

The Rhode Island Early Learning Standards



Family Engagement Self-Assessment for Practitioners

Practitioners engaged in implementing a Standards-based program begin their journey during participation in the Early Learning Standards professional development and continue improving their early childhood practice over time. As a practitioner, you will want to continually step back from your day-to-day work with children and families to assess your own progress in meeting each of the four Practitioner Standards associated with implementing a Standards-based program. You will then use the information from this self-assessment to identify your strengths and the individual professional development goals you will pursue to achieve new levels of competency and improve your practice.

Standard 4: Practitioners implement family engagement opportunities linked to the Standards to involve all families in meaningful ways.

Four Key Areas to Consider:

- My practice reflects the building blocks of successful family engagement: (1) Getting to Know Families, (2) Creating Welcoming Environments, and (3) Effective Communication.
- I plan and implement a continuum of opportunities so that families:
 - know what four year olds should know and be able to do
 - recognize how Standards-based programs support their children's learning
 - understand and embrace the positive role they play in supporting their child to learn at home and at school
- I successfully engage families in their child's education by implementing meaningful family engagement opportunities linked to the Standards.
- I work to improve family engagement on a continuous, ongoing basis.

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Instructions:

This self-assessment is designed to focus on Standard 4: Practitioners implement family engagement opportunities linked to the Standards to involve all families in meaningful ways. Standard 4 is divided into four key areas as described above.

As you proceed through the self-assessment, you will use three different methods to gather information regarding your current practice. This multi-method approach allows you to obtain a more complete and accurate picture of your current practice. These methods include:

- **Self-Observation**

The statements in the self-observation sections encourage you to engage in critical-thinking to analyze your own teaching practices. Self-observation, by its very nature, is often difficult for practitioners. You may want to consider asking for input from a peer or colleague to assist you in obtaining an honest appraisal of your skills and practices in each area.

- **Documentation**

Focus your review on the following documents to help measure your progress in implementing a quality curriculum aligned with the Standards:

- *Your Practitioner Professional Portfolio including previous self-assessment, goals, artifacts, and reflections*
- *Written curriculum, Lesson Plans and/or Activity Plans*
- *Family interviews, questionnaires, or surveys*

- **Reflective Questioning**

These questions encourage you to think about and analyze your teaching practices to monitor your own performance.

After considering your responses, use the three columns in the middle section of each page to identify your areas of strength, areas that are somewhat strong, and areas where you intend to focus your improvement efforts. Use the NOTES column to provide examples or evidence to justify your responses. Use the artifacts and reflections you have collected for your Practitioner Portfolio as a source of evidence for many of these items.

The key to self-assessment is to remain objective and honest with yourself as you reflect on your current practice and determine your strengths and the areas where you want to grow and improve.

Once you have completed the self-assessment, use the Next Steps section to take stock of your responses, identify your strengths and accomplishments in the area of curriculum, and identify goals to move forward in implementing a quality curriculum aligned with the Standards.

The goal chart on the final page provides space for you to document your plan for achieving your professional development goal(s) in the area of curriculum. Complete the chart by identifying your goal(s), strategies, and time frames. Use the right hand column to record progress along the way.

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Area 1. My practice reflects the building blocks of successful family engagement: (1) Getting to Know Families, (2) Creating Welcoming Environments, and (3) Effective Communication.

1. Place a checkmark (√) to indicate if each item is an area of strength, an area that is somewhat strong, or an area that needs improvement
2. In the NOTES column, provide an example or evidence to justify your choice. Use the contents of your Practitioner Portfolio as a resource.

	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
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A. Self-Observation

1. GETTING TO KNOW FAMILIES
I am aware of the cultural and linguistic differences of families in the community I serve.

I collect information from individual families that I use to design family engagement opportunities appropriate to their circumstances.

2. CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT
I have created a physical environment that is welcoming to families.

I have signs posted in positive language that welcomes families.

I can be seen welcoming families as they arrive.

Information for families is posted and appears in their primary language.

3. ENGAGING IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:
I make plans to engage in two-way communication with **all** families in my program.

I use a variety of resources to communicate with families who speak languages different than my own.

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<p><i>B. Documentation</i></p> <p>1. My professional philosophy includes statements about the important role that families play in early childhood care and education.</p> <p>2. My records include notes regarding the <i>input</i> that families have provided that impact how I plan for children.</p> <p>3. I have copies of family notices, newsletters, and other written communications that I send to families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is sent out on a regular basis. • Information is written in family-friendly language. • Information is written in the families' home language. • Families receive regular updates about their child's progress. 				
<p><i>C. Reflective Questions</i></p> <p>1. Do I embrace a broad, inclusive definition of family that is reflected in my early childhood practice?</p> <p>2. Am I aware of the demographics of my community?</p> <p>3. Am I familiar with the cultures and languages spoken by the families in the community I serve?</p> <p>4. Have I taken the time to gain knowledge and develop an appreciation of the different cultures represented in the community I serve?</p> <p>5. Do I work to continually improve my active listening skills to engage in more effective communication with families?</p> <p>6. Do I create opportunities for frequent communication with each family in my program?</p>				

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Area 2. I plan and implement a continuum of opportunities so that families:

- know what four year olds should know and be able to do.
- recognize how our Standards-based programs supports their child’s learning.
- understand and embrace the positive role they play in supporting their child to learn at home and at school.

	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
<p>A. Self-Observation</p> <p>1. I have used the “continuum of opportunities” chart to assess my current practice, identify gaps, and develop a plan to expand and improve family engagement in my program.</p> <p>2. I obtain input from families when planning family engagement opportunities.</p> <p>3. I am purposeful in planning family engagement opportunities that are linked to the Standards.</p> <p>4. I have developed a method for sharing <i>Fun Family Activities for Preschoolers</i> (English and Spanish) with families.</p>				
<p>B. Documentation</p> <p>1. I have written materials that describe the various opportunities for family engagement.</p> <p>2. Written materials are printed in the languages spoken by families in my program.</p> <p>3. My plans include opportunities throughout the year for families to support their children’s learning at home, utilizing <i>Fun Family Activities for Preschoolers</i>, and other resources.</p>				
<p>C. Reflective Questions</p> <p>1. Do I adjust and improve the opportunities for families from year-to-year based on their input and circumstances?</p>				

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Area 3. I successfully engage families in their child’s education by implementing meaningful family engagement opportunities linked to the Standards.

<i>Note: This area represents a long-term goal for most practitioners and comes as a result of attaining goals in Areas 1 and 2.</i>	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
<p>A. Self-Observations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have improved and expanded the family engagement opportunities I offer to families. 2. Families can be observed as active participants in family engagement opportunities I offer. 3. As a result of my efforts in the area of family engagement, more families are involved in their child’s education in ways that are meaningful to them. 4. I work with families both individually and in groups to connect them to family engagement opportunities appropriate to their circumstances. 5. I reach out and connect to families who represent different cultures and speak different languages. 6. I use the <u>Before You Begin</u> and <u>When It’s Time for Kindergarten</u> sections of <i>Fun Family Activities for Preschoolers</i> to help transition children and families to and from my program. 				
<p>B. Documentation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My files contain family information that I collect and use to enhance curriculum, assess children’s progress, and differentiate teaching and learning. 2. I have copies of family engagement materials in languages spoken by the families in my program. 				

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<p><i>B. Reflective Questions</i></p> <p>1. Do I make special efforts to develop positive connections with families who in the past have had limited communication and connections with their child’s early education program?</p> <p>2. Do I make special efforts to accommodate families with special needs and special circumstances so that they can take full advantage of family engagement opportunities?</p>				
Area 4. I work to improve family engagement on a continuous, ongoing basis.				
	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
<p><i>A. Self-Observations</i></p> <p>1. I commit time, energy, and resources to improve my practice in the area of family engagement.</p>				
<p><i>B. Documentation</i></p> <p>1. My Professional Portfolio includes artifacts and reflections demonstrating my professional growth in the area of family engagement.</p> <p>2. My Professional Portfolio includes ongoing self-assessment, professional development goals, and documentation that shows progress towards attaining goals in the area of family engagement.</p>				
<p><i>C. Reflective Questions</i></p> <p>1. How do I ensure that I will review my Professional Portfolio on an on-going basis?</p> <p>2. What will I pledge to do to guarantee that I will update and periodically review my Portfolio?</p>				

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Next Steps

I. Take stock of your responses to the self-assessment as well as the documentation in your Professional Portfolio to determine your strengths and progress in implementing family engagement opportunities linked to the Standards to involve all families in meaningful ways.

My strengths include:

-
-
-
-

II. Next, determine the goals you want to achieve to move forward in implementing a quality curriculum aligned with the Standards.

My professional development goal(s):

-
-

III. Transfer your goal(s) onto the attached goal sheet and develop a specific plan for accomplishing each goal by identifying strategies and time frames. Space is provided on the goal sheet to evaluate and record your progress along the way.

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Family Engagement

Standard 4: Implementing family engagement opportunities linked to the Standards to involve all families in meaningful ways

Professional Development Goals

GOAL:		
Strategies	Time Frame	Progress

GOAL:		
Strategies	Time Frame	Progress

Date I will evaluate progress and reassess goals: _____