

Welcome to the Professional Preparation and Development Committee!

The Professional Preparation and Development (PPD) Committee formed after Vermont's first Early Childhood Work Group retreat in 1992. At the time, visionary leaders wanted to bring together the groups, activities, and resources that supported the array of services and programs delivered to children, their families, and the adults who work with them. The PPD Committee's initial charge was to examine the issues and current state of early childhood professional development in Vermont. The committee quickly identified several immediate issues including limited coordination of professional development opportunities, limited knowledge across settings, and the limited number of people who had individual professional development plans (IPDPs).

In the early years, the PPD committee focused primarily on professional development needs for staff working in early childhood centers or family child care programs. Over time, the committee expanded its focus to include other professionals working directly with young children and their families in various settings. These settings include afterschool programs, PreK-3 public and private school settings, and home visiting settings. While the particular professional development needs of these populations differ, everyone benefits from accessible professional development opportunities offered within a coordinated system.

Over the years, PPD committee members have worked hard to develop tools, products, and systems to support professionals who work with young and school-age children and their families in Vermont. Some notable committee accomplishments include creating the Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder, the first edition of the Vermont Guide to Early Childhood Careers, and the first edition of Planning your Professional Growth. This committee also created the conceptual framework for Vermont's first statewide professional development hub, the Northern Lights Career Development Center.

In 2016 the PPD committee officially agreed to become one of the Building Bright Futures statewide committees maintaining a particular focus on professional development for the early childhood and afterschool workforce. See the later section for additional detail about our relationship to BBF.

As part of a recent effort to transform Vermont's early childhood professional development system, the PPD committee embarked on its own transformation to strengthen its leadership function in the system. One key change was establishing a voting membership to better ensure appropriate representation of voices across the early childhood and afterschool spectrum, including voices representing K-3, Children's Integrated Services, Early Childhood Special Education, Afterschool direct service and others.

The PPD meets monthly for 2-2.5 hours with an annual half or full day planning retreat. All meetings are open to anyone who wishes to participate, and at times when a vote is required only identified voting members will participate in the votes. This allows us maximum flexibility – all voices are invited to participate in discussions, and a voting membership representing an appropriate array of voices across the system votes on official committee positions when needed. For more information or to join the PPD listserve, email Becky Millard at becky.millard@ccv.edu or Lynne Robbins at lynne.robbins@vermont.gov

Building Bright Futures and its relationship to PPD

Building Bright Futures is a 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization and the designated Vermont Early Childhood Advisory Council to the Governor, Administration, and Legislature in Vermont. BBF is the statewide nonprofit, public-private partnership focused on improving the well-being of young children and families by improving the system that serves them.

In 2014, Vermont conducted a comprehensive stakeholder process to create our Early Childhood Framework, identifying six goals to help ensure that all children grow up happy, healthy, and ready for a lifetime of learning. In the following year, a stakeholder committee used these goals to create Vermont's initial Early Childhood Action Plan.

In 2020, BBF conducted a review and revision process to update the Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan to better align with our current realities and future planning. More information is available here:

<https://buildingbrightfutures.org/what-we-do/early-childhood-action-plan-ecap/>

Building Bright Futures, as the backbone organization of Vermont's early childhood systems work, supports and aligns the work of several statewide committees toward the goals of Vermont's Early Childhood Action Plan. The revised action plan includes the following goals:

1. All children have a healthy start
2. Families and Communities play a Leading Role in Children's Well-Being
3. All Children and Families have Access to High-Quality Opportunities that Meet Their Needs
4. The Early Childhood System will be Integrated, Well-Resourced, and Data-Informed

The four goals of the Action Plan are stewarded by the following committees:

Goal 1	Child Outcomes Accountability Team
Goal 2	Families and Communities Committee
Goal 3	Early Learning and Development Committee Professional Preparation and Development Committee
Goal 4	Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Team Early Childhood Investment Committee Data and Evaluation Committee

Because the PPD and Early Learning and Development committees share responsibility for implementation and oversight of Goal 3, clear and collaborative communication between these committees is particularly important. Each statewide committee is structured with at least one overlapping member. There is also a hybrid committee (ECAP leadership) composed of co-chairs from each committee and facilitated by the BBF ECAP Coordinator that meets monthly to collaborate and share insights.

The new revision to the ECAP makes great strides in clarifying the longer term goals of the broad system and identifies various strategies to advance this work. Most of these strategies are not directly connected to the work of the PPD committee, but it is important for us to continue to examine and identify how our work contributes to the broader goals of the system.

Mission and Purpose of the Professional Preparation and Development Committee

Created July 12, 2005; updated October 2, 2007; updated March 30, 2012

Mission: To develop, coordinate, and promote a comprehensive system of quality learning opportunities for current and prospective early childhood and after school professionals.

Purpose: To build a professional community that:

- Identifies and builds on assets and prioritizes needs for professional opportunities
- Aligns professional development initiatives into a coordinated system
- Advocates for resources and improvements to the system
- Fosters respect, collegiality and collaboration
- Facilitates external and internal communication strategies that promote the value of professional development to stakeholders, including: consumers, practitioners and the general public
- Uses the Guiding Principles for Vermont's professional development system for early childhood and afterschool professionals

This Professional Community includes representatives from broad sectors of the early childhood and afterschool professional development community and the different geographic regions of Vermont including:

- Higher Education
- State agencies and partners¹ (such as the Department of Education², Child Development Division, State Collaboration Office, Department for Children and Families, Vermont Department of Health, Parent Child Centers, Community Child Care Support Agencies, Children's Integrated Services)
- Building Bright Futures State and Regional Councils
- Head Start and Early Head Start
- Northern Lights Career Development Center³
- Sponsors of Professional Development
- Instructors of Professional Development
- Consumers of Professional Development⁴
- Professional associations and networks

¹ Please note: Several of these agencies and partners have changed since the most recent updating of this statement of purpose in 2012. For detailed information about the current roles and constituencies identified as key to representation for the PPD committee, visit the Membership section of this document.

² Now the Vermont Agency of Education

³ Now Northern Lights at CCV

⁴ These consumers include early childhood programs, PreK programs, regulated family child care and center-based programs, Parent Child Center programs, early intervention, home visiting, and more.

Guiding Principles of Vermont's Professional Development System for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals

Adopted March 4, 2011

The following principles serve as a framework for developing and evaluating Vermont's professional development system for early childhood and afterschool professionals. These principles were developed collaboratively and are approved by the Child Development Division and partners throughout the state including the Professional Preparation and Development Committee.

Vermont's professional development system for early childhood and afterschool professionals is:

1. Clear and known
2. Supportive of professional growth
3. Research-based and relevant
4. Integrated and aligned
5. Accessible
6. Financially supported
7. Evaluated on all of the above criteria

Expanded explanations of the Guiding Principles:

1. Clear and known

Practitioners know there is a professional development system available to them

2. Supportive of professional growth

Learning opportunities build upon knowledge and skills in systematic and meaningful ways. Professionals who attain enhanced knowledge and skills are recognized and compensated for achievements along their professional career pathways.

3. Research-based and relevant

Useful professional development content and instructional practices are based on recognized and effective standards that support best practices.

4. Integrated and aligned

Professional development is articulated so it is recognized and meaningful across different systems and work settings.

5. Accessible

Professional development opportunities and pathways are designed with a variety of delivery options to be flexible and available to diverse populations and skill levels.

6. Financially supported

Sufficient and dependable funding, both public and private, is available to support quality professional development that reflects these principles and related practices.

7. Evaluated on all of the above criteria

These principles are used to evaluate professional development activities and the system as a whole in order to ensure an increasingly proficient workforce.

Membership in the Professional Preparation and Development Committee

The following membership guidelines, representation, and member agreements were established 1/30/18

Membership Guidelines:

- PPD will have an **ongoing membership of approximately 15 members.**
- Members bring either/both:
 - o Deep knowledge of **research and best practices** in professional development
 - o Direct knowledge of the **reality of professional development** in early childhood and/or afterschool settings in Vermont including the ability to reflect on the impact of potential changes
- All members have an **identified “constituency group”** of which they are a member or leader. This could be a membership group (Vtaeyc, Vermont Early Childhood Network, BBF state or regional council, Vermont Afterschool Inc., VCCPA, VHSA) or other group of individuals with a particular role/perspective in the early childhood system from whom members can solicit feedback and share updates in an ongoing way. Other individuals with key roles/perspectives may include Head Start Education Coordinators or Public PreK Coordinators.
- To strengthen **feedback loops**, each member will explicitly articulate how they will both share information and solicit feedback from their constituency.
- When a vote is needed, **only PPD members will vote.** Other meeting attendees will not have an opportunity to vote, though they are welcome to participate in discussions that occur prior to the vote being taken.
- Votes will be taken by PPD members participating in the meeting. For any vote, a **PPD member can request that the vote be delayed** a month so all members can solicit feedback from their constituency group or that a vote by email be allowed. Modified consensus will be used when needed to determine if the vote will be taken immediately or delayed. Modified consensus will also be used to determine the official position of PPD membership when needed
- Members are asked to prioritize attendance and participation in PPD meetings whenever possible

All interested parties are invited to participate in PPD meetings on a regular or occasional basis. Content experts may also be invited to participate in meetings as needed based on agenda topics.

Constituency Group: A group of early childhood or afterschool professionals of which you are a member. This group should be one you can both seek feedback from to inform PPD work and report back to with PPD updates. Ideally, the collective constituency groups of all PPD voting members will represent a broad array of early childhood and afterschool professionals from a variety of settings across the whole prenatal to 8 field in Vermont.

Core Member Representation

Certain groups or agencies must be offered a member seat on the PPD committee, either because they hold funding or oversight responsibilities for the system itself or because of their role in implementation of system functions. The Core Members of PPD are:

- Member representing the Child Development Division Systems Team
- Member representing the Child Development Division Children’s Integrated Services Team
- Member representing the Agency of Education’s early education team
- Member representing Northern Lights at CCV
- Member representing Building Bright Futures

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Essential Representation

The PPD seeks to ensure adequate diversity of representation among its voting membership. The following roles, groups, and organizations have been identified as priorities for consideration when selecting representatives to serve as voting members of the PPD committee:

Roles and Non-Membership Organizations	Membership Organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Let’s Grow Kids- Children’s Integrated Services local/regional team- Higher Education- Public School administration- Public school direct staff / teacher- Head Start / Early Head Start- Program Director- Afterschool direct staff- Health / Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children (VTAEYC)- Vermont Head Start Association (VHSA)- Parent Child Center Network- Vermont Child Care Providers Association (VCCPA)- Vermont Afterschool Inc.- Early Childhood Networks (formerly Starting Points Networks)

When possible, membership will also include the following representation:

Roles / Groups / Organizations	Other Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agency of Education [K-3rd grade]- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Centers- Professional Development Sponsors- Instructors / Trainers- Business Leaders- Mentor / Advisor / Coach- BBF Regional Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Geographic diversity of members- Diversity in length of experience in the field- Age groups served (if applicable)- Racial / Ethnic diversity- Balance of public / private / practitioner

Member Agreements:

- Members agree to attend meetings regularly. All members must attend a minimum of 9 meetings per year. Attendance can be in person or by phone, but members agree to participate in person whenever possible.
- Members must have an identified “constituency group” of which they are a leader or a member. Members agree to engage in ongoing communication with their constituency group to gather feedback and share updates - part of the role of a member is to amplify voices not at the table.
- Members agree to participate in one or more ad hoc groups based on availability, expertise and interest and keep ad hoc work group connected to the full PPD.⁵
- Members agree to participate in an annual half or full day retreat for agenda planning, data analysis, and discussion of connection to Early Childhood Action Plan
- Members are asked to agree to a two year term. At the end of a term members can request to continue for another two year term - continuation would be based on meeting participation/attendance and diversity of the group.
- Members agree to uphold the mission and purpose of the PPD committee and the guiding principles of the professional development system.

⁵ This does not mean all PPD members are required to participate in an ad hoc group. If their availability, expertise, and interest allow, they are encouraged to consider participating in at least one ad hoc group.

Decision-Making Tool for Seeking Agreement: The BBF PPD committee utilizes modified consensus to seek agreement. This modified consensus process will utilize a decision-making tool (red, yellow, and green cards) to indicate levels of agreement with various proposals brought before the committee. We currently use the following levels of agreement:

Green is Consent: Holding up a green card indicates your general agreement, support for, and willingness to abide by the proposal.

Yellow is Consent with Reservations: Holding up a yellow card indicates you have some concerns with the proposal. The group will make every effort to address these concerns in a way that helps you feel confident moving to Green. If the group is unable to resolve your concerns, you are still willing to allow the proposal to move forward and will not block.

Red is Block: Holding up a red card indicates you have serious concerns with the proposal and you do not feel comfortable allowing it to move forward. The group will make every effort to address these concerns in a way that helps you feel confident moving to Green. At minimum, the group will work to address these concerns in a way that allows you to feel confident moving to Yellow.

Meeting Ground Rules:

- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Participate by sharing your own opinions and experiences and those of the people you represent
- Listen to and consider the opinions of others
- Honor confidentiality requests
- Challenge yourself to think about creative solutions
- Assume positive intent

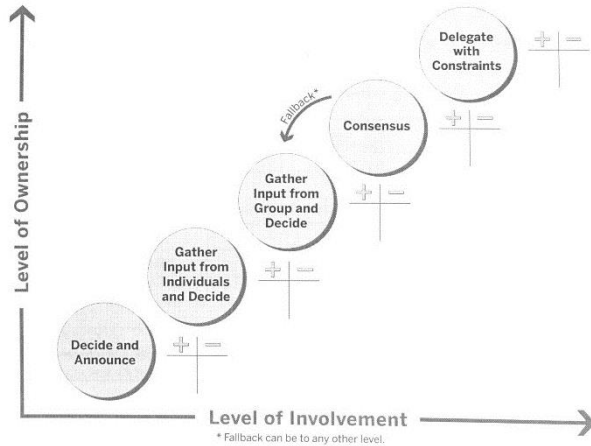
Levels of Involvement in Decision Making

There will be times when BBF PPD is not the final decision-maker about a particular issue and will instead be making a recommendation to a person, committee, organization, or agency who has final say in the decision itself. For these decisions and recommendations, we will strive to provide BBF PPD members with detail about who is the final decision-maker and clarify the particular role of BBF PPD membership.

Please see the following chart for further detail:

Levels of Involvement in Decision Making

Levels of Involvement in the Decision-Making Process



Factors to consider:

- Stakeholder buy-in
- Time available
- Importance of decision
- Information needed
- Capability
- Building teamwork

Decide and Announce

Leader makes the decision with little or no input, then announces the decision to those who will be affected by or must carry out the decision.

Gather Input from Individuals and Decide

Leader asks selected individuals for input (ideas, suggestions, information). The leader then makes a decision.

Gather Input from the Team and Decide

Leader asks the team members to share their ideas in a meeting. The leader decides after hearing from the team.

Consensus

A consensus decision is one that every member of the team is willing to support and help implement. All Key Stakeholders have had an opportunity to give their opinion and to understand the implications of various options. All members, including the Leader, have the same formal power to support or block proposals. If consensus cannot be reached, the leader has a fallback decision-making option.

Delegate Decision with Constraints

Leader defines the decision that needs to be made in the form of a question, clarifies the constraints on the decision (e.g. budget, timeframe, quality requirements) and delegates the decision to others. The leader does not alter the decision as long as it adheres to the constraints.