

## **ASSESSMENT #4: ECE Leadership Activity**

Assessment conducted in LEE 250: Leadership in Early Childhood Education

### **2010 NAEYC Advanced Standards 2, 3, 6 NAEYC Key Elements 2b, 3d, 6a, 6b, 6e**

Assessment #4, ECE Leadership Activity, evaluates three 2010 NAEYC Standards and five Key Elements. The ECE Leadership Activity is evaluated in LEE250: Leadership in Early Childhood Education. This assessment is required of all ECE graduate candidates as part of LEE250, which is a core (required) course.

The ECE Leadership Activity requires students to design a community-based activity to enhance ECE quality based in their ECE practice. This activity is a critical demonstration of the candidate's ability to provide effective professional leadership grounded in research and best practice, and to be an advocate for children and families.

Based on feedback regarding Assessment #4 in our Recognition Report, we have removed Key Element 3b from the assessment and separated each Key Element in the rubric. The revised assessment and rubric assess the following Key Elements: 2b: *Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships*; 3d: *Demonstrating ability to collaborate effectively to build assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments*; 6a: *Demonstrating professional identification with and leadership skills in the early childhood field to think strategically, build consensus, create change, effectively collaborate with and mentor others, and have a positive influence on outcomes for children, families, and the profession*; 6b: *In-depth understanding and thoughtful application of NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and other professional guidelines relevant to practice and professional role*; and 6e: *Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession, skillfully articulating and advocating for sound professional practices and public policies*.

Because the course in which this assessment is administered is only taught in the Fall semester, data are only available for one round, administered in Fall 2014. Data suggest that this assessment taps into relative areas of weakness for our candidates. Based on holistic scores, 1 out of 15 candidates scored at a "does not yet meet expectations" level on this assessment. Every Key Element, with the exception of 6e: *Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession, skillfully articulating and advocating for sound professional practices and public policies*, had at least one candidate who scored a 1. The weakest candidate performance was on Key Element 6b: *In-depth understanding and thoughtful application of NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and other professional guidelines relevant to practice and professional role*, for which 9 (60%) out of 15 candidates scored a 1. Candidate performance was strongest for Key Element 6a: *Demonstrating professional identification with and leadership skills in the early childhood field to think strategically, build consensus, create change, effectively collaborate with and mentor others, and have a positive influence on outcomes for children, families, and the profession*, for which 11 (73.33%) out of 15

candidates scored at a level that exceeded expectations. With the revision of the rubric for this assessment, it may be that a course revision is also necessary. Future steps will include analysis of the course topics and the instruction to evaluate how the course can be strengthened to provide more support for candidates to develop their competencies relative to the Key Elements assessed in this assessment and rubric.

## **ECE Leadership Activity**

Assessment conducted in LEE 250: Leadership in Early Childhood Education

**2010 NAEYC Advanced Standards 2, 3, 6**  
**NAEYC Key Elements 2b, 3d, 6a, 6b, 6e**

Students design or participate in a leadership activity related to ECE specialization that enhances ECE quality and includes working collaboratively with families or community members. This activity is a critical demonstration of the candidate's ability to provide effective professional leadership grounded in research and best practice and to be an advocate for children and families. Students can choose to design a new activity or to join an ongoing activity and contribute their expertise and help. The goals of this assignment are to give students experience and practice with the following NAEYC Key Elements: 2b, 3d, 6a, 6b, 6e.

Examples of possible leadership activities for ECE Teacher Leaders include: providing a workshop for families at the school on testing and the uses and misuses of test scores; creating a plan for adding a preschool to the school site; or offering an in-service on anti-bias curriculum resources or children's literature. Examples of possible leadership activities for ECE Program Leaders include: providing a program for parents on the effects of TV viewing on children; developing a workshop for family-based ECE providers on obesity prevention in children; or conducting a strategic planning session with a local ECE organization on ways to expand the availability of quality infant and toddler services.

Regardless of the setting or role of an ECE professional, advocacy for children, families and ECE programs requires specific leadership skills. It is crucial that ECE leaders employ strategies that persuade decision-makers to make constructive changes to improve ECE quality and make investments in children's programs (Edelman, 2002).

### *Background*

Numerous studies have demonstrated that ECE quality is directly and positively related to improved cognitive, social and behavioral outcomes for children as well as children's later school success (Carolina Abecedarian Project, 1999; Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study Team, 1995; Frede, 1995; Galinsky, Howes, Kontos, & Shinn, 1994; NICHD, 2002). Yet all of these same studies indicate that the quality of the vast majority of ECE programs continue to be low to mediocre quality. Minimal licensing requirements, low pay, lack of well-qualified ECE teachers and ECE leaders, turnover in the field, inappropriate curriculum, poor learning environment and other factors detrimentally affect ECE program quality in most pre-K settings.

ECE leaders play a pivotal role in creating a quality ECE program (Culkin, 1997). The extent that an ECE program leader is able to advocate for services, craft the

organization's mission, understand the organizational culture, manage for quality, build quality relationships and develop a quality ECE program determine the organization's well-being and effectiveness (Kagan & Bowman, 1997). Similar findings exist with respect to teacher leaders. ECE leaders who champion quality for children have the potential to have a significant impact. However the philosophical orientation and specific leadership skills needed are not always clear. Kagan and Hallmark (2001) argue that the traditional corporate model for leadership is not adaptable to the ECE field. Rather, "the intimacy, flexibility, diversity, and individualization of early childhood programs create a decidedly different leadership context than the formality, uniformity, rigidity, and bureaucratization that has been conventionally associated with a corporate setting" (p. 8). Collaboration. interpersonal communication, cultural competence, group decision-making and staff development are essential aspects to effective ECE leadership (Bella & Bloom, 2003). ECE leaders must exert at least five varieties of program leadership: community leadership, pedagogical leadership, administrative leadership, advocacy leadership and conceptual leadership (Kagan & Bowman, 1997). ECE leadership requires going beyond day-to-day crises to develop a vision of ECE in the context of the profession and the larger community (Bella and Bloom, 2003).

### *Activity Directions*

Design a leadership activity that enhances ECE quality in an ECE setting such as a school or program or in the community.

#### **Leadership Activity Steps**

1. Select a topic based on personal experience or literature review, and/or needs assessment.
2. Develop a Leadership Activity Plan: outline of the leadership activity, short description of what you propose to do, timeline, audience, collaborative partners, and 8-10 resources.
3. Implement the plan: do the "Leadership Activity."
4. Evaluate your activity / get feedback from audience.
5. List recommendations for further action.
6. Present an overview of the leadership activity to the class.
7. Submit a Leadership Activity Report on Blackboard. Include all of the above.

Scoring will be based on the ECE Leadership Activity Rubric. An "A" is required on this a project for a grade of A in the course.

**Assessment #4: ECE Leadership Activity**

Assessment conducted in LEE 250: Leadership in Early Childhood Education  
 2010 NAEYC Advanced Standards 2, 3, 6 (Key Elements: 2b, 3d, 6a, 6b, 6e)

NAEYC Advanced Standard/Key Element	DOES NOT YET MEET EXPECTATIONS (1)	MEETS EXPECTATIONS (2)	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (3)	Analytic Score
<p>STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p><b>Key Element 2b:</b> Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships</p>	<p>The family/community component of the leadership activity is limited. There are no opportunities for input or two-way communication.</p>	<p>Families and community members have some opportunities to give input on the leadership activity. Their ideas are valued and considered for inclusion.</p>	<p>Families and community members are included by contributing to the planning and/or implementation process of the activity. Their contributions are valued and celebrated. Specific examples of reciprocal relationships are highlighted.</p>	
<p>STANDARD 3. OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p><b>Key Element 3d:</b> Demonstrating ability to collaborate effectively to build assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments</p>	<p>The Leadership Activity confuses cooperation with collaboration; it does not have provisions for collaborative work with families and colleagues. There is little or no evidence of observation or assessment being used.</p>	<p>The Leadership Activity includes some type of initial observation or assessments. The Activity incorporates collaborative discussion and planning that involves families and professional colleagues.</p>	<p>The Leadership Activity includes a collaborative approach to building effective learning environments. The Leadership Activity is based on the results of analyzing observations, assessment data and input from stakeholders.</p>	

NAEYC Advanced Standard/Key Element	DOES NOT YET MEET EXPECTATIONS (1)	MEETS EXPECTATIONS (2)	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS (3)	Analytic Score
<p>STANDARD 6. GROWING AS A PROFESSIONAL</p> <p><b>Key Element 6a:</b> Demonstrating professional identification with and leadership skills in the early childhood field to think strategically, build consensus, create change, effectively collaborate with and mentor others, and have a positive influence on outcomes for children, families and the profession</p>	<p>Little evidence of participating in partnerships or contributing to positive changes in the profession;</p>	<p>The Leadership Activity provides some evidence of taking a leadership role, and of working with others to achieve positive professional outcomes.</p>	<p>The Leadership Activity clearly demonstrates that the candidate is assuming a leadership role. There is evidence of working collaborative with others on the chosen topic or issue. The Leadership Activity produces a positive outcome.</p>	
<p><b>Key Element 6b:</b> In-depth understanding and thoughtful application of NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and other professional guidelines relevant to their professional role</p>	<p>No mention of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct or professional guidelines in the Leadership Activity. Parts of the activity are not in alignment with established codes.</p>	<p>The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is referenced in the leadership activity and the activity is in complete alignment with established codes.</p>	<p>There is evidence of understanding the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and using it to guide decision-making, with specific references to the Code.</p>	
<p><b>Key Element 6e:</b> Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession, skillfully articulating and advocating for sound professional practices and public policies</p>	<p>Little or no evidence of using research to design or evaluate the Leadership Activity. Position is unclear or disconnected to professional practices and public policy. The Leadership Activity does not address a community/family need.</p>	<p>Some evidence of Leadership Activity being based on research. At least 8 resources cited. Position taken is clear but not connected to professional practices and public policy. The Leadership Activity is generally related to a community/family need.</p>	<p>Evidence of Leadership Activity being based on research. At least 10 resources cited. Position clearly articulated and connected to sound professional practices and public policy. The Leadership Activity is clearly and explicitly related to a focused community/family need.</p>	

### **ECE Leadership Activity Scoring Guide**

**Analytic Scoring:**

Does Not Yet Meet Expectations = 1; Meets Expectations = 2; Exceeds Expectations = 3

**Holistic Scoring:**

Does Not Yet Meet Expectations = 5-7; Meets Expectations = 8-11; Exceeds Expectations = 12-15

## ASSESSMENT #4 ECE Leadership Activity Data

### Assessment #4 Analytic Data (Fall 2014); n = 15

NAEYC Advanced Standard/Key Element	Does Not Yet Meet Expectations (1)	Meets Expectations (2)	Exceeds Expectations (3)
STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS <b>Key Element 2b:</b> Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships	5 33.33%	8 53.33%	2 13.33%
STANDARD 3. OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES <b>Key Element 3d:</b> Demonstrating ability to collaborate effectively to build assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments	1 6.67%	10 66.67%	4 26.67%
STANDARD 6. GROWING AS A PROFESSIONAL <b>Key Element 6a:</b> Demonstrating professional identification with and leadership skills in the early childhood field to think strategically, build consensus, create change, effectively collaborate with and mentor others, and have a positive influence on outcomes for children, families and the profession	1 6.67%	3 20%	11 73.33%
<b>Key Element 6b:</b> In-depth understanding and thoughtful application of NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and other professional guidelines relevant to their professional role	9 60%	3 20%	3 20%
<b>Key Element 6e:</b> Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession, skillfully articulating and advocating for sound professional practices and public policies	0	10 66.67%	5 33.33%

### Assessment #4 Holistic Data (Fall 2014); n = 15

Does Not Yet Meet Expectations (5-7)	Meets Expectations (8-11)	Exceeds Expectations (12-15)
1 6.67%	8 53.33%	6 40%