

Program Director Credential – Step 3

Portfolio Design Seminar OUTLINE

Recommendation to the Professional Preparation and Development Committee, July 21, 2020

This seminar will provide a structured learning experience that enables the participant to delve deeply into the director competencies and explore what is at the heart of best practice.

Seminar Rationale

The Program Director Credential (PDC) Portfolio Design Seminar is designed for experienced early childhood and afterschool professionals seeking to become credentialed childcare program directors. The overarching purpose is to contribute to the quality and stability of childcare settings in Vermont.

The objective of this seminar is to facilitate the individuals' understanding and demonstration of competence as a program director working in a regulated early childhood or afterschool program in Vermont. Objectives will be met through reflection on previously accumulated education and experience, as well as by gaining new skills and perspective based on the research-based VT Knowledge and Competencies for Program Directors.

This seminar will provide a structured learning experience that enables the participant to delve deeply into the director competencies and explore what is at the heart of best practice. During this process, the participant develops materials and compiles evidence for a portfolio demonstrating their skills and knowledge in these Program Director knowledge areas: Child and Youth Development, Families and Communities, Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Learning Environments, Healthy and Safe Environments, and Professionalism and Program Organization. The acquisition of these competencies demonstrates growth and development for both the program director and the organization. The seminar will develop the participant's understanding and use of these competencies. Specific competencies requiring focused research and development of skills relating to managing a regulated program will be defined by self-assessment. Learning during the 45 seminar will occur through Core Knowledge Area trainings, community of practice and coaching. The Community of Practice allows group dialogue to share and build skills, resources and networks.

Seminar Learning Objectives

Learners will:

1. Complete a pre and post self-assessment based on Vermont Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Program Directors that reflects their prior knowledge and experience; identifies areas for growth, and recognizes development during the seminar.
2. Expand and enhance collegiality and group problem solving.
3. Create an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) based on Program Director self-assessment.
4. Demonstrate competencies as a program director through the development, and visual presentation of elements of the individual's program director portfolio.
5. Identify indicators of quality and effective practices in program director competency areas.
6. Submit a completed Portfolio Checklist with "evidence of competency" documentation for each section, with a minimum of 60% of the full portfolio documents included.

Portfolio Design Seminar

Outline

Learning Objectives are divided into four modules equaling 45 hours of content and delivered over 12 weeks:

The Portfolio Design Seminar was created to include training, coaching, and community of practice to meet standards for best practice. The workgroup recommends that the seminar be assessed by Northern Lights and STARS to identify if any hours within the seminar meet yearly professional development training and STARS requirements.

Module 1: Core Knowledge Areas (CKA) training content (learning objectives 1 and 5)

Module 2: Based on self-assessment, either CKA training OR coaching sessions (learning objectives 1 and 5)

Module 3: Community of Practice (learning objectives 1, 2, 3, 4)

Module 4: Portfolio Progress Review (learning objective 6)

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Competencies refer to the observable skills and dispositions needed by professionals in order to provide high quality care and education to children and their families. They are organized around Core Knowledge Areas, which represent the key knowledge areas of the profession.¹

Module 1

Core Knowledge Area 5 Trainings²

- 18.5 training hours over 9 weeks via online-real time (online learning platform with trainer).

Methods

Learning objective 5 will be explored by studying each competency, using a rubric for identifying and collecting quality evidence and sharing documents. Overall, we want participants to ask, "Why is this competency important? Why is it identified as best practice?" Then, follow that with this reflection, "How do I - or how would I - demonstrate this in my program and what document(s) will I choose as evidence?" Also, participants are asked to engage in ongoing assessment that supports the question, "Am I strong in this area, or do I need coaching/support to create evidence for this competency?"

- **Session I** - 2.5 hours online: Introduction – what is the portfolio design seminar process, how is the portfolio organized, program director self-assessment reviewed and applied to next steps in the seminar process (assessment completed by individual prior to Session I), general questions.
- **Session II** - 2 hours online: CKA – 5A Professionalism. Competency study and choosing quality evidence.
- **Session III – parts 1 and 2** - 6 hours: CKA- 5B Fiscal Management
2 hours online, 2 hours for assignment, followed by 2 hours online for reflection/review.
- **Session IV – parts 1 and 2** - 6 hours: CKA-5C and 5D Legal Issues and Personnel
2 hours online, 2 hours for assignment, followed by 2 hours online for reflection/review.
- **Session V** - 2 hours: CKA-5E Leadership. Competency study and choosing quality evidence.

Module 2 - Participants Choose Either: A (Trainings) or B (Coaching)

Core Knowledge Areas 1-4

- 4 training hours over 2 weeks via online-real time.

Methods

Choice of Module A or B is self-selected based on self-assessment completed in Module 1, Session I. Competencies in CKAs 1-4 will be studied and portfolio design rubric used for choosing quality evidence. Coaching is done one-to-one and includes reviewing personal assessment for CKA 1-4, support with writing CKA introductory descriptions/philosophy, and using portfolio design rubric for choosing quality evidence.

Module 2A	Module 2B
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Session I – 2 hours: Competency study and choosing quality evidence.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ CKA 1 - Child and Youth Development○ CKA 3- Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Learning Environments• Session II – 2 hours: Competency study and choosing quality evidence.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ CKA 2 - Families and Communities○ CKA 4 - Healthy and Safe Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coaching – 4 hours (see Methods above).

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*Community of practice is, "...a group of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly."*³

Module 3

Community of Practice

- 21 Hours over 10 weeks, online-real time (online learning platform with facilitator).

Methods

Learning objectives 1,2,3,4 and topics that develop organically by the group will be investigated with the support of a facilitator. The facilitator will guide the group as they establish goals and a time-line to meet them. The facilitator will support the group's exploration of the learning objectives; assisting the group in identifying the methods for exploration in their practice and delivering materials the community is inspired to use for their learning.

Module 4

Portfolio Progress Review

- 1.5 hours

Methods

Learning Objective 6 is met by the student consulting with a member of the Program Director Credential (PDC) committee, a Step 3 PDC recipient, or the PDC coordinator for a review of the student's progress with creating their portfolio. At least 60% of the portfolio should be completed by the time of the progress review.

Suggestions and feedback will be given on documents submitted for evidence, as well as the successful organization of the portfolio and clarity of the Core Knowledge Area reflections. This progress review does not replace the final portfolio review. Notes from this review will be added to evidence submitted to the final portfolio review committee to demonstrate growth and learning of the candidate.

The progress review will include creating a time-line for completing and submitting the portfolio for final review, as well as identifying supports that will help the participant meet this time-line.

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What are the Key Assumptions?

Competencies for Program Directors of Early Childhood and Afterschool Programs are anchored to these assumptions that guide their use:

1. Research consistently reports that competent directors are essential to a successful program for children and families.
2. Effective administration of a center requires a strong foundation in child development and education, as well as business and management knowledge.
3. Administrative functions include a multitude of tasks and systems designed to carry out the program's mission.
4. Leadership requires that managers have the vision to focus on the larger picture, anticipate trends and set new goals.
5. The role of the director is multifaceted and dynamic. Though all competencies may not be required in a particular job, directors should strive to acquire all the skills and knowledge reflected in the competencies.
6. Competencies are emergent and develop over time with experience, education and intention.
(Program Director Competency Book, 2012)

² Program Director Core Knowledge Areas (CKA) – description from the Program Director Competency Book (2012)

Competencies for Program Directors of Early Child and Afterschool Programs Assessment have been organized around five knowledge areas deemed essential to the position of a program director. These include Child and Youth Development, Families and Communities, Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Learning Environments, Healthy and Safe Environments, and Professionalism and Program Organization. The knowledge areas are detailed in the Program Director competencies.

³ Description of a Community of Practice taken from the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium

1. Domain: Community members have a shared domain of interest, competence and commitment that distinguishes them from others. This shared domain creates common ground, inspires members to participate, guides their learning, and gives meaning to their actions.

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2. Community: Members pursue this interest through joint activities, discussions, problem-solving opportunities, information sharing and relationship building. The notion of a community creates the social fabric for enabling collective learning. A strong community fosters interaction and encourages a willingness to share ideas.
 3. Practice: Community members are actual practitioners in this domain of interest, and build a shared repertoire of resources and ideas that they take back to their practice. While the domain provides the general area of interest for the community, the practice is the specific focus around which the community develops, shares and maintains its core of collective knowledge.

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