Supporting Cultural Competence
Accreditation of Programs for Young Children
Cross-Cutting Theme in Program Standards

There is no doubting that America’s population of young children is becoming increasingly diverse. Early childhood programs have begun to reflect this increasing diversity. To effectively meet the needs of children from diverse backgrounds, early childhood programs must work toward building cultural competence among children and staff alike.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, cultural competence is “a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations.” Beyond enrollment and recognition of cultural diversity, early childhood programs embrace cultural competence when they provide culturally relevant and diverse opportunities for young children and their families. Doing so requires programming decisions and training and support for staff that allow for diversity to become infused in the daily life of the program.

Recognizing children’s and families’ unique background and experiences is one of the fundamental considerations in developmentally appropriate practice. In 1995, NAEYC took a position on embracing cultural and linguistic diversity in early childhood programs: “For the optimal development and learning of all children, educators must accept the legitimacy of children’s home language, respect (hold in high regard) and value (esteem, appreciate) the home culture, and promote and encourage the active involvement and support of all families, including extended and nontraditional family units.” Embracing cultural diversity is a critical aspect in the training of early education professionals. The NAEYC standards and guidelines for professional development, as well as standards for programs serving young children, demonstrate a commitment to cultural competence by infusing it throughout the standards.

Cultural Competence within NAEYC Standards for Programs Serving Young Children

The NAEYC criteria related to the quality of programs serving young children are statements of best practice in the field. They are organized among 10 standards—large organizing concepts such as curriculum, physical environment, and teacher qualifications. Other large
themes or concepts cut across these 10 standards and are embodied in criteria throughout the accreditation system. The analyses reported in this Trend Brief are part of a larger analysis of criteria from across the 10 standards that are related to diversity. Diversity-related criteria were selected for inclusion in this analysis by use of a preliminary text search followed by an expert rating process. All of the text content of NAEYC’s standards and criteria and their related guidance was searched on the following words or word stems:
- “diverse” or “diversity”
- “differ” or “differences”
- “gender,” “ability,” “culture,” “language”
- “special needs”

A total of 52 criteria were identified in this content search. Many of the identified criteria encompassed multiple diversity-related terms, either listed in a single indicator or enumerated as individual indicators. Twelve members of NAEYC’s accreditation staff were asked to read each criterion and its related guidance, and check any and all topics included in the criterion, using a rating tool identifying a set of diversity-related topics. These topics included Language, Cultural, Special Needs, Ability, Family, Religion, Race, Socio-Economic, Gender, and General Diversity. Criteria were retained for inclusion in the diversity cross-cutting theme if 10 or more of the 12 raters assigned it to one or more of the topics. Eight criteria failed to be included by 10 or more raters on any of the topics and were dropped, leaving a set of 44 criteria. Using these same ratings, 31 of the diversity criteria were identified that address cultural competence (topics included general diversity, cultural, religion, family, race, and language). These are listed in Appendix A. Table 1 shows the distribution of cultural competence criteria among 10 NAEYC standards and the sources of evidence used to evaluate them. Note that all sources of evidence are used to evaluate at least some criteria related to diversity and cultural competence—observation, program and classroom portfolios, family and teaching staff surveys—although various sources are used selectively to assess different standards.

### Findings

This Trend Brief looks at the performance of the 31 cultural competence criteria among 127 programs visited in 2009 as part of a reliability study (see inset). The analysis considers the pass rates for these criteria, and pass rate differences according to the program’s decision outcome for the accreditation visit, i.e., Accredited or Not Accredited (Deferred or Denied). In addition, we created overall scores for all 44 diversity criteria and for the 31 criteria that address cultural competence. Finally, as detailed below, scores for general diversity and cultural competence were also calculated at the indicator level, allowing a comparison between programs’ ability to meet general diversity or cultural competence criteria based upon the source of evidence demanded for each specific indicator.

#### Cultural Competence Criteria Pass Rates

The first analysis examines the overall pass rate for each of the cultural competence criteria to identify those criteria that programs are least successful in meeting. Importantly, all programs in this sample are seeking accreditation and are attempting to demonstrate compliance with NAEYC criteria, so pass rates are generally higher than might be expected among early childhood programs generally. As shown in Table 2, the eight most challenging criteria occur in 5 standards (Standards 2, 7, 6, 10, and 3), including 3 in the NAEYC standard for Families (Standard 7). The two criteria with the lowest overall pass rates (2.J.01 and 2.L.03) both speak to children’s “varied opportunities” to gain understanding and appreciation for diversity. These criteria go beyond superficial efforts to “recognize” diversity and extend toward variation in curriculum-driven experiences with a goal of understanding and appreciation. Two of the most challenging criteria focus on how teachers interact with families to understand cultural diversity and build cultural competence through shared community experiences (7.A.04) and directly with families (7.A.03). One of these criteria (3.E.03) reflects the use of teaching practices that embrace cultural diversity. Finally, some of the criteria speak to the preparation and on-

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### Table 1. Summary of Diversity and Cultural Competence Criteria by Program Standard and Source of Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>All Diversity</th>
<th>Cultural Competence</th>
<th>Sources of Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Criteria</td>
<td>Number of Criteria</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Relationships</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Curriculum</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Teaching</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Assessment of Child Progress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Family</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Community Relationships</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Physical Environment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Leadership and Management</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
engaging them in the child’s program (8.B.02, 7.A.02, 7.A.03, 10.E.03) also differentiate between programs that became accredited through NAEYC’s site visit assessment and those that did not achieve accreditation. Some of these criteria reflect challenges in connecting with diverse families and engaging them in the child’s program (8.B.02, 7.A.02, 7.A.03, 7.A.07). Two of these criteria (3.F.03, 4.E.05) may reflect an ability to understand, and respect, diversity in family values, especially when they may differ from those of the teacher. This may be especially challenging for programs that struggle to hire diverse staff and ensure that their training includes working with diverse families (7.A.01 and 10.E.03). Not only do these competencies affect the potential for programs to engage families, they may also limit the degree to which programs can provide children with varied and:

Table 2. Cultural Competence Criteria with Lowest Pass Rates among All Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Number</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.L.03</td>
<td>Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to build their understanding of diversity in culture, family structure, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways.</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.E.05</td>
<td>Communication with families about their child’s assessments is sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.F.03</td>
<td>Teachers and families work together to help children participate successfully in the early childhood setting when professional values and practices differ from family values and practices.</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.E.05</td>
<td>Communication with families about their child’s assessments is sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Cultural Competence Criteria with Highest Pass Rate Differences between Accredited vs. Not-Accredited Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Number</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Accredited Pass Rate</th>
<th>Not Accredited Pass Rate</th>
<th>Pass Rate Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.A.01</td>
<td>As a part of orientation and ongoing staff development, new and existing program staff develop skills and knowledge to work effectively with diverse families.</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.L.03</td>
<td>Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to build their understanding of diversity in culture, family structure, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways.</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.E.05</td>
<td>Communication with families about their child’s assessments is sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.B.02</td>
<td>Program staff connect with and use their community’s urban, suburban, rural, or tribal cultural resources.</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.F.03</td>
<td>Teachers and families work together to help children participate successfully in the early childhood setting when professional values and practices differ from family values and practices.</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.E.03</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.A.03</td>
<td>Program staff actively use information about families to adapt the program environment, curriculum, and teaching methods to the families they serve.</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.A.02</td>
<td>Program staff use a variety of formal and informal strategies (including conversations) to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure; their preferred child-rearing practices; and information families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds.</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.A.07</td>
<td>Program staff ensure that all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language are included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities. These opportunities consider each family’s interests and skills and the needs of program staff.</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
deep experiences to support their own cultural competence (2.A.03).

**Cultural Competence Overall Scores**

Examining pass rates for cultural competence-related criteria provide one view of programs serving young children that can speak to specific examples of best practice. Such a view is no doubt critical in building cultural competence within programs. However, it is also possible to examine the degree to which programs, overall, support cultural competence. To do so, overall scores for diversity and cultural competence for each program were created by calculating the pass rate of the criteria in the diversity cross-cutting theme as well as the 31 criteria that address cultural competence. Across programs, the overall diversity scores averaged 90.4% (range: 61%–100%) and the cultural competence scores averaged 90.1% (range: 59%–100%). Because the cultural competence score is based upon a subset of all of the diversity sensitive, the two would be expected to be closely related. Indeed, they are highly correlated \( r = .956, p < .01 \). The average overall scores for each of these scales differed markedly and significantly between programs achieving accreditation and those that did not become accredited. Accredited programs scored significantly higher than programs not accredited on both the overall diversity score (average score of 91.9% versus 77.0%) and the cultural competence score (average score of 91.5% versus 77.0%).

**Indicator Level Scoring by Sources of Evidence**

There are two problematic aspects of these diversity-related criteria scores that prompted further analysis. First, many of the diversity-related criteria have multiple indicators (sub-statements of best practice). Indicators constitute the rated items in our system. Criteria are scored by combining ratings across indicators, which are themselves rated across one or more sources of evidence. For some criteria, only some of the indicators are related to diversity. An example is seen in Criterion 3.B.03, containing 6 indicators:

3.B.03  Teaching staff develop individual relationships with children by providing care that is
a. responsive,
b. attentive,
c. consistent,
d. comforting,
e. supportive, and
f. culturally sensitive.

Criteria are scored across multiple indicators, so a failure to pass Criterion 3.B.03 may or may not reflect performance on Indicator (f), “providing care that is . . . culturally sensitive”. Therefore criterion-level scores may reflect differences for reasons not related to the program’s approach to diversity.

A second problem with criterion-based scores arises because they are constructed by considering all sources of evidence assigned to the criterion. For example, standard 2.A.04 (“The curriculum can be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to [a] family home values, beliefs, and experiences, and [b] language”) is assessed through family survey, teacher survey, and program portfolio review. Among diversity-related criteria, family and teaching staff surveys are commonly in the evidence mix, though never used as the sole source of evidence for any criterion. However, survey evidence is subject to a positive rating bias among the stakeholders who make these ratings. In our data, survey evidence tends not to correlate with other sources of evidence, which do otherwise correlate with each other.

Each source of evidence provides a different and complementary means of approximating the level at which cultural competence is incorporated into early childhood programs. Generally speaking, program portfolio evidence provides documentation of program policies and procedures at the programmatic level (i.e., across all classrooms within a program). Classroom portfolio evidence illustrates and exemplifies classroom practices and resources. Finally, observable evidence is focused within classrooms, but what is seen there may be the result of various combinations of program-level and classroom-level practices and approaches. An examination of indicator-level scores within these various sources of evidence provides a more detailed and nuanced picture of specific quality improvement steps that may be taken. For example, low scores on observable evidence seen with high scores on program portfolio suggests that a program’s policies may be in place, but they are not being realized within its classroom practices.

For these reasons we constructed indicator-level, evidence-specific scores for overall diversity and for cultural competence. For each previously selected criterion, we identified and included only the specific indicators related to diversity. We constructed separate scale scores for Observation (OBS), Program Portfolio (PP), and Classroom Portfolio (CP) sources of evidence, but not for Family or Teaching Staff Survey sources of evidence. Because each criterion is rated according to its own evidence profile (one criterion may be rated on Observation and CP, another on PP alone, another on PP and survey evidence), scores constructed for each source of evidence contain a different mix of indicators and had different pass rates. Across all programs in the sample, Observable evidence pass rates for general diversity and cultural competence were 91% and 92% respectively. Classroom Portfolio evidence scores were markedly lower (79% & 78%), while Program Portfolio evidence scores were in between (90% & 90%).

Figure 1 presents these source-of-evidence indicator scores for Accredited vs. Not Accredited Programs. There were meaningful and mostly significant differences in diversity-related scores by accreditation decision. Mean differences between scores for accredited vs. not accredited programs ranged from 10% (Cultural competence, Observable Evidence, and Classroom Portfolio evidence) to over 19% (Cultural Competence, Program Portfolio evidence).

Correlations among overall scores measuring cultural competence in these various ways ranged from high to moderate and were all significant. Table 4 shows these correlations for the criterion-level overall scores and the three indicator-level, evidence-specific scores. These data suggest that the criterion-level scores provide a reasonably good estimate of the scores at the indicator, evidence-specific level; in other words, programs’ ability to address cultural competence at the criterion level is consistent with performance on the indicator level. Likewise, the correlations between each of the indicator-level scores (ranging .320–.377) are statistically significant, but all smaller than their corresponding correlation with the overall criteria-level score.
This suggests that each is contributing to the program’s overall cultural competence score. There are, however, large apparent differences between the correlations of the indicator-level scores and the criterion-level scores that are suggestive. The Program Portfolio indicator-level score and criterion-level cultural competence score appear much more highly correlated with each other than do either of the other sources of evidence (classroom portfolio and observation) with the criterion-level score. This suggests that program portfolio may be a larger determinant of the degree to which the program supports cultural competence. It may also suggest that even within programs showing high cultural competence, practices at the classroom level (evidenced through observable and classroom portfolio evidence) can be stronger.

### Summary and Conclusions

Cultural competence is a critical component of developmentally appropriate practice and infuses both NAEYC standards for professional preparation and standards for programs serving young children. However, there is no single standard for cultural competence within the program standards. The analyses presented here looked across all standards to identify criteria that address diversity generally and cultural competence in particular. One strength of the NAEYC Accreditation system for programs is that its 417 criteria provide an opportunity to construct cross-standard scores that are not constrained by a single standard. The analyses presented here suggest that the accreditation assessment process is very robust and can yield meaningful measures.
for concepts of interest. Further, these analyses can be done for individual sources of evidence as well as for combined criteria scores.

Consistent with similar analyses we have presented previously for individual standards, these analyses found that some cultural competence-related criteria and indicators are more challenging for programs than are others, and some are more likely to present barriers to achieving accreditation by NAECY, even when all of the programs are attempting to meet the same set of criteria. These findings suggest that criteria related to cultural competence may constitute an area in need of improvement for programs seeking accreditation.

In addition to informing program improvement within the context of accreditation, these analyses are suggestive of quality improvement as it relates to cultural competence in programs that may not be seeking NAECY Accreditation.

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5NAEYC standards address diversity in a number of ways in addition to cultural and linguistic diversity, including diversity in gender, family structure, and developmental differences and disabilities. As a result, some criteria address diversity globally (including cultural diversity and/or linguistic diversity), while others speak specifically to cultural and/or linguistic diversity.

6A total of 19 of the 44 diversity criteria were identified as addressing special needs or developmental ability. Additional analyses focused on these topics will be reported in a separate “Trend Brief.”

7Criteria considered “most challenging” are those in the lowest quartile when pass rates for these criteria were examined.

8Difference based upon independent sample t-tests for overall diversity score (t=4.31, p<.001) and cultural competence score (t=3.724, p<.05). The t-test is a basic statistical procedure that compares two average, or mean, scores to each other. By taking into consideration how much scores within each group vary (the standard deviation), t-tests identify differences in means that are statistically significant, or larger than one might expect even with the variations in scores within each group.


10Because the number of accredited programs was 10 times the number of not-accredited programs, equality of variance could not be assumed for these t-tests. Tests of observable and program portfolio evidence were significant (p<.01) but tests of classroom portfolio evidence were not (p>.05).

11There are statistical procedures that can directly assess the degree to which these scores comprise a single scale or multiple scales. However, the modest sample used for exploratory purposes here does not support such analyses. An examination of correlations, while less statistically robust, can be suggestive of relationships that can be further tested using a larger set of data.

12While there are statistical procedures to test for significant differences between some pairs of correlation coefficients, those procedures require both a larger sample and data that meet a number of criteria about their relatedness. As a result, these data are not suitable for such analyses, so the simple comparisons presented in the text are speculative.

13See http://www.naeyc.org/academy/primary/trendbriefs.

Appendix A: Cultural Competence Criteria

The following NAEYC Accreditation criteria have been identified as related to cultural competence.

1.A.02 Teachers gain information about the ways families define their own race, religion, home language, culture, and family structure.

1.D.01 Teaching staff counter potential bias and discrimination by (a) treating all children with equal respect and consideration; (b) initiating activities and discussions that build positive self-identity and teach the valuing of differences; (c) intervening when children tease or reject others; (d) providing models and visual images of adult roles, differing abilities, and ethnic or cultural backgrounds that counter stereotypical limitations; (e) avoiding stereotypes in language references.

2.A.04 The curriculum can be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to (a) family home values, beliefs, experiences, and (b) language.

2.A.08 Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum reflect the lives of the children and families as well as the diversity found in society including (a) gender, (b) age, (c) language, and (d) abilities.

2.D.01 Children are provided with opportunities for language acquisition that (a) align with the program philosophy, (b) consider family perspectives, (c) consider community perspectives.

2.D.02 Children are provided opportunities to experience oral and written communication in a language their family uses or understands.

2.J.01 Children are provided varied opportunities to gain appreciation of (a) art, (b) music, (c) drama, and (d) dance in ways that reflect cultural diversity.

2.L.03 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to build their understanding of diversity in (a) culture, (b) family structure, (c) ability, (d) language, (e) age, and (f) gender in non-stereotypical ways.

3.B.01 Teaching staff’s daily interactions demonstrate their knowledge of (a) the children they teach; (b) the children’s families; (c) the social, linguistic, and cultural context in which the children live.

3.B.03 Teaching staff develop individual relationships with children by providing care that is (a) responsive, (b) attentive, (c) consistent, (d) comforting, (e) supportive, and (f) culturally sensitive.

3.B.04 Teaching staff are active in identifying and countering any teaching practices, curriculum approaches, or materials that are degrading with respect to gender, sexual orientation, age, language, ability, race, religion, family structure, background, or culture.

3.B.10 Teaching staff individualize routine care (e.g., learning to use the toilet and to feed oneself) by incorporating family practices whenever possible and by respecting the home culture and the family’s preferred language.

3.F.03 Teachers and families work together to help children participate successfully in the early childhood setting when professional values and practices differ from family values and practices.

3.F.04 Teaching staff help children understand spoken language, (particularly when children are learning a new language) by using (a) pictures, (b) familiar objects, (c) body language, and physical cues.

3.F.05 Teaching staff support the development and maintenance of children’s home language whenever possible.

4.B.01 Programs use a variety of assessment methods that are sensitive to and informed by family culture, experiences, children’s abilities and disabilities, and home language; are meaningful and accurate; and are used in settings familiar to the children.

4.E.05 Communication with families about their child’s assessments is sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.

6.A.07 All teaching staff have specialized college-level course work and/or professional development training that prepares them to work with children and families of diverse races, cultures, and languages. Specialized college-level course work may include core courses that cover these topics or courses that address these topics specifically. Teaching staff adapt their teaching in response to children’s differences.

7.A.01 As a part of orientation and ongoing staff development, new and existing program staff develop skills and knowledge to work effectively with diverse families.

7.A.02 Program staff use a variety of formal and informal strategies (including conversations) to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure; their preferred child-rearing practices; and information families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

7.A.03 Program staff actively use information about families to adapt (a) the program environment, (b) curriculum, and (c) teaching methods to the families they serve.
Appendix A: Cultural Competence Criteria cont.

7.A.04 To better understand the cultural backgrounds of children, families, and the community, program staff (as a part of program activities or as individuals), participate in community cultural events, concerts, storytelling activities, or other events and performances designed for children and their families.

7.A.07 Program staff ensure that all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language are included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities. These opportunities consider each family’s interests and skills and the needs of program staff.

7.B.01 Program staff use a variety of mechanisms such as family conferences or home visits to promote dialogue with families. The program staff asks adults to translate or interpret communications as needed.

7.B.02 The program compiles and provides program information to families in a language the family can understand. This information includes program policies and operating procedures.

7.C.04 Program staff use a variety of techniques to negotiate difficulties that arise in their interactions with family members. Program staff make arrangements to use these techniques in a language the family can understand.

8.A.03 Program staff are familiar with family support services and specialized consultants who are able to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services. They use this knowledge to suggest and guide families to these services as appropriate.

8.B.02 Program staff connect with and use their community’s urban, suburban, rural, or tribal cultural resources.

9.A.09 Program staff arrange the environment to be welcoming and accessible. A welcoming and accessible environment contains elements such as (a) multicultural materials that promote appreciation for diversity while being respectful of the cultural traditions, values, and beliefs of families being served; (b) clearly defined places where families can gather information regarding the daily schedule and upcoming events; (c) clearly defined places where families sign in, sign out, and gather information about their child’s day; (d) places for displaying children’s work; and (e) features that moderate visual and auditory stimulation.

10.B.08 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. Policies address (a) the program’s philosophy, (b) curriculum goals and objectives, (c) the program’s commitment to welcome children and families, and (d) guidance and discipline. Procedures address (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.

10.E.03 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.