ratio).” This criterion is always assessed for determining NAEYC Accreditation but it is not a required criterion.

Exceptions When Determining Teacher–Child Ratios within Group Size

| Exception | Description |
|---|---|
| Program Administrator | A program administrator fulfilling the responsibilities of a teaching staff member may be counted. |
| Substitute | An individual substituting for a teaching staff member may be counted. |
| Special Subject Teachers or Other Ancillary Professionals | When an ancillary professional (such as a music teacher, art teacher, or librarian) is providing a planned activity for one hour or less, that person may be counted toward the teaching staff ratio but does not need to be included in other reporting requirements for teaching staff. |
| Nap Time | When two or more adults must be present during nap time, at least one of the adults present must be a teacher or assistant teacher–teacher aide (for example, a group of 5–8 infants would require at least two people, one of whom is a teacher or assistant teacher–teacher aide, to be present to meet the ratio). Additional adults may be staff members or other adults who function in a different role. |
| Brief Absences of Teaching Staff | Ratios are considered to remain in compliance when a staff member leaves the group without a substitute for no more than 5 minutes (e.g., to get craft supplies, talk in the hall to a parent, go to the bathroom, etc.). If a teaching staff member is absent for more than 5 minutes but less than 20 minutes (e.g., to take children to the bathroom, to administer first aid, to take a personal break), the ratio is considered to remain in compliance when another adult who is not part of the teaching staff substitutes for the staff member. |

What Are the Connections between Leadership and Management and the Other Standards?

Each standard represents an essential, interlocking element of high-quality programs for all children from birth through kindergarten. The criteria within each standard are organized by topic areas to make the meaning and the value of the standard more clear. For example, the Leadership and Management topic area “Management Policies and Procedures” addresses written policies that are essential to mission-driven practice, program operations, and continuous program improvement. The criteria provide guidance in the nature and content of the components of program operation that are guided by written policies and that are carried out through articulated plans, systems, and procedures that enable the program to smoothly and effectively achieve its goals. These include attention to training, family and community partnerships, licensure, boards, family orientation, staff turnover, group size and ratios, and continuity of relationships.

Standards are not independent of one another. Criteria not only are grouped within particular standards to make sense and to add context but also are connected across standards. Often, similar ideas appear in different standards, but each idea is expressed within the perspective of a particular standard. Looking at the criteria across standards therefore allows the examination of ideas from many perspectives. For example, consider again the topic area “Management Policies and Procedures” to see how this topic requires contributions from other standards to be fully achieved. These connections are briefly described in the following sections.

Relationships—The topic area “Building Positive Relationships among Teachers and Families” area addresses the development and maintenance of positive, reciprocal relation-

Clarification on Groups

What is a group?

A group of children is those children who are assigned for most of the day to a specific teacher or team of teaching staff members and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area. If children from different groups do intermingle within a larger room or area for more than two hours, if the composition of the original group of children changes by more than 50 percent, or if both occur, then this intermingled group is considered a separate group.

For example, if kindergartners join an all-day preschool group from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., then the program would report one preschool group from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and one mixed-age group of kindergartners and preschool age children from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

When do I have a mixed-age group?

If a group includes children whose ages range beyond the overlapping portion of two age categories, then the group is a mixed-age group. For mixed-age groups, universal criteria and criteria relevant to the age

categories for that group apply. For example, a group of children 24 to 48 months must meet universal, toddler/two, and preschool criteria.

What if we serve school age children?

For NAEYC Accreditation, please count only groups that include eligible children (within the ages of birth through kindergarten).

A mixed-age group that serves ages that are eligible *and* ages that are not eligible for NAEYC Accreditation must be included in the accreditation process if at least 50 percent of the children served in the group are eligible—from birth through kindergarten. (For example, if an after-school group includes kindergartners and those of school age, it must be included in the accreditation process if the kindergartners make up at least 50 percent of the children in the group.) Groups in which fewer than 50 percent of the children represent eligible ages may not be included in the NAEYC Accreditation process.

What does NAEYC consider a part-day group?

Full-day refers to more than five hours. *Part-day* refers to five hours or less.

ships among teachers and families, emphasizing the need for ongoing communication and sensitivity to family diversity. The topic area “Building Positive Relationships between Teachers and Children” area addresses the development of positive, individualized relationships between teachers and children, emphasizing the need for

consistent, predictable care; frequent social interactions; acceptance of a wide range of emotions; and support and acknowledgement of all children as capable and resourceful.

Teachers—The topic area “Teachers’ Dispositions and Professional Commitment” addresses teachers’ openness to continual learning and professional commitment by adding to their knowledge and skills, using feedback from supervisors and peers, strengthening their abilities to improve conditions for children and families, and performing their responsibilities consistent with the field’s ethical principles.

Families—The topic area “Sharing Information between Staff and Families” addresses techniques and communication styles that promote continuous communications with families.

Community Relationships—The topic area “Linking with the Community” addresses the program’s role in gathering information about community services, informing families about these services, and assisting families in gaining access to services and consultants.

In addition to the connections that exist among various standards and criteria, several key themes emerge across the 10 standards. These themes relate to the most fundamental aspect of NAEYC Accreditation—respect for each unique individual (child, parent or family member, and staff member)—and they address cultural and linguistic diversity, attention to special needs, and the importance of genuine partnerships between families and program staff. Specific information about each of the key themes is provided in the next section to help you consider how they are addressed in your program.

Each Self-Study book provides guidance throughout, emphasizing the key themes and highlighting certain connections to help programs interpret and link criteria. Ultimately, however, programs will also need to create their own linkages because the linkages are really about putting the pieces together to create a story of program quality. Each program must use the standards and criteria to tell its own story, and program staff must make their own links between criteria and across standards to make sense of the criteria for themselves.

What Does This Standard Mean for Your Program?

The Self-Study process is self-paced and self-directed; there are no requirements, and the findings will not be reported to NAEYC. More information about Step 1: Enrollment/Self-Study is in Section 4. Section 3 offers guidance and information about the things you may want to consider as you study the leadership and management of your program. This guidance is offered in the spirit of helping you think about your leadership and management and how it contributes to quality in your program.

- What will help you create shared understandings about quality leadership and management practices and approaches?
- How do leadership and management address children’s age and developmental needs? Remain sensitive and responsive to diversity in culture and language? Address children’s special needs?
- What topic areas or criteria in the Leadership and Management Standard are important to discuss?
- Are you open to changing how you develop and implement your leadership and management practices?

What Will Help You Create Shared Understandings about Quality Leadership and Management Practices and Approaches?

During Self-Study, programs should develop or strengthen structures that ensure genuine communication between family members and staff and then work to build

shared understanding of basic information about choices as well as development and implementation of leadership and management practices. The following topics can guide your thinking as you form your Self-Study team and can help to build understanding.

Forming a Self-Study Team

Partnering with families and including staff members in efforts toward program improvement are cornerstones of the NAEYC Self-Study and accreditation processes. It is important to develop a way for staff members and families to share both ideas and responsibility in Step 1: Enrollment/Self-Study, and it is required in Step 2: Application/Self-Assessment. More information about the requirements for Step 2 is in Section 5.

Every family and staff member should have the opportunity to participate in Self-Study and provide feedback about their perceptions of the program’s strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it is important to identify a smaller group to help lead the effort. When selecting this team, programs benefit by choosing individuals from both families and teaching staff who are

- willing to participate in the additional tasks that are necessary to successfully completing the Self-Study and accreditation process,
- committed to maintaining a positive attitude toward learning, and
- open to constructive criticism and dialogue.

Finding and Using Resources

As a process, Self-Study encourages you to expand your vision and knowledge of early childhood practice beyond the scope of your own program. It is essential for programs to look to the early childhood field for knowledge, resources, and professional expertise. Linking with other professionals helps make the planning and implementation of program improvement strategies easier and helps to ensure that program practices are up to date. Fundamentally, Self-Study involves both program improvement and professional development. Keep track of your resources as part of efforts to document improvement and development.

Look not only to the early childhood field but also to many other fields who are concerned with excellence in leadership and management for knowledge, resources, and professional expertise for guidance and information about leadership and management practices. The following list suggests resources and strategies for programs to consider for help and support:

- Find a state or local NAEYC Affiliate or facilitation project working on similar issues.
- Join with local programs and share efforts.
- Meet or speak with consultants on health, nutrition, sanitation, and hazards to gather suggestions for improvement. Document your conversations, and include copies of their reports.
- Ask other people such as volunteers, board members, and community specialists who work with the program for input and ideas.
- Consult child development and early childhood education specialists to assist in developing strategies to improve the program and to conduct relevant training and staff development opportunities.

In addition to these suggestions, the Resources section in this book provides additional sources of potential support, including a form that guides the observations you will be making and a list of relevant Web sites that contain articles and publications about this standard. The literature review, also in the Resources section, provides a summary of evidence that supports the criteria included in the standard. The references it mentions (see the Bibliography in Section 6) represent a range of sources: academic research; national reports; summaries of research, descriptive, survey, and interview data; and multi-authored position statements. These references provide support and rationale for the criteria, and they represent both national and international research. You can use this information to help program stakeholders (staff, families, and funders) understand why you are considering certain improvements and why those improvements are investments worth making.

Over the course of the Self-Study, the Self-Study team can take responsibility for the following tasks:

- Meet with family members, staff, and others to discuss the process, what is involved, and the status of the program improvement efforts.
- Determine priorities and timelines for program improvement.
- Determine roles and responsibilities for specific Self-Study tasks.
- Find and use resources that can support the Self-Study effort.

Frequently Asked Questions about Leadership and Management

The frequently asked questions and the answers that are outlined here can be provided not only to program staff but also to family members and may be the basis for both formal and informal conversation, discussion, and elaboration.

What is the purpose of evaluating early childhood programs? The primary purpose of program evaluation is to improve the quality of education and other services provided to young children and their families. Efforts toward improvement are made in concert with the vision, principles, and goals of the program, and these efforts are measured against standards of quality. Comprehensive observation instruments and other rating scales are widely used to obtain data on program quality. The advantage of using these types of measures or of participating in NAEYC Self-Study and accreditation processes is that the program is evaluated against a broad set of criteria that have been developed with expert input.

What is included in program evaluation?

Evaluation should always begin with a review of the program's goals, scope, and mission. In every case, the evaluation should address all components of the program. In an open process, results are shared with stakeholders,

who may include families, staff, community members, funders, and others. Objective discussion of strengths and needs in light of the program's goals and mission will help guide decisions about changes directed at higher quality and more effective service delivery.

We are concerned about the requirements for group size and ratio. Can you advise us?

Only one criterion (10.B.12) specifically addresses group size and ratio. This criterion is always assessed. Performance of this criterion is not required to become accredited, but performance is considered in determining whether 80 percent of the assessed criteria are met (70 percent for each classroom). Although there are no upper limits for group size and ratio, NAEYC's experience, supported by research (see the literature review in Section 6), suggests that the more programs exceed the ratios and group sizes in the criterion, the more difficult it will be to meet the expectations in the other standards, including relationships, curriculum, and teaching. Programs must meet 80 percent of the criteria in each standard to receive NAEYC Accreditation, so programs whose ratios and group size exceed the criterion will need to demonstrate that they are able to meet each of these standards despite their ratios and group sizes. As more data are collected, NAEYC will analyze the results for programs that vary by ratio and group size and will share those results over time.

We are concerned about the education requirements for administrators. Can you advise us?

NAEYC is requiring that all programs accredited under the reinvented system meet minimum qualifications for teaching staff and program administrators through the Candidacy Requirements. The Candidacy Requirements provide some flexibility for programs with respect to qualifications for administrators beyond what is specified in the criteria.

Related NAEYC Accreditation Criteria

Criterion 10.F01—At least annually, administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults are involved in a comprehensive program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. Valid and reliable processes are used to gather data and evidence.

Criterion 10.F02—The annual evaluation processes include gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction and community awareness and satisfaction. A report of the annual evaluation findings is shared with families, staff, and appropriate advisory and governance boards, and the results are used as a basis for continuing successful activities and for changing those that need improvement.

Criterion 10.F03—The program establishes goals for continuous improvement and innovation using information from the annual program evaluation. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

Criterion 10.F04—The program offers staff and families opportunities to assist in making decisions to improve the program. Collaborative and shared decision making is used with all participants to build trust and enthusiasm for making program changes. Staff and families meet at least annually to consult on program planning and ongoing program operations.

The Candidacy Requirements for qualifications of the program administrator are the same as those specified in Criterion 10.A.02 and must be met. However, some flexibility is built into that criterion by allowing programs to have a plan in place to meet the criterion within five years and by stipulating alternative pathways by which administrators may demonstrate the necessary knowledge and expertise through a combination of formal education, relevant experience, and continuing education.

The Candidacy Requirements provide greater accountability to families and others who depend on NAEYC Accreditation as the mark of quality. At the same time, the requirements acknowledge the current realities of the early childhood field and create a bridge to help programs and their staff meet the qualifications over time.

Related NAEYC Accreditation Criteria

Criterion 10.B.12—Written procedures address the maintenance of developmentally appropriate teaching staff-child ratios within group size to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among children.

Teaching staff-child ratios within group size (see Table 4) are maintained during all hours of operation, including

- a. indoor time,
- b. outdoor time, and
- c. during transportation and field trips (when transporting children, the teaching staff-child ratio is used to guide the adult-child ratio).

Groups of children may be limited to one age or may include multiple ages. (A group or classroom consists of the children who are assigned to a teacher or a team of teaching staff for most of the day and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area.)

Related NAEYC Accreditation Criteria

Criterion 10.A.02—The program administrator has the educational qualifications and personal commitment required to serve as the program’s operational and pedagogical leader. This criterion can be met in one of three ways:

Option A: The administrator

- has at least a baccalaureate degree.*
- has at least 9 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in administration, leadership, and management (which can be in school administration, business management, communication, technology, early childhood management or administration, or some combination of these areas)
- has at least 24 credit-bearing hours of specialized college-level course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education, or early childhood special education that encompasses child development and children’s learning from birth through kindergarten; family and community relationships; the practices of observing, documenting, and assessing young children; teaching and learning processes; and professional practices and development.

OR

Option B: The administrator documents that a plan is in place to meet the above qualifications within five years.

OR

Option C: The administrator can provide documentation of having achieved a combination of relevant formal education and experience as specified in table 2, Alternative Pathways to Achieve Qualifications as a Program Administrator.

(This is a required criterion.)

* Degrees and college course work are from regionally accredited institutions of higher education that may have been earned through online course work, distance learning, degree completion programs, or some combination that offer credit as part of a formal assessment of prior learning.

How Do Leadership and Management Address Children’s Age and Developmental Needs? Remain Sensitive and Responsive to Diversity in Culture and Language? Address Children’s Special Needs?

Each Self-Study book addresses these areas in the specific ways that link them to the standard. The chart on pages 44–45 outlines the ways in which programs work to support age and developmental needs, diversity, and special needs. It is the task of leadership and management to ensure that the areas of development, culture, language, and special needs are addressed across the standards.

What Topic Areas or Criteria in the Leadership and Management Standard Are Important to Discuss?

Some of the criteria in the Leadership and Management Standard need to be discussed and thought about more than others. Some may be harder to understand, may produce different interpretations by different staff, and may seem at first to be inconsistent with program or personal philosophy. Considering the discussion topics listed in the box “Discussion Topics Linked to Specific Leadership and Management Criteria” (see page 46) and deciding on some discussion topics for yourselves will contribute to efforts to gain shared understanding of the leadership and management practices in your program.

When engaging in discussion, the following strategies ensure that the discussion will be productive:

- Designate a leader who sets the ground rules and manages the discussion.
- Set specific times for discussion.
- Have everyone help decide on the topic.
- Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to talk.

Developmental Needs, Culture and Language Needs, and Special Needs across the Standards

| Standard | Developmental Needs | Culture and Language Needs | Special Needs |
|---------------|--|---|--|
| Relationships | <p>Building positive relationships with teachers and with friends</p> <p>Developing self-regulation skills</p> <p>Conflict resolution</p> | <p>Negotiating shared meaning, value, and beliefs about relationships.</p> <p>Developing communication strategies for home language</p> | <p>Addressing challenging behaviors—working with children who avoid or resist positive relationships</p> |
| Curriculum | <p>Developmental decisions that affect grouping, physical space and materials</p> | <p>Family background, including culture and language, is acknowledged, represented, and respected through materials and activities</p> | <p>Consider all areas of child development and curriculum content areas when thinking about inclusion and adaptations for children with special needs</p> |
| Teaching | <p>Knowledge of child development to inform appropriate approaches and instructional strategies</p> | <p>Match between home and school, helping children have access to school culture</p> <p>Understanding how children acquire a second language</p> | <p>Teacher knowledge of inclusive practices and of the importance of observation in determining unique needs</p> |
| Assessment | <p>Age appropriate assessment methods that differ in what and how one assesses at different ages</p> <p>Knowledge of child development</p> | <p>Family wishes taken into account</p> <p>Language difference is not a language delay</p> <p>Support for appropriate choices for assessment of early language learners</p> | <p>The purpose of screening</p> <p>Resources for teachers</p> <p>The importance of considering all developmental domains</p> <p>Accommodations and modifications</p> |
| Health | <p>Routine health care, illness prevention, knowledge of nutrition and feeding</p> | <p>Honoring and respecting cultural beliefs while providing factual information on health and safety for children</p> | <p>Teamwork</p> <p>Knowledge of medical needs</p> |
| Teachers | <p>The importance and content of staff education background and professional development</p> <p>Needs for adult learners</p> | <p>The importance and content of staff education background and professional development</p> <p>Needs for adult learners</p> | <p>The importance and content of staff education background and professional development</p> <p>Needs for adult learners</p> |

Developmental Needs, Culture and Language Needs, and Special Needs across the Standards (continued)

| Standard | Developmental Needs | Culture and Language Needs | Special Needs |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| Families | Needs of families can be different depending on child's age Responding to concern and anxiety The importance of good separation practices | Summary of diversity throughout the standards Acknowledging families through their celebrations | Families need knowledge of federal laws and resources as well as district and community resources |
| Community Relationships | Available resources for different ages | Knowing the communities in which families live and working in a variety of ways to develop positive relationships | Knowing the communities in which families live and working in a variety of ways to develop positive relationships |
| Physical Environment | Changing the physical space, equipment, furnishings, and materials to meet developmental needs | Developing physical space that welcomes families from diverse culture and language backgrounds | Adapting the environment to meet children's special needs and to offer increasing challenges |
| Leadership and Management | Policies and professional development in place to ensure that children's age and development is considered in all aspects of the program | Policies and professional development in place to ensure that sensitivity to language and culture is included in all aspects of the program | Policies and professional development in place to ensure that children's special needs are considered and met in all aspects of the program |

Related NAEYC Accreditation Criteria

Criterion 10.C.01—Financial policies and the procedures to implement them provide evidence of sound fiscal accountability using standard accounting practices. Financial policies and procedures are consistent with the program's vision, philosophy, mission, goals, and expected child outcomes. Operating budgets are prepared annually, and there is at least quarterly reconciliation of expenses to budget. A system exists to review or adjust the budget if circumstances change, and it includes a yearly audit. Budgets are reviewed and amended as needed. Fiscal records (such as revenue and expenditure statements, balance sheets, banking reconciliation, etc.) are kept as evidence of sound financial management.

Discussion Topics Linked to Specific Leadership and Management Criteria

| Criteria | Discussion |
|---|--|
| <p>10.A.03—The program administrator demonstrates commitment to a high level of continuing professional competence and an ability to promote teamwork.</p> <p>10.A.05—The program administrator provides leadership to staff to implement the program mission.</p> <p>10.A.06—The program administrator responds proactively to changing conditions to enhance program quality.</p> <p>10.A.07—The program administrator and other program leaders systematically support an organizational climate that fosters trust, collaboration, and inclusion.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In what ways is our staff successful at working as a team? What problems do we encounter? How could leadership help us? 2. What leadership qualities do we appreciate most? 3. If I do not feel skillful in some areas of leadership, where can I go for guidance? 4. Do staff feel comfortable sharing their ideas? |
| <p>10.B.13—The program is organized and staffed to minimize the number of group, teaching staff, and classroom transitions experienced by an individual child during the day and program year. Every attempt is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In what ways do we actively work to make sure there is a continuity of relationships? 2. Do we agree that this continuity is important? 3. What gets in the way of our efforts to ensure continuity? |
| <p>10.C.03—The program has resources to support the program’s vision, philosophy, mission, goals, operation, and expected child outcomes. Program administrators and other program leaders actively work to generate and manage the resources needed to support a program of excellence.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are we unable to fulfill our mission because we lack resources? 2. What and who do we consider when we cut funds or staff, raise rates, or look for extra funding? |

Exploring Your Practice: What Parts of the Day Are Most Difficult for the Children in Your Program?

Gathering information on this topic can occur in a number of ways. Teachers could be provided with copies of their schedules and asked to note difficult periods throughout the week. Results could be compiled to provide an overall picture. Administrators could conduct random visits throughout the week, noting periods when things are going smoothly and periods when children are having a difficult time. They should also note child-staff ratio, location (classroom, common room, a classroom other than the children's regular classroom, play yard, lunch room, etc.), and people (regular teacher, assistant teacher, another teacher in the program, etc.). Program policies and procedures about ratio, group size, and continuity of relationships can be addressed more fully after this information is available.

Are you interested in finding further support for exploring your own practices? See NAEYC's *Voices of Practitioners* online (www.journal.naeyc.org/btj/vp) for articles and resources on teacher research.

- Emphasize that all points of view are important.
- Designate someone to be responsible for keeping track of ideas for later use.

Are You Open to Changing How You Develop and Implement Your Leadership and Management Practices?

Regardless of how a program approaches Self-Study, it requires something very difficult—change. Because the object of Self-Study is for programs to commit to a process of continuous improvement, it may be helpful for you to think about and keep track of how your program approaches and is affected by change. Consider these questions:

- How important is tradition to you? Are you open to change, or do you usually prefer to keep things the same?

- Are you willing to think about yourselves and your work honestly, speak candidly, listen to the ideas of everyone, and consider program improvement an ongoing endeavor?
- Are you willing to gather evidence that will help you determine your strengths and weaknesses and do the work that will improve your program?
- How do changes in leadership and management affect other aspects of the program?

Self-Study encourages you to reflect on your current practices and to really think about what is working and what could work better. This type of reflection can (a) help you gain new ways of seeing children, (b) develop new insights about the effectiveness of your own practices in light of children's responses to the learning environment and the people in it, and (c) develop deeper understandings of children's experiences, including their feelings and development.

Following are some suggested questions that can help you more fully explore your leadership and management practices and how they support positive outcomes for children.

- What parts of the day are most difficult for the children in our program?
- Which staff members communicate with me regularly; which ones do not?
- How do I know whether I am meeting the needs of staff?
- Program leaders and administrators who take the time and effort to explore their own practice become more able to decide what they want to know about their work as well as to describe what they do and why they do it.

What Does Your Program Need to Do for Self-Study?

Step 1: Enrollment/Self-Study is the first of four steps toward achieving NAEYC Accreditation. It is an essential step toward achieving NAEYC Accreditation, but programs also may enroll and engage in Self-Study even if they have no intention of seeking NAEYC Accreditation.

The purpose of Self-Study is to encourage programs to engage in a structured approach to program improvement that considers all of the necessary components of a high-quality program. The Self-Study process requires programs to methodically discern and document actual program practices and then determine how to improve them if necessary.

Pursuing NAEYC Accreditation and engaging in Self-Study demonstrates a commitment to best practice and continuous program quality improvement, including ongoing reflection on classroom and program practices. To make the most of the Self-Study process, NAEYC recommends six tasks:

- Creating shared understandings of key concepts about accreditation, the standards, the criteria, and implications for the program
- Gathering information by using the tools
- Determining strengths and weaknesses
- Developing improvement plans as needed
- Making improvements and documenting progress
- Evaluating results and determining next steps

Programs that complete these tasks in Self-Study will be better prepared for the formal Self-Assessment of program quality that occurs at Step 2: Application/Self-Assessment. The differences between Self-Study and Self-Assessment will be explored further in Section 5. Note that although NAEYC provides programs with guidelines, there are no requirements for Self-Study. Programs are not required to submit their Self-Study findings to NAEYC.

Create Shared Understandings

Creating shared understandings of key concepts about NAEYC Accreditation, the standards, the criteria, and implications for the program is an important component of a successful Self-Study process. Members of the program staff and leadership should understand the steps and requirements of the NAEYC Accreditation process. At a minimum, this group includes the program administrator, teachers and other teaching staff members, and representatives of the program's governance structure. Teaching staff members and program leadership should thoughtfully consider how their program policies and procedures demonstrate the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria. The criteria are statements of best practice for children and families. They are sometimes complex statements that may seem open to multiple interpretations. NAEYC has developed guidance to help programs further understand the criteria and how they will be

assessed. The guidance is regularly updated and may be found at TORCH (see www.naeyc.org/selfstudy for details).

The following are suggested questions for programs to ask in Self-Study:

- What are we trying to achieve in our classrooms?
- Do our program policies and procedures help us achieve these goals?
- How do our program policies and procedures as well as classroom practices demonstrate that the criteria are met?
- Which criteria are not met?

More strategies for creating shared understandings were discussed in detail earlier in Section 3 of this book.

Gather Evidence

Evidence is a critical concept for NAEYC Accreditation. The process is designed to focus on evidence of a program's ability to meet the program standards and accreditation criteria consistently over time. Evidence includes *observable evidence* that can be directly seen—in classroom practices or as part of the program facility; *survey evidence* that reflects the opinions of key program stakeholders, including families and teaching staff members; and *portfolio evidence* that is specifically collected by members of the program staff to document the policies, procedures, and practices for not only individual classrooms but also the overall program.

NAEYC has developed specific tools to help you (a) assess your strengths and weaknesses as they relate to each standard and its associated criteria and (b) begin collecting evidence that your program is meeting the criteria and is likely to do so regularly in the future. Some of the tools are designed primarily to assist in your program improvement efforts; others are specific to the NAEYC Accreditation process and must be followed in Steps 2 and 3. Regardless of your

program's intent about pursuing NAEYC Accreditation, the information you gather will provide tangible evidence to families and others in your community of how your program meets this important standard.

This section provides information about the tools that are available. The specific tools, as well as other resource information, are available at TORCH. See www.naeyc.org/selfstudy for more details.

Teaching Staff Survey and Family Survey

Opinions and thoughts from members of the teaching staff and families will inform program efforts to develop and improve child outcomes and program quality. Programs may choose to use surveys during Self-Study. However, they are not required to report to NAEYC the findings of the surveys conducted during Self-Study. Please note that if your program plans to seek NAEYC Accreditation, you will be required to conduct surveys as part of the Self-Assessment process.

The Teaching Staff Survey can help you collect information about the program from the staff perspective, and the Family Survey can help you collect information about how families perceive program practices. The surveys are designed to provide you with information from several anonymous viewpoints. Sometimes, members of the staff and families are not comfortable openly offering suggestions or ideas for fear of retaliation against them or their child; consequently, programs seeking the full range of ideas and concerns that truly represent members of the families and staff need to offer the opportunity for privacy by asking a trusted intermediary to collect the information or by taking other steps to ensure anonymity. (Steps to ensure anonymity are required during Self-Assessment.) The Teaching Staff Survey and Family Survey are available at TORCH (www.naeyc.org/selfstudy).

Teaching Staff Survey. The Teaching Staff Survey may be used to survey teaching staff members and gain their perspectives with respect to the program’s strengths and weaknesses. You may choose to ask staff members to complete different sections at different times or to complete the entire survey at once. You may decide to use one or more of the statements as a springboard for discussion among groups of teaching staff members. Results of these discussions or surveys completed during Self-Study are strictly for the use of your program.

Providing an envelope with each survey and a box to which they are returned in a common staff area (and not the administrator’s office) is one strategy that can help to ensure anonymity.

Family Survey. The Family Survey is designed to gather family perspectives on specific criteria. During Self-Study, you may choose to ask families to complete different sections at different times or to complete the entire survey. You may also adapt the survey questions and use them as a springboard for discussion with parents and family members. The results of your findings during Self-Study are strictly for the use of your program.

Survey Summary Forms. Once the surveys are completed by the staff members and families and collected, there are resources online to help your program summarize the data gathered to determine which criteria are met. The summary forms can be used to record information about the number of teaching staff and families surveyed and the percentage of those returning surveys. The more teaching staff and families returning the surveys, the more representative the information will be. The summary forms can be used to help you identify key findings from the Teaching Staff and Family Surveys. Make any notes concerning areas of strength and improvement after compiling and reviewing the feedback from the teaching staff and family members. It can be especially helpful

to review the findings of both surveys in conjunction with one another to identify common issues, concerns, and areas where perceptions of strengths or weaknesses vary. These resources are available online at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy.

Observable Criteria

Observable Criteria are those criteria that can actually be seen in practice or as part of a tour of the program facility. Classroom observations provide the most direct evidence of program quality and the results of program improvement efforts. During Self-Study, it is useful to provide teaching staff members the opportunity to observe one another’s classrooms and give feedback to one another. Supervisory staff members can also conduct regular observations as a way of supporting teachers’ ongoing professional growth and development.

As program staff members become more familiar with the criteria, it becomes easier to notice the number of ways Observable Criteria are fulfilled. Observable criteria should be apparent to an administrator who is visiting a classroom or other program areas, to a teacher who is evaluating his or her work, or to a parent who is visiting his or her child’s classroom.

When conducting observations during Self-Study, you may want to consider

- focusing on learning activities during the program day.
- targeting specific age groups.
- observing the classroom at different times throughout the day, for example, when children arrive or depart, during indoor or outdoor time, during planned activities or free play, etc.
- focusing on a specific standard, or even a specific Topic Area within a standard, for example, using criteria from Topic Area 2.G. “Curriculum Content for Area of Cognitive Development: Science” when observing a science activity.

Guidelines for Observing

Following these general guidelines for conducting classroom observations will enhance your ability to collect valid information about program practices:

- 1. Be unobtrusive.** You are here to observe others in the classroom, not to participate in the activities yourself.
- 2. Take time to absorb what you are seeing and understand the context of what is going on.** This step may seem unnecessary when you know the program well, but it can be important to simply observe what is happening before starting your ratings. Plan on spending at least one hour observing to get a real sense of what is happening in the classroom.
- 3. Consider what you are seeing from the perspective of individual children.** What is each child experiencing? Even if the experiences are positive for most children most of the time, what is happening to the child for whom things are not positive?
- 4. Observe at different times of day and consider how the level of quality is maintained.** High-quality programs need to be consistently strong over the course of the day. Programs are often “best” in the morning when teachers and children are well rested and eager to learn, but what happens later in the day when people are tired is equally important to the quality of children’s overall experience.

As you conduct observations, it is helpful for you to make comments related to each criterion. When reflecting on the observation, consider the following:

1. What materials were used or accessible that are consistent with those identified in the criteria?
2. What affirming examples of the criteria were observed?
3. What opportunities to fulfill criteria were missed?
4. What criteria were not met? What were the contributing factors?
5. Did I observe conflicting evidence?

Programs enrolled in Self-Study can access specific forms for documenting observable evidence at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy.

Portfolio Evidence

Portfolios were introduced as formal sources of evidence for the NAEYC Accreditation process as part of the reinvented system in 2005. Portfolios provide

a systematic way of documenting policies, procedures, and practices that reflect how individual classrooms and the program as a whole are meeting specific criteria. A Classroom Portfolio is maintained for each individual classroom or defined group of children, and a Program Portfolio is maintained for the overall program. Each portfolio is organized around the 10 standards.

Classroom Portfolio Evidence. The Classroom Portfolio is an opportunity for programs to present evidence of each group’s capacity to meet the accreditation criteria over time. It is a mechanism for documenting classroom practices and recording events to provide current evidence of implementation of specific criteria or indicators within criteria.

NAEYC defines a group or classroom as the number of children who are assigned for most of the day to a teacher or a team of teaching staff members and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area. In most instances, it is expected that the Classroom Portfolio will be developed for a specific classroom or group by the teaching team responsible for that group. However, when the responsibility for planning and implementing classroom activities is shared among several teaching teams for multiple groups of children, then a single portfolio may be used to document the evidence for each of the groups included in the shared planning and implementation.

Classroom Portfolios are used by NAEYC Assessors as part of the site visit to supplement information gathered during the classroom observations (only a sample of classrooms is observed and has portfolios reviewed during the site visit). Specific guidelines for assembling portfolios to meet requirements for evidence as part of the site visit are available at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy.

Program Portfolio Evidence. The Program Portfolio is an opportunity for programs to present evidence of the program's capacity to meet the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria over time. It is a mechanism for tracking policies and recording events that provides current evidence of implementation of the standards and criteria.

Many programs have reported that it is helpful to begin working on the Program Portfolio as one early task in the Self-Study process. Simply making sure that your program has policies and procedures documented can be an important first step; then consider whether the policies and procedures specifically address what is stated in the criteria. Most programs have found that they need to give careful attention to this part of the process to ensure that policies and procedures are in place and align with the standards and criteria.

The Program Portfolio is used by NAEYC Assessors as part of the site visit to gather information used to determine the NAEYC Accreditation decision. Specific guidelines, including checklists, for assembling the Program Portfolio to meet requirements for evidence as part of the site visit are available at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy.

Determine Strengths and Weaknesses

The purpose of this task is to identify your program's areas of strength and areas of weakness. Using the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria as your measure of quality, consider the evidence you gathered, using the tools to help identify areas that need to be addressed. Is there a theme across the standards that you are not meeting? Is one standard particularly difficult for your program? For example, you may notice that your program is not meeting many criteria in the Curriculum Standard but that your

Tips on Portfolios

Here are some ideas to help get you started with your portfolios.

- Provide each teaching team with a copy of the Classroom Portfolio checklist with related criteria (available at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy).
- Form a team to work on the Program Portfolio, and make sure that all the team members have a copy of the Program Portfolio checklist (available at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy). Use this team or form another committee to review your policy manual and other documentation against the checklist and the criteria.
- Start by brainstorming: What evidence do we already have?
- Plan time to document! Set aside time to work on the portfolios.
- Do not limit yourself to one type of evidence! Photos can work, but also consider lesson plans, family newsletters, a list of materials and equipment, and much more.
- Include a description when using photos to make clear connections with the criteria or the specific indicator within a criterion that the photo is illustrating.
- Designate a place (e.g., a crate, shelf, or drawer) for storing evidence for future use in a portfolio.
- Have a teaching team that serves a different age group review another team's Classroom Portfolio for a fresh perspective.
- Keep a list of things that you should keep in mind for future documentation.
- Remember, one piece of evidence can meet multiple criteria, but be sure that it fully reflects each of the criteria for which you use it as evidence.

program is meeting many criteria in the Relationships Standard. You may identify broad areas where improvement is needed during this step. You will also want to take this time to celebrate your program's strengths with others in the program.

Taking an honest and careful look at your current practices is essential for an effective Self-Study. It is easy to look at the criteria and say, of course we do that. But do you really? What did your families say? What did the teaching staff members say? What did you not see that you expected to see when observing each group? Is your program fully meeting each criterion, including all indicators?

During Self-Study, challenge your staff and program leadership to provide evidence of your program's policies and practices, using the accreditation criteria as your measure of quality. You will need to be open to thinking seriously about all aspects of your program practices as well as many of your personal and professional beliefs and behaviors. Being open to the possibility of needing to change is a critical factor in quality improvement.

Develop Program Improvement Plans

This period is the time to thoughtfully consider how you can use the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria to truly inform practices in your program and create structures that will support quality over time. It may require some creative brainstorming and true collaboration

from members of the program staff, but it will result in higher quality programming for the children and families you serve.

Using the results from your Self-Study, create a plan for program improvement. You will need to identify resources to address the challenges for your program. To help you get started, use the ideas identified in Sections 3 and 6 of this volume. Brainstorm with staff members and families about additional resources available in your local community and state. Be creative. Link up with other early childhood programs to share training resources.

Be sure to keep track of your resources as part of your program improvement and development efforts. Describe who will be involved, how you will gather further information and evidence, and how you will use the results. Your improvement plan should also include time to implement changes and to assess your progress as you move forward.

Make Improvements and Document Your Efforts

Put your plans into action. Depending on the plans and the area of improvement, start making the identified changes. This phase is where you will begin to see the results of your improvement efforts, which can be an exciting time for your program. Be sure to encourage members of the program staff in their efforts and celebrate their accomplishments one step at a time.

Evaluate Results and Determine Next Steps

Program improvement efforts are ongoing. Staff members, families, program administrators, and other stakeholders need to evaluate the effects of the changes after sufficient time has passed for the changes to be fully implemented and thoroughly tested. Discuss the effects of the changes on the children, teachers, and family members. Examine the changes for both positive and potentially negative effects. If necessary, make modifications.

Getting Started with Your Classroom Portfolio

Here is a brief list of items to get you started thinking about the types of documentation that could be used as evidence.

- Copy of classroom daily schedule
- Copy of written curriculum
- Copies of assessment forms, anecdotal observations of children, developmental checklists
- Copies of letters, e-mails, or notes sent to parents
- Information shared with parents on enrollment in the program
- Copies of lesson plans, planning webs, or other planning sheets
- Photographs or written documentation of children participating in activities
- Examples of work samples from children
- Photographs or other documentation of classroom displays of children's work
- Lists or photographs of materials and equipment available to children in the classroom space or additional supply closets
- Other items specific to your individual program

Document your evaluation efforts and the modifications that you make. Your next steps depend on the context of your efforts and the nature of your findings. If you are exploring the standards one by one, this might be a good time to begin reviewing the next standard. If you are enrolled in Self-Study and your findings suggest that further improvement is needed to meet the standards and their criteria, then you can repeat the cycle to plan improvements, make improvements, document your efforts, and evaluate your results.

When the program staff members and families are confident that the program can document that it meets each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards, then the program is ready to proceed to the next step and become an Applicant for NAEYC Accreditation (Step 2 in seeking NAEYC Accreditation). In the application, the program will select a Candidacy due date, 3 to 12 months from the date of application. Programs are not required to submit documentation of their Self-Study process to the NAEYC Academy in their application. However, the program

that applies for NAEYC Accreditation is making the commitment to complete a formal Self-Assessment and to report these results to the NAEYC Academy by the Candidacy due date chosen in the application. Programs that are accepted as Candidates for NAEYC Accreditation will receive a site visit within six months of the selected Candidacy due date.

Programs that are currently NAEYC Accredited should refer to the timeline for currently accredited programs at TORCH (www.naeyc.org/selfstudy) to determine what due dates they must meet to maintain their NAEYC Accreditation status with no lapse while pursuing re-accreditation. Currently accredited programs may choose to allow their NAEYC Accreditation to lapse if they believe that they need more time to conduct a thorough and meaningful Self-Study and to be successful during the next steps of the accreditation process. Programs that choose to allow their accreditation to lapse are not penalized for doing so, but their accreditation expires after their current accreditation expiration date has passed.

What Do Programs Need to Do during Self-Assessment for NAEYC Accreditation?

The formal Self-Assessment process is used to document that the program's administration (program administrator and members of the governing body or ownership), teaching staff members, and families all believe that the program meets each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and is ready for a site visit by the NAEYC Academy.

What Is the Difference between Self-Study and Self-Assessment?

The purpose of Self-Study is primarily program improvement. There is no one way to complete Self-Study, and the results need not be shared with the NAEYC Academy. In contrast, the Self-Assessment must follow the specific guidelines outlined in the Guide to Self-Assessment that is available at TORCH (see www.naeyc.org/selfstudy) to all enrolled programs. In addition, programs must be prepared to share their Self-Assessment findings with the NAEYC Academy and must be sure that all families, teaching staff members, and members of the program's governance structure have the opportunity to participate in the assessment process.

Through Self-Assessment, programs prepare documentation that demonstrates their belief that they meet each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. Documentation is based on specific sources of evidence for each criterion. Evidence includes the results of observable evidence as well as information in Classroom Portfolios, the

Program Portfolio, and summaries of the Family Survey and Teaching Staff Survey results. Evidence collected as part of Self-Study may be used as evidence in Self-Assessment as long as the evidence is not more than 12 months old as of the program's Candidacy due date and complies with the guidelines outlined in the Guide to Self-Assessment.

During Self-Assessment, the program staff will also need to spend time documenting how their program meets the Candidacy Requirements. These requirements are discussed in detail in *Getting Started* in the NAEYC Self-Study Kit, and they include documentation of the qualifications of a designated program administrator and teaching staff members as well as evidence that the program maintains good standing with its licensing/regulatory body.

By systematically documenting evidence that they meet each of the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and the Candidacy requirements, programs will be prepared to complete their Candidacy Materials at Step 3: Candidacy. The NAEYC Academy provides programs with Candidacy Materials approximately eight weeks before their Candidacy due date in their online program record; this Candidacy due date is selected by the program in its application at Step 2 of the accreditation process. The completed Candidacy Materials and applicable fees must be submitted to the NAEYC Academy by the program's Candidacy due date. The Candidacy Materials request general program

information needed to arrange the site visit and sample evidence from the program's completed Self-Assessment.

What Do Programs Need to Do during Self-Assessment?

This section includes additional notes and requirements about the sources of evidence specific to Self-Assessment and supplements the information in Section 4. Note that these guidelines are general. Programs *must* follow the specific requirements outlined in the Guide to Self-Assessment that is available to enrolled programs at TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy. Requirements may change over time, so it is important to verify that the program is using current information and following the current requirements in their Self-Assessment. Please refer to TORCH or contact the NAEYC Academy should you need further assistance.

Observable Criteria

Observation results for a specific classroom or group should be agreed upon by all members of the teaching team and the program administrator(s) as an accurate reflection of what typically happens in that classroom or group. New observations may be conducted specifically for Self-Assessment, or observations conducted for Self-Study may be used if they are agreed upon by the teaching team and the program administrator(s) and the results are not more than 12 months old at the Candidacy due date.

Guidelines for Preparing the Classroom Portfolio and Program Portfolio

Guidelines are available for preparing the Classroom Portfolio and the Program Portfolio to meet the requirements for Self-Assessment. Programs should ensure that their portfolios include evidence for each criterion for which the portfolio is a source of evidence (see the charts in Section 2 or refer to TORCH at www.naeyc.org/selfstudy). One piece of evidence may be used to docu-

ment more than one criterion. In such cases, multiple copies of the evidence do not need to be included in the portfolio; however, it is important to clearly label the evidence with any and all applicable criteria numbers. It is also helpful in these cases to have an index of the included criteria, referencing the location of the evidence.

Things to keep in mind:

- Many of the criteria clearly articulate the specific evidence required, while other criteria comprise multiple indicators. Carefully review each criterion to be sure that the evidence in either the Classroom or Program Portfolio truly and fully supports its intent.
- Each document or other evidence included within a Classroom or Program Portfolio must be clearly labeled with the number of the criterion that it supports. If the program is submitting a document that is several paragraphs or pages in length and only a portion is the actual evidence for that criterion, please highlight or flag that portion. Highlighting will assist Assessors in their review of the particular portfolio during the site visit.
- Not all evidence needs to be copied and placed in the Classroom or Program Portfolio if it can be readily provided to the Assessor along with the portfolio. However, if evidence is provided along with a particular portfolio, then a “place holder” should be added to the portfolio in the appropriate section, listing the criterion number and a detailed explanation of where the evidence is located.
- It is critical to refer to the full language of a criterion when selecting evidence to demonstrate that it is met.
- Some of the activities presented in the Classroom or Program Portfolio will demonstrate evidence of multiple criteria. This situation is an opportunity to

provide the Assessor with examples of the richness of the classroom community over time. Evidence should be selected to provide an authentic reflection of children's classroom experience.

- Most important, remember that Assessors will use the Classroom and Program Portfolios to determine whether or not criteria are met. Therefore, anything you can do to help Assessors efficiently locate needed evidence will make the site visit process an easier experience for both the program and the Assessor(s).

Instructions for Collecting Family and Teaching Staff Surveys

Perspectives of families and teaching staff members are important sources of evidence in the Self-Assessment, just as they were in Self-Study. The surveys are quantitative (Yes/No format) and do not provide the more open-ended options to give feedback for program improvement that is an option for programs during Self-Study.

Programs are responsible for making sure that all teaching staff members and all families served by the program are informed in advance of the survey and have the opportunity to provide anonymous responses to the survey. Programs are asked to document their

compliance with the survey requirements as part of the summary forms. Your program will report findings from the summary forms as part of your Candidacy Materials.

Specific Instructions for Family

Surveys. Family Surveys may be distributed at any point in the program's school year. For programs operating on a school-year calendar, results from the previous year's families may be used as long as the survey was completed within 12 months of the Candidacy due date. For the survey results to be considered valid, at least 50 percent of all families enrolled (at the time of the survey distribution) must have responded.

As part of their Candidacy Materials, programs must provide documentation of how they publicized the opportunity for families to respond to the survey and how they made sure that families could provide a confidential, anonymous response to the survey.

Specific Instructions for Teaching Staff

Surveys. Guidelines for the distribution and reporting of the Teaching Staff Survey are similar to those for Family Survey, with the following exception. At least 80 percent of all teaching staff members must have responded to the survey for the results to be considered valid.

This section on resources provides various documents and sources of information that will support your efforts to complete the Self-Study process. In it, you will find the following:

- Selected Publications and Web Sites, including TORCH (www.naeyc.org/selfstudy).
- Literature Review
- Bibliography

The Web sites will provide you with additional information and will lead you to other valuable resources. The literature review will give you a thorough background for the concepts, issues, and research that pertain to the area of leadership and management. The bibliography will enable you to access particular relevant work that has been done in this area.

Selected Publications and Web Sites

NAEYC offers a wide range of publications through its online catalog at www.naeyc.org/shoppingcart. Here we highlight a few especially pertinent to the Leadership and Management Standard. These are presented as resource information only, and are not required for the Self-Study process.

Leadership in Action: How Effective Leaders Get Things Done, by Paula Jorde Bloom (NAEYC #371)

Tools to assess your leadership style, increase shared commitment to the program goals, and solve a variety of organizational issues.

The Business of Child Care: Management and Financial Strategies, by Gail Jack (NAEYC #767)

Straightforward text that addresses topics such as managing enrollment; staff recruitment, retention and review; budgets; and financial recordkeeping.

Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice: An Introduction for Teachers of Children 3 to 6, by Carol Copple & Sue Bredekamp (NAEYC #259)

This introductory book explains core concepts and makes them meaningful to everyday practice. A 30-minute companion video (VHS #860 or DVD #861) is also available. For a comprehensive discussion, see the 2009 edition of *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*, (NAEYC #375).

Web Sites

Programs enrolled in Self-Study should check TORCH (www.naeyc.org/selfstudy). TORCH includes resources for early childhood programs in all steps of the NAEYC Accreditation process. At TORCH, you can

- Search for criteria, FAQs, and additional resources by keyword.
- View a calendar of important NAEYC due dates and chart your own due dates on a personalized calendar.
- Access valuable NAEYC resources and link to other helpful Web sites.
- Submit questions directly to the NAEYC Academy Information Center.

In addition, you may find these sites of interest:

The McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership works to enhance the effectiveness and leadership of early childhood program administrators. The center provides information on research, publications, and technical assistance related to early childhood program leadership and management. www.cecl.nl.edu

Child Care Information Exchange is dedicated to enhancing the efforts of early childhood program administrators. It offers a magazine specifically addressing the issues facing early childhood directors today. www.ccie.com

National Association of Elementary School Principals, a membership association for elementary school principals, offers numerous resources for this community, including guidelines for leading early childhood learning communities. www.naesp.org

Literature Review

This literature review was prepared by Brandt Chamberlain and Ellen Smith under the direction of Carollee Howes. The evidence base for the Leadership and Management Standard supports the belief that skillful, knowledgeable leaders contribute significantly to quality in early childhood programs. This text supplies a comprehensive set of references and research evidence that provide support for the criteria included in the Leadership and Management Standard. Together, this information represents a range of sources—academic research; national reports; summaries of research, descriptive, survey, and interview data; and multiauthored position statements—that provide support and rationale for the criteria. The body of literature represents both national and international research.

Administrators of early care and education programs are responsible for satisfying a

wide array of requirements to ensure a safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate environment for children and a supportive, enriching work environment for staff. The development of written policies and the implementation of procedures in the areas of management, fiscal accountability, child and adult health and safety, personnel, and program accountability relate back to the establishment, maintenance, and continual improvement of program quality. For this reason, this literature review starts with an overview of the dimensions and consequences of quality in early care and education environments. Of particular concern are questions about group size and the teacher–child ratio, so a later section addresses this issue in detail.

Quality in Early Care and Education

Researchers generally agree that quality in early care and education settings can be defined and reliably measured (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty 2000; Kontos et al. 1995; Lamb 1998). Like parents, researchers are ultimately concerned with the well-being of the children: Are they safe and healthy? Do they feel secure that the teachers will keep them safe? Are they learning language, social skills, and the range of knowledge and abilities they will need to be successful in school? In short, does the early care environment enhance children’s development in a variety of dimensions while they are in the program, and does it give them a good start on the rest of their lives?

Most research on early care and education comes from an ecological theoretical perspective (Bronfenbrenner & Morris 1998; Sameroff 1983). Within this theoretical perspective, dimensions of the environment are considered to influence each other in a bidirectional manner and in ways that influence children’s development. In early care and education research, these models of influence are usually conceptualized as structural dimensions of the early care environment that influence process dimensions that, in turn,

influence children's development (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 2002).

This model of the influence of early care quality on children's development makes several implicit assumptions. The first set of assumptions has to do with families and the early care system; the second involves relationships between structure and process.

Families and the Early Care System.

Families are assumed to influence children's development in ways independent of the early care environment. The NICHD Early Child Care Research Network has completed the largest and most comprehensive research study of families and child care in the United States. This study is particularly important because it is so large, representing approximately 1,000 children from 10 sites, and because the family observations were so extensive and intensive. Unfortunately the sample overrepresents white and affluent families and therefore is not representative of the families enrolled nationwide. Nevertheless, the results from the NICHD study are conclusive in supporting the assumption that what happens within families is influential for children's development (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 1998, 2001).

This theoretical model of the influence that early care has on children's development also assumes that families influence children's development indirectly by their selection of early care. Families with more advantages, education, and income as well as mothers with higher vocabularies, less authoritarian child-rearing beliefs, and more stimulating home environments—all factors associated with enhanced cognitive, language, and social development—tend to use early care that is higher in quality (Johnson et al. 2003; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 1997; Puhnpungello & Kurtz-Costes 1999). This finding holds true across all ethnic groups (Johnson et al. 2003), although for Latino families, the concern

may be an issue of availability, not choice (Buriel & Hurtado 1998). For all families who live in poverty, finding high-quality early care that they can afford is nearly impossible (Buriel & Hurtado 1998; Johnson et al. 2003; Phillips et al. 1994). Further, families in particularly difficult life circumstances, for example, where the mother suffers from depression or family violence or the children have particular developmental problems including early emotional problems, are unlikely to have the social resources to find high-quality care and maintain enrollment (Love et al. 2003; Newcombe 2003).

Finally, the same processes that enhance development within families are expected to enhance development within early care. Therefore, just as sensitive and responsive parenting is linked to children's construction of secure child-mother attachments at home, sensitive and warm provider behaviors are expected to be associated with secure child-teacher relationships (Howes 1999). Rich language environments with lots of child-adult talk, positive affect, responsiveness to children's vocalizations, and cognitive stimulation at home enhance children's language development (Bloom 1991; Hart & Risley 1992; Hoff-Ginsberg 1991; Tamis-LeMonda & Bornstein 2002; Tamis-LeMonda, Bornstein, & Baumwell 2001) and are expected also to do so in early care. Home environments that have plenty of social and physical resources, where adults interactively read to children and connections are made between actions and ideas, are homes that foster cognitive development (Bradley et al. 1989; Bradley, Corwyn, Burchinal et al. 2001; Bradley, Corwyn, McAdoo et al. 2001; Storch & Whitehurst 2002; Whitehurst et al. 1994; Whitehurst & Lonigan 2002).

To a large extent, this assumption—that processes within families that influence child development are the same processes in early care—is warranted. Studies measuring exactly the same behaviors identified both at home and in early care find similar

associations between these interactions and children's development (Caughy, DiPetro, & Strobine 1994; Dickinson & Smith 2001; Howes & Ritchie 1999, 2002; McCartney 1984; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 2000b; Whitehurst et al. 1994). Some observational measures of process quality in child care, notably the NICHD Early Child Care Research Network's Child Observation Scale and Howes's Snapshot, have built from this developmental research within the family base and find associations between high scores on these measures and children's development (Howes 1997; Howes, Galinsky, & Kontos 1998; Howes & Hamilton 1992; Howes & Smith 1995; Howes & Stewart 1987; Kontos et al. 1997; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 1996, 2000a, 2003).

The assumption that replicating what goes on in "good" homes will become "good" child care, however, has several problems. Katz (1980), in a classic essay, warned that teachers are not mothers. Mothers mother in larger part from an emotional investment in their children and from their understandings of how they were mothered (Belsky et al. 2001; Van Ijzendoorn, Juffer, & Duyvesteyn 1995). Teachers—good teachers—understand that they must constantly reflect on their knowledge of children's development, their knowledge of the particular children with whom they are engaged, and their ability to balance the needs of the child, the group, and the child within the group (Ahnert & Lamb 2003; Howes & Ritchie 2002).

Relationships between Structure and Process.

The second set of implicit assumptions made in modeling the influence of child care quality on children's development involves relationships between structure and process. Beginning back in the early 1980s and using the classic work by Phillips and Howes (1987), child care researchers have conceptually identified two dimensions

of child care quality: structure and process. *Structural dimensions* of early care are features that can be regulated, for example, the qualifications of teachers who work in care or the number and size of bathrooms that need to be provided. *Process* refers to observable events that occur within the setting, for example, warm, sensitive, and stimulating adult-child interactions. This conceptual framework assumed that both structure and process dimensions of early care could be measured but that measuring process quality would require close observation and measuring instruments that were based on what developmental psychological research has defined as warm, sensitive, and stimulating. It further assumed that structural dimensions would directly predict process dimensions, not children's development. That is, a fit was expected between a structure that supported good care giving and actual good care giving; further, good care giving would enhance development. These assumptions have now been tested in the NICHD study (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 2002) and in the Cost, Quality, and Outcome Study (Peisner-Feinberg & Burchinal 1997; Peisner-Feinberg et al. 2001; Phillipsen et al. 1997). The Cost, Quality, and Outcome study included a representative sample of children in center-based community child care and followed the children's development through second grade. In both studies, pathways were found linking structural dimensions to process dimensions and to children's outcomes.

Across all the comprehensive research linking structural dimensions of early care to child care quality and to children's optimal outcomes, three structural dimensions emerge as most predictive of process quality: early care providers' compensation, early care providers' education and specialized training, and the teacher-child ratio (Shonkoff & Phillips 2000). Adults in early care settings who have higher levels of compensation and more advanced education and specialized

training in child development and who work with smaller groups of children are (a) most often found in settings with higher quality ratings, (b) are more effective with children, and (c) are associated with children who have more optimal child development outcomes.

Process quality captures the day-to-day experiences of children in early care. The cornerstone of process quality is the relationship between the provider and the children. Children whose early care providers give them ample verbal and cognitive stimulation and generous amounts of individualized attention perform better on a wide range of assessments of development (Shonkoff & Phillips 2000). The implications for leadership and management are clearly that structural dimensions, including teacher compensation, group size, and teacher–child ratio, must be addressed before programs can hire and keep employed the stable, well-trained, and educated staff needed for continuous quality improvement.

These criteria are supported by several bodies of research literature: teacher–child ratio, group size, continuity across the day, and continuity within the peer group. The literature on teacher–child ratio is most definitive, and the literature on group size is less so. The literature on continuity for adult caregivers and peer group is small.

Teacher–Child Ratio. There is general agreement that child care quality can be defined and reliably measured by measures of structure and process quality as described above (Abbott-Shim, Lambert, & McCarty 2000; Lamb 1998). Structural dimensions of child care are features that predict process dimensions such as warm, sensitive, and stimulating adult–child interactions (Phillipsen et al. 1997). Across all the comprehensive research linking structural dimensions of child care to child care quality and to children’s optimal outcomes, three dimensions emerge as most predictive: child care providers’ compensation,

providers’ education and specialized training, and the teacher–child ratio (Shonkoff & Phillips 2000). Relatively little research has been published since the Shonkoff and Phillips (2000) review on the issue of teacher–child ratio, and none of it contradicts this basic conclusion.

The majority of the literature on teacher–child ratios has used a linear approach. That is, smaller numbers of children per adult are associated with more positive outcomes. NAEYC and other professional groups have pointed out that the number of children per adult may vary with the developmental age of the children cared for and have set standards as listed in Table 6.

Few published studies have used the thresholds shown in Table 6 as a basis for investigation. One study (Howes 1997) using two large and representative data sets of center-based care—one data set from the Florida Quality Improvement Study and the other from the Cost, Quality, and Outcome Study (Phillipsen et al. 1997)—found not only that teachers engaged in more effective teaching when classrooms met the NAEYC ratios but also that having a more highly educated teacher did not compensate for poorer ratios. This finding is relevant for the practices of grouping and regrouping of children across the day and of having well-educated teachers supervise several classrooms taught by less well-educated teachers: maintaining a favorable teacher–child ratio is one of the most important considerations in establishing groupings throughout the day. The second study comes from the NICHD Early Child Care Study. It also supports the NAEYC teacher–child ratios.

Group Size. The research literature on group size is less definitive than the literature on teacher–child ratio. One problem is that the two constructs are empirically related, so pairing them in a test of which is stronger in a statistical framework is difficult. Another problem is that in large repre-

Table 6. Standards for Ratio and Group Size

| National Association for the Education of Young Children (1998) | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Age | 0–24 months | | 25–36 months | 3–5 years | Kindergartners | |
| Ratio (group size) | 1:3 (6) 1:4 (8, 12) 1:5 (10) | | 1:4 (8) 1:5 (10) 1:6 (12) 1:7 (14) | 1:7 (14) 1:8 (16) 1:9 (18) 1:10 (20) | 1:10 (20) 1:11 (22) 1:12 (24) | |
| U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (Fiene 2002) | | | | | | |
| Age | 0–24 months | 25–30 months | 31–35 months | 3 years | 4–5 years | |
| Ratio | 1:3 | 1:4 | 1:5 | 1:7 | 1:8 | |
| American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (2002) | | | | | | |
| Age | 0–12 months | 13–30 months | 31–35 months | 3 years | 4–5 years | |
| Ratio | 1:3 | 1:4 | 1:5 | 1:7 | 1:8 | |

sentative data sets such as the Cost, Quality, and Outcome Study (Phillipsen et al. 1997), child care centers tend to have group sizes consistent with those specified by NAEYC and other professional groups because of constraints of existing buildings and costs associated with space. Classrooms that are very large may be outliers on many dimensions besides group size.

It is often assumed that a situation with fewer adults and fewer children as well as with positive interactions can lead to a more intimate and less confusing social group and, thus, to better care. The value or belief behind this assumption is that children should interact with a limited number of children and adults in a defined space to develop close and positive relationships; however, this assumption may simply be a white middle-class value because no research evidence substantiates it. Indeed, the literature suggests instead that the particular sensitivity of the teacher to the individual and to the entire group is the best predictor of positive teacher–child relationships (Ahnert & Lamb 2003). The Shonkoff and Phillips review (2002) did not link qual-

ity and group size. However, studies on class-size reduction for kindergarten through third-grade classrooms found that smaller groups led to increased achievement, particularly for low-income children (Achilles, Harman, & Egelson 1995; Ferguson 1998; Mosteller 1995; Wenglinsky 1997).

Recommended teacher–child ratios and group sizes are costly to maintain for many programs; therefore, some alternatives have surfaced with discouraging results. The Howes (1997) study cited above examined interactions between adult–child ratio and teacher backgrounds and found that one does not substitute for another. That is, giving either highly educated or less highly educated teachers more children simply leads to less effective teaching in both cases. Further, several other researchers also suggest that improving the ratio without reducing the group size does not yield the same positive benefits, because simply adding extra adults to an already crowded environment may interfere with learning (Achilles, Harman, & Egelson 1995; Ferguson 1998; Mosteller 1995; Wenglinsky 1997).

Table 7. Recommendations for Group Size

| National Association for the Education of Young Children (1998) | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| Age | 0–24 months | 24–30 months | 30–36 months | 3 years | 4–5 years | Kindergartners |
| Group size | 6–8 | 8–12 | 10–14 | 14–20 | 16–20 | 20–24 |
| U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (Fiene 2002) | | | | | | |
| Age | 0–24 months | 25–30 months | 31–35 months | 3 years | 4–5 years | |
| Group size | 6 | 8 | 10 | 14 | 16 | |
| California Department of Education, Child Development Division (2001) | | | | | | |
| Age | 0–18 months | 18–35 months | | 3–5 years | | Kindergartners |
| Group size | 6–8 | 12–14 | | 24 | | 28 |
| American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (2002) | | | | | | |
| Age | 0–12 months | 13–30 months | 31–35 months | 3 years | 4–5 years | |
| Group size | 6 | 8 | 10 | 14 | 16 | |

Currently, recommendations for group size vary, as illustrated in Table 7. No literature from a threshold perspective could be found on whether there is a point at which a group is too small or too large, potentially hindering a child’s development. In mixed-age groupings, NAEYC (1998) suggests that the ratio and group size be determined by the age of most of the children present. However, if infants or toddlers are also in the group, then the ratios and group sizes should adhere to the recommendations for infants and toddlers.

Continuity of Care. The National Child Care Staffing Study (Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1990) examined the influence of accordion staffing on teacher behavior. In accordion staffing, groups of children are combined during the times of day when the census is low (early morning and late afternoon) in an effort to maintain group size and teacher–child ratios at a lower cost to the program because start and end times for the teachers can be staggered. The NCCS study

(Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1990) found that children who were exposed to large amounts of accordion staffing were more likely to rate teachers more harshly than children who experienced accordion staffing only at the end of the day or not at all.

Research support for minimizing the number of transitions or regroupings that children experience and for maintaining relationships among groups of children as much as possible must come from two very different sources. Positive, trusting relationships are established between adults and children when the child can trust that the adult will be there to care for him or her (Howes 1999). Regroupings can interfere with establishing this trust. Further, very young children are just beginning to construct social interactions and friendships with peers. These skills are relatively fragile and need multiple opportunities for rehearsal with the same partners (Hartup 1996). If the peer group is constantly being reshuffled, it is difficult for children to construct social relationships with peers.

Health and Safety, Ratios, and Group

Size. Researchers have also raised the issue of health as it relates to group size and ratios of adults to children. Children in smaller groups are at a lower risk of infection in child care. For example, incidences of hepatitis A occur 3 percent of the time in centers that enroll fewer than 20 children and 53 percent in centers that enroll 51 or more children. Very little research has been done on the association between teacher–child ratios and children’s health; the literature that can be found indicates that lower ratios may reduce the transmission of illnesses because the same programs that maintain lower ratios are also likely to hire adults who use and encourage healthy practices (Hayes, Palmer, & Zaslow 1990).

Hayes, Palmer, and Zaslow (1990), in an early National Research Council review of child care, concluded that settings where the teacher–child ratio was lower had fewer incidences of potential danger. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requires one adult for every two children who are incapable of self-preservation (NFPA-101 Life Safety Code) and suggests that lower ratios for nonambulatory children are essential for safety in a fire.

Children with Special Needs, Ratios, and Group Size.

A search was conducted for literature on teacher–child ratios and group sizes for classrooms that include children with special needs. The types of special needs are extensive, and the severity of each type varies considerably. *Caring for Our Children* (American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, & National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care 2002) indicates that children with special health care needs may require additional staff but that staffing depends on their special needs and the extent to which they are disabled. Therefore, the degree to which additional staff or smaller groups are required to meet the needs for both typical children and children with spe-

cial needs in an early childhood education setting is difficult to quantify; however, it is expected that depending on the nature and severity of children’s special needs, additional staff members may be needed.

Administrators of early care and education programs must take into consideration many concerns in their efforts to build high-quality settings to meet the needs of well-qualified adult staff and children alike (Bloom 1996; Bloom & Sheerer 1992; Jorde–Bloom 1990). To the extent that they can place greatest emphasis on the structural aspects of staff compensation, teacher education and training, and a desirable teacher–child ratio, administrators can expect to be most effective in improving the warmth, sensitivity, and stimulation of teacher–child interactions and enhancing positive outcomes for children.

Self-Study and the Leadership and Management Standard

Administrators of early care and education are responsible for satisfying a wide array of requirements to ensure a safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate environment for children and a supportive, enriching work environment for staff. The criteria for the Leadership and Management Standard represent aspects of all of these requirements. They encompass the wide variety of skills necessary for administrators to run high-quality programs. In essence, high-quality, effective leadership and management refer to the oversight, organization, and execution of the content of Program Standards 1 through 9. Effective administrators demonstrate the ability to make decisions, provide leadership and support, ensure the development and administration of policies and procedures related to a wide range of program functioning and goals, and simultaneously attend to various aspects of program administration.

Some of the specific criteria within the Leadership and Management Standard pose challenges to the self-study process. Many criteria in this standard focus directly on the

qualifications, organization, effectiveness, and leadership of the program administrator. The administrator herself must step back and critically assess her own performance and identify areas of improvement. In addition, criteria call for staff and families to provide feedback on the administrator's effectiveness. If the self-study process is to be useful and effective in improving program quality, then program administrators must be open to hearing from others involved with the program and use the information obtained from staff members and families to effect positive change.

Running a high-quality early childhood program is a huge responsibility. The role of program director is complex and requires the program administrator to consider many factors simultaneously.

Successful completion of the self-study process for accreditation provides a framework for assessing the efficacy of program leadership and management. Sound and effective leadership is essential for the initiation of the self-evaluation process, the organization and inclusion of all relevant parties, and engagement in intensive evaluation of the current program in relation to program standards and criteria.

Each state has specific licensing requirements for early childhood programs. At a minimum, programs must abide by the licensing, health, safety, and nutrition guidelines as well as other features of early care and education that are subject to state and local regulation. Requirements vary greatly from state to state, and in some cases there is great variance between state requirements and NAEYC recommendations for aspects of care such as adult-child ratio, group size, and training and education requirements for staff (Blank, Behr, & Schulman 2001). Programs seeking accreditation need to consider the financial and logistical implications of aligning their programs with NAEYC recommendations with respect to key areas of programming.

Topic Area A: Leadership

Leadership, an important component of quality care, is a complex concept, one that refers to a broad range of behaviors (Kagan & Bowman 1997; Bloom, Sheerer, & Britz 2005). Unfortunately, few empirical research studies on early childhood leadership have been reported in the literature (Mitchell 1997; Muijs et al. 2004).

Mitchell (1997) identifies six “generally agreed-upon competencies” of early childhood leaders: (1) the ability to articulate organizational mission, goals, and direction; (2) communication skills (written and verbal); (3) analytic skills (problem solving); (4) interpersonal skills (e.g., motivate and inspire others, get along with others, collaborate, resolve conflict); (5) attitudes and dispositions (e.g., flexibility, openness to change, ability to accommodate divergent viewpoints); and (6) child and family development knowledge (page 87). She adds four additional leadership competencies that relate to (1) fiscal management and planning; (2) creation and development of organizational culture; (3) staff development; and (4) supervision for the creation of coherent, well-understood curriculum (page 87). Her definition of effective leadership refers to strong business skills and personal qualities. Leaders run a business and must attend to a variety of legal, safety, and administrative criteria. They are employers with employees. The nature of the “business” of early child care, serving young children and their families, adds distinct features and required skills to the role of the leader.

Bloom & Sheerer (1992) conducted research to demonstrate the effects of leadership training on program quality. In their study, some early childhood directors participated in leadership training whereas others received no training. These researchers found that training increased quality of care according to directors' report. Specifically, they documented improvements in three domains: quality of teaching practices

within classrooms, quality of work life for program staff, and perceived competence among directors who received training.

Analysis of effective leadership styles suggests that including staff in decision making translates into more effective practice, satisfaction, and change (Bellm & Hack 2001; Bloom, Sheerer, & Britz 2005; Jack 2005). This type of management demonstrates the leader's perception of staff as valued partners in the processes of decision making, change, assessment and program improvement. Staff members who feel valued as employees and participants express more job satisfaction (Bloom 1996).

The topic area "Leadership" identifies characteristics that both programs and program administrators must possess to achieve excellence. The topic area comprises seven criteria. Some criteria refer to the educational background of the administrator and licensing status of the facility whereas others refer to less concrete but essential characteristics such as the administrator's personal commitment and ability to provide leadership.

The criteria reflect the need for strong and effective leadership and management skills. The educational requirements of the program leader reflect the need for formal education and training and knowledge of issues related to the successful administration of a high-quality program. The National Child Care Information Center (2004) compiled a state-level analysis of early childhood director requirements. Their report reveals great variability across states in pre-service qualifications and annual, ongoing training hours for directors. Some states such as Georgia require no specific level of education or amount of training whereas others such as Colorado have requirements across all parameters of preparation. Bowman (1997) acknowledges the lack of consensus in the field with respect to preparation of program leaders. She attributes the problem to three factors: the diversity of settings and auspices under which programs operate; lack of

"incentive to seek higher education" because of "economic and regulatory pressures" (107); and the feeling that formal education requirements are perceived as unnecessary by parents, policy makers and professionals. Because programs pursuing accreditation represent the entire United States, varying degrees of change will be necessary to align with NAEYC recommendations.

The criteria also reflect the need for program leaders to demonstrate personal dedication, commitment, and professional competence. Espinosa (1997) identified personal attributes that relate to effective leadership. She defines leadership as

the ability to influence, inspire, motivate, or affect the thoughts, feelings and actions of others. Leaders are those who provoke or nudge or elevate others into thinking, feeling, or behaving in ways they would not otherwise have demonstrated. Leadership is sustained influence over others, shaping the course of events and bending the will of others by word or personal example. (97)

Topic Area B: Management Policies and Procedures

Many critical areas of program operation are addressed within this topic area. Most of the criteria within this section require "written policies and procedures" that span many different areas of program functioning and that both policies and procedures are consistent with NAEYC philosophies, reflect best practice concepts, and focus on the existence and maintenance of a safe and nurturing environment for children, families, and staff members.

Two central components of quality care are included in this topic area: (1) teacher-child ratio and group size and (2) staff qualifications and turnover. Criteria addressing teacher-child ratio and group size are located in the topic area "Management Policy and Procedures" because program administrators are responsible for ensuring compliance with regulations related to these program variables. Analysis of state licensing requirements reveals great variation in stringency of requirements (Blank, Behr, & Schulman 2001; Gallagher,

Rooney, & Campbell 1999), with some states more closely aligned with NAEYC recommendations than others.

The development of written policies and the implementation of procedures for management, fiscal accountability, health and safety, personnel, and program accountability support maintenance and improvement of program quality.

The topic area “Management Policies and Procedures” also includes criteria related to classroom staffing and continuity of care. Decisions about classroom staffing have profound implications for children’s development (Honig 2002; Lally, Mangione, & Signer 2002; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1990; Howes & Hamilton 1993; Cryer et al. 2005). Research indicates that children benefit from remaining with the same early childhood teacher over time (Cryer et al. 2005; Honig 2002; Lally, Mangione, & Signer 2002; Whitebook & Bellm 1999; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1990). Stable, nurturing relationships with adults provide a secure base from which children learn and grow. Nevertheless, despite recommendations from experts about the benefits of continuity of care (Cryer et al. 2005; Lally, Mangione, & Signer 2002), research indicates that early childhood programs routinely change children’s caregivers (Cryer, Hurwitz, & Wolery 2001).

Two primary factors have been identified as influencing the continuity of care offered to young children. One factor is staff turnover. When a teacher leaves a program, continuity of care is disrupted. National data on staff turnover rates in the early childhood field have been consistently and alarmingly high (Whitebook & Bellm 1999; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1990; Whitebook & Sakai 2004). Staff turnover affects the quality of adult–child relationships and children’s development (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 1999, 2002; see Whitebook & Sakai, 2004, for a thorough review of the research on the effects of staff turnover on children’s devel-

opment, outcomes, and program quality). Staff turnover also affects other staff, administrators, and the financial health of the program (Bellm & Haack 2001; Jack 2005; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1990; Whitebook & Bellm 1999; Whitebook & Sakai 2004). Whitebook and Bellm (1999) have addressed the topic of staff turnover in their book *Taking on Turnover: An Action Guide for Child Care Center Teachers and Directors*. They review research on turnover and its many effects and provide guidance on how to develop a staff turnover plan as well as how to hire and retain qualified staff. They also address the creation and maintenance of a high-quality work environment, which is a factor in attracting and retaining qualified personnel. The quality of the work environment is addressed in Topic Area E, “Personnel Policies.”

The second factor that influences continuity of care relates to intentional program practices such as accordion staffing (discussed earlier in this literature review). In addition to the benefits of nurturing relationships between adults and children, the stability of the peer group has been shown to contribute to the development of meaningful peer relationships (Hartup 1996). Unfortunately, research indicates that the majority of early childhood programs do not offer continuity of care across significant periods of time (Cryer, Hurwitz, & Wolery 2001). Children change caregivers when they reach developmental milestones such as walking. Changes in staffing patterns can improve continuity of care.

A final aspect of management policies and procedures relates to the way in which staff, children, and families are oriented and welcomed into the program. Staff orientation is identified as a component of quality program administration (Talan & Bloom 2004). In their section on human resource development, Talan and Bloom (2004) provide descriptors of staff orientation procedures on a seven-point scale, ranging from “inade-

quate” to “excellent.” Inadequacy is defined as having no provisions, no written procedures, and inconsistent implementation. Excellence is the existence of written procedures, annual review of the materials, time for new staff to observe in their assigned classroom as well as time to meet children and co-workers, and an assessment of the orientation process, which facilitates change, provides feedback, and contributes to program improvements. Orientation for families and children is identified in their section on family partnerships, which is evaluated on the same point scale as the item on staff orientation. Programs attempting to achieve effective family communications must include regular communication and orientation procedures for families. Inadequate levels of communication are determined if a program has no guidelines, no processes for effective communication with families, and no formal procedures to discuss child progress and development. Excellent levels of communication comprise procedures to welcome new families, including a tour of the facility; introduction to the teaching staff; information about program schedules, fees, rules, holidays, and other program specifics; and a system for checking with families after a few weeks.

Topic Area C: Fiscal Accountability Policies and Procedures

Part of a program administrator’s responsibility is to ensure that the program has adequate economic resources to support the program’s vision, philosophy, goals, and values. Economic resources contribute to the overall quality of the program. Ample resources support the retention of highly qualified and dedicated staff (Jack 2005; McMullen & Alat 2002; Whitebook & Sakai 2004). Economic support for teacher education and training, participation in conferences, professional development activities, and preparation time further support staff members and therefore benefit the program and children (Bellm & Haack 2001).

Part of fiscal accountability and support of the program’s goals and values rests with the ability to project fiscal needs and use the budget as a planning tool (Jack 2005). Training in accounting principles and practices, reliance on a financial expert, or both can aid programs in meeting their objectives and commitments. In addition to the references cited throughout the text, the listing of Web sites in the Resource section located at the end of this volume provides a wide range of resources focused on management issues. Many of the publishers identified in the Resource section of the Teachers Standard booklet list books that address leadership, management, and financial issues specific to early childhood programs.

Topic Area D: Health, Nutrition, and Safety Policies and Procedures

The development and administration of written policies and procedures that ensure the health and safety of the children, staff, and families who participate in the program is of paramount importance to the providing of a high-quality environment. These criteria fall within the Leadership and Management Standard because the program administration is charged with the task of ensuring that safety precautions are taken, that the program complies with licensing requirements relevant to health and safety, and that written policies and procedures are developed, communicated, and enforced. There is considerable overlap with both the *Standard 5: Health* and the “Environmental Health” topic area within the *Standard 9: Physical Environment*. The specific concerns and issues related to health and safety are addressed more fully in those sections. The execution and maintenance of as well as the compliance with the health-related criteria falls within the domain of the Leadership and Management Standard.

The criteria within this topic area refer to a broad range of health and safety issues, many of which overlap with other topic areas

from other program standards. For example, the Health Standard addresses the need for all personnel and children to stay current with immunizations and to provide the program with immunization dates. It is the program administrator's responsibility to ensure that this procedure happens and is well-documented. Specifications for sanitizing and cleaning the environment as well as guidelines for safe food storage and preparation are delineated in the Health Standard; it is the administrator's responsibility to ensure adherence and compliance with the guidelines as well as to provide written documentation for compliance and currency.

Criteria within this topic area refer to two additional aspects of the providing of safe care. The first concerns protection from abuse and the policies and procedures programs have in place to safeguard children from mistreatment. In addition, criteria refer to staff training on warning signs of abuse, procedures for handling suspicion, and reporting procedures help to promote children's development (Horner 2005). Standard 3.054 of the *National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs* (American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, & National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care 2003) notes that all child care providers are mandated reporters of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Although providers are obligated to report, however, the procedures and time frames for reporting vary by state. Thus, program administrators must be aware of the local regulations and guidelines as well as be prepared to fulfill their obligations and train staff on appropriate procedures and applicable laws. In a similar regard, program administrators are encouraged to develop procedures in the event that any staff member is accused of abuse or neglect. The existence of procedures safeguards staff members, the program, the children, and the families.

The second aspect of providing safe care relates to a program's policies, procedures, and ability to respond to a disaster. The organization of first aid supplies, food and water supplies, and other disaster-related necessities in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of the staff and children enrolled over the course of several days is recommended (Talan & Bloom 2004). In addition, procedures for communication with families, drills to practice exiting procedures, and other preventive measures fall within the program administrator's job responsibilities. Similarly, other types of dental or medical emergencies may occur during the course of any given day. Policies and procedures to ensure prompt response include the presence of written consent, quick access to emergency numbers and personnel, and trained staff members who can act quickly given any type of emergency. Staff and child well-being will be maximized by the organization of materials and existence of policies and procedures to respond to any and all emergency situations.

Topic Area E: Personnel Policies

The quality of work life for early childhood staff affects many aspects of care that influence the quality of the overall program (Bellm & Haack 2001; Bloom 1996; Bloom, Sheerer, & Britz 2005; Whitebook & Bellm 1999; Whitebook & Sakai 2004; Whitebook, Sakai, & Howes 2004). As the lead individual at a program, the program administrator is responsible for overseeing staff, devising and implementing policies and procedures that support teaching staff, and ensuring that staff members are suitable for working with children and families.

It is incumbent on administrators not only to hire staff members who possess the formal education and training in early childhood education that is associated with effective teaching but also to hire individuals based on their ability to interact with children and families in a safe, nurturing, and ethical way (Albrecht 2002; Jack 2005;

NAEYC 2005). Background checks related to past criminal activity, history of child abuse or neglect, and the general physical and mental health to work effectively with young children and families represent some of the factors early childhood administrators must address in their hiring practices.

Once staff have been hired, programs and staff members benefit from clear, written materials related to job responsibilities, benefits, hours, performance reviews, and expectations for behavior and involvement in professional development activities (Albrecht 2002; Bellm & Haack 1999; Jack 2005). The existence of and discussion of written policies and procedures for staff serve to reduce ambiguity and provide a framework for conflict resolution. The Program Administration Scale (Talan & Bloom 2004) details excellent practices related to a range of personnel policies such as compensation, benefits, staff evaluation, and staff orientation.

A supportive and respectful work environment contributes to staff feelings of satisfaction (Greenman 2005; Jack 2005; Harms, Clifford, & Cryer 1998). In addition to policies and procedures that promote positive relationships with staff, aspects of the physical environment also contribute to job satisfaction. The Early Childhood Environment Scale—Revised (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer 1998) and the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale—Revised (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford 2003) identify excellence in providing for the personal and professional needs of staff. They indicate that the providing of a separate adult lounge, adult size bathrooms, comfortable furnishings, and space for personal belongings contribute to staff satisfaction.

Topic Area F: Program Evaluation, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement

One of the primary objectives of the 2005 NAEYC Accreditation Standards and system is to provide structure and guidance to programs in their efforts to sustain high

quality. The topic area described in this section identifies the need for early childhood programs to have and use a system for ongoing program evaluation, accountability, and continuous improvement. The goal is for programs to regularly take stock of issues related to quality, to rely on the input of the various people involved with the program, and to have a well-organized and comprehensive system in place that facilitates the process (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE 2003). The Self-Study process required to achieve NAEYC Accreditation is similar in the sense that programs must rely on input from staff and families to determine areas in need of improvement. However, the intent of this topic area is to ensure that programs have a viable and useful system specifically tailored to their program, *independent* of the accreditation system. The unique evaluation system for a program should provide the basis for ongoing improvements; ensure continued quality of care over time; and address the specific goals, values, composition, and curriculum of the program. Achievement of NAEYC Accreditation reflects a program's commitment to quality and demonstrates that they have successfully aligned their practices with the criteria.

There are several reasons for continuous evaluation and analysis of program practices. First, research continues to inform early childhood practice. Research studies continuously contribute new and important findings that have implications for care and educational practices. For example, research has informed many critical recommendations for practices in the area of health and safety. Data about the frequency and nature of children's injuries on playgrounds has guided the selection and usage of equipment. In short, research findings provide an ongoing and important source of information that affects best practice ideals.

Second, changes in the sociopolitical climate of our country and local communities inform practice. Increases in the number of

parents participating in the workforce has increased the demand for early care environments to accommodate the children of working parents, for example, by offering more flexible hours. Changes in the characteristics of children enrolled in early care programs also have shifted. The enrollment of increased numbers of infants, English-language learners, and children with disabilities has implications for teacher education and training, adult-child ratios, group size, anti-bias education, and more. Clearly, changes in the population served require accompanying shifts in practice to accommodate the needs of a diverse group. Research on the benefits of early care have also influenced attendance rates and the availability of programs.

Other sociopolitical factors also influence and inform practice. For example, the threat of war and of bioterrorism have affected the types of emergency preparedness plans and resources that programs develop and use.

In addition to program-generated instruments and instruments available through professional networks, research measures offer a clear, systematic, and comprehensive framework for program self-analysis. Specifically, four measures hold promise for contributing to the self-study process and to the general goal of continuous program improvement. The Program Administration Scale (Talan & Bloom 2004), the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale—Revised (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer 1998; Perlman, Zelman, & Le 2004), the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale—Revised (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford 2003), and the Early Childhood Physical

Environment Rating Scale (Sugiyama & Moore 2005) each offer programs clear descriptors of what constitutes quality care across a broad range of issues.

As part of program efforts to continuously improve quality, the criteria refer to the creation of a program improvement plan and to annual comprehensive program evaluations that include all relevant parties and perspectives. There are five specific criteria in this topic area. They refer to the frequency, content, and participants of program evaluation, summarized as follows:

- Conduct evaluations *at least* annually: Regular evaluations that reflect the perspectives of administrators, staff, and families provide valuable information that can guide improvement efforts.
- Include administrators, families, and staff in the process by
 - establishing goals based on the feedback obtained in the report.
 - conducting an evaluation that addresses many aspects of the program.
 - sharing the findings with the people who are affected by them.

As reiterated throughout this volume, one of the main objectives of the NAEYC Accreditation system is to provide structure and content for ongoing program analysis and improvement. The development and maintenance of high-quality early childhood programs requires dedication, time, effort, personal and financial resources, and a consistent and heartfelt commitment to offering children the best possible care and education possible.

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Program Administrator Definition and Competencies

I. Program Administrator Definition

The program administrator is the individual responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating a child care, preschool or kindergarten program. The role of the administrator covers both leadership and management functions. Leadership functions relate to the broad plan of helping an organization clarify and affirm values, set goals, articulate a vision, and chart a course of action to achieve that vision. Managerial functions relate to the actual orchestration of tasks and the setting up of systems to carry out the organization's mission.

Functions of the program administrator include the following:

- *Pedagogy*—Creating a learning community of children and adults that promotes optimal child development and healthy families
 - *Organizational development and systems*—Establishing systems for smooth program functioning and managing staff to carry out the mission of the program; planning and budgeting the program's fiscal resources; managing organizational change and establishing systems to monitor and evaluate organizational performance
 - *Human resources*—Recruiting, selecting, and orienting personnel; overseeing systems for the supervision, retention, and professional development of staff that affirm program values and promote a shared vision
 - *Collaboration*—Establishing partnerships with program staff, family members, board members, community representatives, civic leaders, and other stakeholders to design and improve services for children and their families
- *Advocacy*—Taking action and encouraging others to work on behalf of high-quality services that meet the needs of children and their families

The administrator may have different role titles depending on the program type or sponsorship of the program. Common titles include director, site manager, administrator, program manager, early childhood coordinator, and principal.

II. Core Competencies: Relevant Information for Selecting Annual Professional Development Options

(adapted with permission from the Illinois Director Credential).

The core competencies needed for effective early childhood program administration fall into two broad categories: management knowledge and skills and early childhood knowledge and skills. These are not discrete categories; they overlap conceptually and practically.

Management Knowledge and Skills.

Administrators need a solid foundation in the principles of organizational management, including how to establish systems for smooth program functioning and how to manage staff to carry out the mission of the program.

1. **Personal and professional self-awareness**—Knowledge and application of adult and career development, personality typologies, dispositions, and learning styles
 - Knowledge of one's own beliefs, values, and philosophical stance
 - The ability to evaluate ethical and moral dilemmas based on a professional code of ethics
 - The ability to be a reflective practitioner and apply a repertoire of techniques to improve the level of personal fulfillment and professional job satisfaction

2. Legal and fiscal management— Knowledge and application of the advantages and disadvantages of different legal structures

- Knowledge of different codes and regulations as they relate to the delivery of early childhood program services
- Knowledge of child custody, child abuse, special education, confidentiality, antidiscrimination, insurance liability, and contract and labor laws pertaining to program management
- Knowledge of various federal, state, and local revenue sources
- Knowledge of bookkeeping methods and accounting terminology
- Skill in budgeting, cash flow management, grant writing, and fund-raising

3. Staff management and human relations— Knowledge and application of group dynamics, communication styles, and techniques for conflict resolution

- Knowledge of different supervisory and group facilitation styles
- The ability to relate to staff and board members of diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds
- The ability to hire, supervise, and motivate staff to high levels of performance
- Skill in consensus building, team development, and staff performance appraisal

4. Educational programming— Knowledge and application of different curriculum models, standards for high-quality programming, and child assessment practices

- The ability to develop and implement a program to meet the needs of young children at different ages and developmental levels (infant–toddler, preschool, kindergarten)
- Knowledge of administrative practices that promote the inclusion of children with special needs

5. Program operations and facilities management— Knowledge and application of policies and procedures that meet state and local regulations as well as professional standards pertaining to the health and safety of young children

- Knowledge of nutritional and health requirements for food service
- The ability to design and plan the effective use of space based on principles of environmental psychology and child development
- Knowledge of playground safety design and practice

6. Family support— Knowledge and application of family systems and different parenting styles

- Knowledge of community resources to support family wellness
- The ability to implement program practices that support families of diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds
- The ability to support families as valued partners in the educational process

7. Marketing and public relations— Knowledge of the fundamentals of effective marketing, public relations, and community outreach

- The ability to evaluate the cost-benefit of different marketing and promotional strategies
- The ability to communicate the program’s philosophy and promote a positive public image to families, business leaders, public officials, and prospective funders
- The ability to promote linkages with local schools
- Skill in developing a business plan and effective promotional literature, handbooks, newsletters, and press releases

8. Leadership and advocacy— Knowledge of organizational theory and leadership styles as they relate to early childhood work environments

- Knowledge of the legislative processes, social issues, and public policy affecting young children and their families
- The ability to articulate a vision, clarify and affirm values, and create a culture built on norms of continuous improvement and ethical conduct
- The ability to evaluate program effectiveness
- The ability to define organizational problems, gather data to generate alternative solutions, and effectively apply analytical skills in its solution
- The ability to advocate on behalf of young children, their families, and the profession

9. Oral and written communication— Knowledge of the mechanics of writing, including organizing ideas, grammar, punctuation, and spelling

- The ability to use written communication to effectively express one’s thoughts
- Knowledge of oral communication techniques, including establishing rapport, preparing the environment, active listening, and voice control
- The ability to communicate ideas effectively in a formal presentation

10. Technology—Knowledge of basic computer hardware and software applications

- The ability to use the computer for program administrative functions

Early Childhood Knowledge and Skills.

Administrators need a strong foundation in the fundamentals of child development and early childhood education to guide the instructional practices of teachers and support staff.

1. Historical and philosophical foundations—Knowledge of the historical roots and philosophical foundations of early childhood care and education

- Knowledge of different types of early childhood programs, roles, funding, and regulatory structures
- Knowledge of current trends and important influences impacting program quality
- Knowledge of research methodologies

2. Child growth and development—Knowledge of different theoretical positions in child development

- Knowledge of the biological, environmental, cultural, and social influences affecting children's growth and development from prenatal through early adolescence
- Knowledge of developmental milestones in children's physical, cognitive, language, aesthetic, social, and emotional development
- Knowledge of current research in neuroscience and its application to the field of early childhood education

3. Child observation and assessment—Knowledge and application of developmentally appropriate child observation and assessment methods

- Knowledge of the purposes, characteristics, and limitations of different assessment tools and techniques
- Ability to use different observation techniques, including formal and informal observation, behavior sampling, and developmental checklists
- Knowledge of ethical practice as it relates to the use of assessment information
- The ability to apply child observation and assessment data to planning and structuring developmentally appropriate instructional strategies

4. Curriculum and instructional methods—Knowledge of different curriculum models; appropriate curriculum goals; and different instructional strategies for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarten children

- Ability to plan and implement a curriculum based on knowledge of individual children's developmental patterns, family and community goals, institutional and cultural context, and state standards
- Ability to design integrated and meaningful curricular experiences in the content areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, drama, movement, and technology
- Ability to implement antibias instructional strategies that take into account culturally valued content and children's home experiences
- Ability to evaluate outcomes of different curricular approaches

5. Children with special needs—Knowledge of atypical development, including mild and severe disabilities in physical, health, cognitive, social-emotional, communication, and sensory functioning

- Knowledge of licensing standards as well as state and federal laws (e.g., ADA, IDEA) as they relate to services and accommodations for children with special needs
- Knowledge of the characteristics of giftedness and how educational environments can support children with exceptional capabilities
- The ability to work collaboratively as part of family-professional team in planning and implementing appropriate services for children with special needs
- Knowledge of special education resources and services

6. Family and community relationships—Knowledge of the diversity of family systems; traditional, nontraditional, and alternative family structures as well as family life styles; and the dynamics of family life on the development of young children

- Knowledge of sociocultural factors influencing contemporary families, including the effect of language, religion, poverty, race, technology, and the media
- Knowledge of different community resources, assistance, and support available

to children and families • Knowledge of different strategies to promote reciprocal partnerships between home and center • Ability to communicate effectively with parents through written and oral communication • Ability to demonstrate awareness and appreciation of different cultural and familial practices and customs • Knowledge of child rearing patterns in other countries

7. Health, safety, and nutrition—

Knowledge and application of practices that promote good nutrition, dental health, physical health, mental health, and safety of infants–toddlers, preschool, and kindergarten children • Ability to implement practices indoors and outdoors that help prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies • Ability to model healthful lifestyle choices

8. Individual and group guidance—

Knowledge of the rationale for and research supporting different models of child guidance and classroom management • Ability to apply different techniques that promote positive and supportive relationships with children and among children • Ability to reflect on teaching behavior and modify guidance techniques based on the developmental and special needs of children

9. Learning environments—

Knowledge of the effect of the physical environment on children’s learning and development • The ability to use space, color, sound, texture, light, and other design elements to create indoor and outdoor learning environments that are aesthetically pleasing, intellectually stimulating, psychologically safe, and nurturing • The ability to select age-appropriate equipment and materials that achieve curricular goals and encourage positive social interaction

10. Professionalism—

Knowledge of laws, regulations, and policies that affect professional conduct with children and families • Knowledge of different professional organizations, resources, and issues affecting the welfare of early childhood practitioners • Knowledge of center accreditation criteria • Ability to make professional judgments based on the NAEYC “Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment” • Ability to reflect on one’s professional growth and development and make goals for personal improvement • Ability to work as part of a professional team and supervise support staff or volunteers