EC Leadership Statement

Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium
Consensus Statement

INTRODUCTION
The Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium is a network of early childhood experts and advocates, committed to developing progressive and transformational leaders of early childhood center- and school-based programs, who will improve outcomes for all children birth through age 8. Consortium members include representatives from national early childhood and public education organizations, higher education institutions, professional development and training groups, philanthropic organizations, and policy advocates. (Please see Appendix A for a full list of Participating Members.)

The Consortium’s strategy is to develop a unifying conceptual framework, concrete action plan, and practical tools to strengthen the effectiveness of and bring coherence to current, as well as future, early childhood leadership development efforts. The Consortium recognizes that in order to develop progressive, transformational leadership for the field of early care and education, a thorough analysis of current research and application of best practices is needed—all while exploring our individual and organizational common interests in developing early childhood education leaders. This consensus statement represents our current best thinking and research efforts to date, to produce an Early Childhood Education Leadership Development Conceptual Framework that we hope will serve as a catalyst for dialogue and reflection among a much larger group of individuals and organizations that have an interest in this topic.

LEADERSHIP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Research sheds light on the history of leadership development in early childhood education and points toward the future. Nearly 20 years ago, as the evidence was building toward the current focus on early childhood leadership development, Kagan and Bowman (1997) edited a comprehensive volume, Leadership in Early Care and Education. In the preface they wrote:

The quality of any field or organization is determined on the quality of its leaders. In early care and education, leadership has never been as critical to the field’s advancement as it is now. This is for several reasons. First, long-held concerns about the status of early care and education services recently have been empirically confirmed with studies finding that many programs threaten the healthy development of young children and that leadership plays a key role in quality enhancement. Second, anticipated growth of early childhood services, as well as the changing nature and numbers of individuals entering the profession, spurs interest in the training of a leadership
They concluded that, as a field, early childhood education had not devoted enough serious analysis and action to the issue of leadership and, as a result, identified a set of recommendations to address the gap in early childhood education leadership development: (1) Pioneer new definitions of and visions for leadership; (2) Engage allied groups and organizations concerned about children and families in the development of a new emphasis on and vision for early childhood leadership; (3) Formalize a leadership structure for the field; (4) Encourage higher education to match leadership training to the needs of the field; (5) Promote nonacademic opportunities for early childhood leaders to learn and gain experience; and (6) Advance diversity through opportunity and the elimination of bias. While the context for ECE leadership was rapidly changing, as of 2013, the early childhood education field was paying limited attention to leadership development (Goffin & Janke, 2013; Goffin & Means, 2009). The latest survey of ECE leadership development programs suggests that the field does not fully recognize the potential of leadership to serve as a change catalyst, nor does it have a common definition of leadership development or a common framework for the necessary knowledge and skills (Goffin & Janke, 2013).

Leadership may be described as the intersection of knowledge, skills, character attributes, and personality traits that motivate others to work toward a common goal (Whitebook & Austin, 2009). Within that definition, early childhood educators demonstrate leadership in a variety of roles. In addition to possessing expertise in specific areas, such as understanding how children learn and develop, partnering with families, or supervising staff, early childhood leaders need to understand the early childhood system itself, and how policy shapes the quality of services available to children and families (Whitebook & Austin, 2009). Furthermore, the diverse sectors in early childhood education require leaders who can successfully collaborate across many types of services and within various policy contexts. Early childhood education services do not exist in isolation. As such, leaders must understand a complex array of issues, develop skills to work collaboratively across disciplines and interest groups, and ultimately improve the quality of early care and education in order to positively impact outcomes for children. As Goffin and Means (2009) articulated so well in their extensive research, “The early care and education field is at a crossroads, and this defining moment calls for leadership.” As a Consortium, we recognize and honor the past efforts of many individuals and organizations who have given time, effort, and thoughtful consideration to the challenge of early childhood education leadership development. We believe that now is the time to work together collectively to further the aims of the 1997 groundbreaking volume, Leadership in Early Care and Education.
Leadership Matters
Leaders of early childhood programs are highlighted in the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership’s report, “Leadership Matters”: “To ensure school readiness and help prepare children for successful participation in work and in civic life, our nation has committed to providing a comprehensive and coordinated system of early learning and development. As more community-based programs provide publicly-funded preschool, the need for well-qualified early childhood administrators has greatly increased” (Bloom & Bella, 2005; MCECL, 2014). The leadership matters theme is further highlighted in the work of two efforts that extend their scope beyond preschool: Leading Pre-K- 3 Learning Communities: Competencies for Effective Principal Practice, from the National Association of Elementary Principals in 2014, and the ongoing work of Kristie Kauerz at the University of Washington Seattle, P-3 Executive Leadership Institute.

High-Quality Early Childhood Education
Strong and intentional leadership-by-design is a necessary ingredient for high-quality education to produce meaningful outcomes for children. Recent research finds that early childhood programs that combine evidence-based curriculum, highly-trained educators, and leadership support, produce positive effects on multiple domains of learning and school readiness, including language, literacy, mathematics, and emotional development, as well as executive function skills, such as working memory, inhibitory control, and attention shifting (Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013).

The science of child development and early learning clearly demonstrates how important and complex it is to work with young children. Despite this fact, the professionals who provide for the care and education of children from birth through age 8 are often not acknowledged as a cohesive workforce, unified by shared knowledge and competencies necessary to perform their jobs well. Expectations for early childhood educators have frequently fallen out of pace with what research indicates children need to thrive and learn, and many current policies do not place enough value on the significant contributions these individuals make to children’s long term growth and success (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015). Early childhood leaders are needed to facilitate a shift in perspective and practice that will allow all children to receive a high-quality early childhood education—the kind of education that will help them achieve their learning goals and reach their highest potential.

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF LEADERSHIP
Early childhood program leaders play an instrumental role in improving outcomes for children by helping teachers strengthen their core competencies, and in creating work environments where these educators can fully implement and grow their knowledge and skills. Leaders have a tremendous influence on professional development. Principals and directors, for example, often select the structure, content, and activities for professional learning. Leaders are also responsible for determining workforce-hiring practices and for the systems used to evaluate early
childhood professionals. In addition, leaders facilitate the necessary communication and collaboration among various professionals with the goal of improving consistency within the care and education sector for children, as well as outside of it, including for example, in the areas of health and social services.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Research Council (NRC) recently convened a committee of experts assigned with exploring the science of child development, particularly with implications for the professionals who work with children birth through age 8. Their resulting report entitled, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, includes a blueprint of recommended actions with the ultimate goal to establish cohesive and consistent support for the development of young learners. (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015). The committee also recommends specific actions, including well-informed and capable leadership that can make these suggested changes to the early childhood workforce feasible.

**IOM Workforce Report: Leadership Recommendations**

Specifically, the IOM committee issued the following leadership recommendations:

1. Policies and standards that shape the professional learning of leaders should encompass the foundational knowledge and competencies necessary to support high-quality practices for child development and early learning.

2. Policy, research, and governmental organizations should establish updated and comprehensive standards that reflect what early care and education leaders need to know and be able to do, particularly in the area of instructional leadership.

3. Early learning principles and best practices should be integrated into leadership training, including policies and accreditation standards; coursework, practicum and evaluation requirements; and ongoing professional learning support systems and recertification requirements.

The IOM committee further recommends that a core competency consensus statement for early childhood leaders be developed in collaboration with organizations that have developed similar statements for school principals, such as the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. While improved statements of core competencies are certainly tantamount, they are not sufficient because realizing those competencies in practice is where the true contribution to improving outcomes for children will occur. Therefore, it’s also recommended that states develop criteria for licensing or credentialing early childhood leaders. Criteria should identify the specialized knowledge and competencies necessary to be both leaders in instruction and experts in organizational development and management. This will require rethinking requirements for leaders related to education, credentials, coursework, and professional experiences.
Elementary school principals, in particular, pose unique considerations to leadership development. This is becoming more evident due to their increasing responsibility for prekindergarten students. To align with the IOM committee recommendations, integrating instructional leadership for early learning into principal development and training is advised. One possibility is to develop distinct definitions of “highly qualified principal” for elementary schools. This definition would include both core competencies and past teaching and leadership experiences specific to the age range the principal is responsible for. If this recommendation were to be realized, elementary school principals would become school administrators recognized for their specific knowledge and competencies in early learning birth through age 8.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK**

The Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium’s initial strategy included the development of a unifying conceptual framework for early childhood leadership. In September of 2014, the Consortium first convened to review a conceptual framework, *Leadership by Design*, developed by Deloitte Consulting LLP. Deloitte’s framework is based on an extensive study of more than 10,000 exemplary private and public sector executive leaders. *(Please see Attachment B for the Deloitte Leadership Capabilities Chart.)* Their Framework takes a comprehensive view of leadership by highlighting four types of leadership with distinct capabilities assigned to each:

- People Leadership - Inspirational Leadership and Execution
- Relationship Leadership - Influence and Collaboration
- Business Leadership - Direction and Business Judgment
- Entrepreneurial Leadership - Competitive Edge and Building Talent

The Consortium reviewed, revised, and adapted the Deloitte Framework to incorporate the specific knowledge and competencies of successful early childhood leaders. This includes relationships with teachers and families, knowledge across content and grade levels, and collaboration between ranges of interested parties.

**IOM Workforce Report Influence**

Following the release and close review of the IOM Workforce Report, the Consortium revised the framework to incorporate the report’s leadership recommendations. We added two competencies to their framework, namely Instructional Leadership and Inter-Professional Collaboration. We incorporated the IOM recommendations related to organizational development and management across eight the leadership capabilities, while adding more business acumen detail, including an understanding of finance and human resources. See Attachment A for the updated version of the Early Childhood Leadership Conceptual Framework.
MOVING FORWARD
The Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium is committed to refining this Leadership Framework and expanding its reach by conducting dialogue/information sessions within the participating Consortium organizations at the leadership level, as well as the organizational, membership, client/stakeholder levels. We will reach out to other potential stakeholders who have an organizational interest in teaching, learning, and leadership in the arena of early childhood education. Additionally, there are many thought leaders within and outside of early childhood education whose opinions and ideas will be sought, in order to expand the dialogue and improve the quality of the framework.

We also look forward to convening focus groups of successful early childhood school and program leaders to review and recommend refinements to the framework, as well as systems-level leaders at the local, state, and federal levels. Long-term goals include exploring the framework’s alignment to the curriculum and components of selected existing early childhood leadership development programs, as well as policy frameworks related to the certification and licensure of early childhood leaders.

Our Consortium recognizes that early childhood leaders and educators bear a great responsibility for children’s health, development, and learning. Maintaining the status quo for these professionals will only perpetuate today’s fragmented approach to the care and education of young children. As articulated in the IOM Report, this will ultimately result in inadequate learning and development, particularly among the most vulnerable families and communities. The time is now, and the need is urgent to develop progressive and transformational early childhood leaders.
REFERENCES


Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium Participating Members

Association for Early Learning Leaders
  o Colleen Haddad

Bank Street College of Education
  o Denise Prince

Child Care Information Exchange
  o Roger Neugebauer
  o Bonnie Neugebauer

Council for Professional Recognition
  o Valora Washington

Council of Chief State School Officers
  o Tom Schultz (Consortium Co-Convener)

Early Childhood Leadership Institute
  o Maurice Sykes (Consortium Co-Convener)

HITN/Early Learning Consortium
  o Ed Greene

Kaplan Early Learning Company
  o Kyra Ostendorf

McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, National Louis University
  o Paula Jorde Bloom

National Association for the Education of Young Children
  o Rhian Evans Allvin

National Association of Elementary School Principals
  o Gail Connelly
  o Kelly Pollitt

National Head Start Association
The Consortium is grateful to the Foundation for Child Development for its support of this work. The Foundation for Child Development is a national private philanthropy based in New York City that supports research to help researchers, policymakers, and advocates develop high-quality, evidence-based early childhood systems to serve the needs of all children.
## EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Knowledge and Competencies</th>
<th>Inspirational Leadership</th>
<th>Execution</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Inter-Professional Collaboration</th>
<th>Foundational Knowledge</th>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>Competitive Edge</th>
<th>Building Talent</th>
<th>Pedagogical/Instructional Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leaders inspire professionals to follow them</strong></td>
<td>Leaders achieve results through others</td>
<td>Leaders persuade and influence stakeholders</td>
<td>Leaders work in synergy with others professionals</td>
<td>Leaders model and promote foundational knowledge</td>
<td>Leaders provide vision and direction</td>
<td>Leaders demonstrate business acumen</td>
<td>Leaders drive change and innovation</td>
<td>Leaders build capability for competitive advantage</td>
<td>Leaders promote evidenced-based teaching and learning practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrates statesmanship</strong></td>
<td>Delivers enterprise execution</td>
<td>Influences politically</td>
<td>Creates sustainable synergies</td>
<td>Focuses on learning</td>
<td>Creates strategic direction</td>
<td>Promotes the mission</td>
<td>Drives innovation</td>
<td>Sustains program capability</td>
<td>Serves as an instructional resource and coach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grows internal and external reputation as a significant leader</td>
<td>• Holds top leaders accountable for delivering strategic goals</td>
<td>• Uses political skills and networking to gain external support and backing</td>
<td>• Establishes cross-sector collaboration</td>
<td>• Helps staff increase their knowledge and competencies</td>
<td>• Sets and communicates long-term strategy to shape the field</td>
<td>• Evaluates future forecasts</td>
<td>• Creates new business models</td>
<td>• Builds a strong succession plan</td>
<td>• Fosters practices that help promote deep learning for children and adults</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provides figurehead leadership</strong></td>
<td>Leverages senior leader strengths</td>
<td>Influences stakeholders</td>
<td>Builds strategic partnerships</td>
<td>Selects teams strategically</td>
<td>Builds alignment</td>
<td>Determines ROI</td>
<td>Drives transformation</td>
<td>Sponsors leaders</td>
<td>Supports developmentally appropriate curricula and instructional practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates a clear leadership brand</td>
<td>• Harnesses the full range of capabilities from senior teams</td>
<td>• Has broad support and buy-in for initiatives</td>
<td>• Creates a shared understanding of the inter-connectedness of practice</td>
<td>• Hires highly qualified early childhood educators</td>
<td>• Aligns internal and external teams across the field with a unifying vision for the future</td>
<td>• Evaluates what will deliver a return on invested resources</td>
<td>• Creates conditions for people to innovate</td>
<td>• Fast-tracks the careers of senior talent</td>
<td>• Promotes best practices based on knowledge of how children learn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Builds followers across the program</td>
<td>• Promotes workforce professionalism</td>
<td>• Leverages relationships with key senior players</td>
<td>• Secures support and resources with internal and external knowledge needs of early childhood educators</td>
<td>• Assesses and responds to content knowledge</td>
<td>• Supports mission fulfillment</td>
<td>• Measures the collective impact of innovative strategies</td>
<td>• Fosters career mobility</td>
<td>• Uses multiple forms of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Leadership Knowledge and Competencies

- **Inspirational Leadership**
  - Leaders inspire professionals to follow them

- **Execution**
  - Leaders achieve results through others

- **Influence**
  - Leaders persuade and influence stakeholders

- **Inter-Professional Collaboration**
  - Leaders work in synergy with others professionals

- **Foundational Knowledge**
  - Leaders model and promote foundational knowledge

- **Vision**
  - Leaders provide vision and direction

- **Judgment**
  - Leaders demonstrate business acumen

- **Competitive Edge**
  - Leaders drive change and innovation

- **Building Talent**
  - Leaders build capability for competitive advantage

- **Pedagogical/Instructional Leadership**
  - Leaders promote evidenced-based teaching and learning practices

### Key Competencies

- **Demonstrates statesmanship**
  - Grows internal and external reputation as a significant leader

- **Provides figurehead leadership**
  - Demonstrates a clear leadership brand
  - Builds followers across the program

- **Leverages senior leader strengths**
  - Harnesses the full range of capabilities from senior teams
  - Promotes workforce professionalism

- **Influences stakeholders**
  - Has broad support and buy-in for initiatives
  - Leverages relationships with key senior players

- **Builds strategic partnerships**
  - Creates a shared understanding of the inter-connectedness of practice
  - Secures support and resources with internal and external knowledge needs of early childhood educators

- **Selects teams strategically**
  - Hires highly qualified early childhood educators
  - Assesses and responds to content knowledge

- **Builds alignment**
  - Aligns internal and external teams across the field with a unifying vision for the future

- **Determines ROI**
  - Evaluates what will deliver a return on invested resources

- **Drives transformation**
  - Creates conditions for people to innovate

- **Sponsors leaders**
  - Fast-tracks the careers of senior talent

- **Supports developmentally appropriate curricula and instructional practices**
  - Promotes best practices based on knowledge of how children learn
  - Uses multiple forms of
## Leadership Knowledge and Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrates leadership versatility</th>
<th>Stretches performance</th>
<th>Influences cross-functionally</th>
<th>Collaborates across boundaries</th>
<th>Demonstrates strong interpersonal communication</th>
<th>Coordinates across teams</th>
<th>Maximizes resource utilization</th>
<th>Drives differentiation</th>
<th>Fast-tracks high performers</th>
<th>Uses multiple sources of data to inform professional development needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivates and inspires people from different functions and cultures</td>
<td>Stretches the performance of people with a wide range of abilities</td>
<td>Uses range of interpersonal approaches to persuade people with differing perspectives and interests</td>
<td>Builds reciprocal relationships and alliances across all levels, grades, and with parents</td>
<td>• Builds reciprocal relationships and alliances across all levels, grades, and with parents</td>
<td>• Keeps diverse teams focused on the same goals</td>
<td>• Evaluates internal systems to support sustainability</td>
<td>• Encourages early adoption and application of new strategies</td>
<td>• Provides opportunities for high potential performers</td>
<td>• Implements individualized professional development plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishes leadership impact</td>
<td>Drives delivery</td>
<td>Influences colleagues</td>
<td>Works within teams</td>
<td>Promotes teamwork</td>
<td>Sets direction</td>
<td>Secures added value</td>
<td>Pushes for continuous improvement</td>
<td>Coaches talent</td>
<td>Promotes a professional learning community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects personal confidence, expertise, and authority</td>
<td>Keeps team’s performance on track</td>
<td>Tailors information, support, and understanding with colleagues</td>
<td>Builds mutual support and understanding with colleagues and parents</td>
<td>Applies relationship values and principles of team dynamics to plan and deliver early care and learning that is safe, timely, efficient, and equitable</td>
<td>Provides a clear sense of direction and priorities</td>
<td>Utilizes knowledge of program operations and finance to evaluate the most effective use of resources</td>
<td>Maintains awareness of industry trends and research</td>
<td>Shares knowledge and experience</td>
<td>Provides leadership and allocates time for peer learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Copyright 2016. The Early Childhood Leadership Development Consortium. All rights reserved.
Leadership capability levels across transitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complexity of Leadership Demands</th>
<th>People Leadership</th>
<th>Relationship Leadership</th>
<th>Business Leadership</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Inspirational Leadership</td>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating statesmanship</td>
<td>Delivering enterprise execution</td>
<td>Persuading and influencing stakeholders</td>
<td>Creating synergies through working in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing figurehead leadership</td>
<td>Leveraging senior leader strengths</td>
<td>Political influencing</td>
<td>Business Synergies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating leadership versatility</td>
<td>Stretching performance</td>
<td>Stakeholder influencing</td>
<td>Business partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing leadership impact</td>
<td>Driving delivery</td>
<td>Cross matrix influencing</td>
<td>Collaborating across boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Persuasive influencing</td>
<td>Team working</td>
<td>Setting direction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Global Leadership Practice

Copyright © 2014 Deloitte Consulting LLP & Kaisen Consulting Ltd. All rights reserved.