

## Early Childhood Walk Through The Learning Environment

<b>Staff Member</b>		<b>Notes:</b>
<b>Date</b>		
<b>Time/Activity Setting</b>		

*The physical classroom environment has significant impact on the engagement and independence of young children. The classroom space should be interesting and functional. According to The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (The Foundation), "A well-organized classroom helps children make choices, encourages them to use materials well, and teaches them to take increasing responsibility for maintaining the classroom." (p. 55)*

<b>Look For:</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
Classroom space is divided into clear interest areas (blocks, dramatic play, toys/games, art, library, discovery/science, sand/water, music/movement)	
Varied materials are available in each center, providing children a range of choices—materials are multicultural	
A designated area is available for quiet activities	
Noisier centers are located away from quiet centers (e.g. Books are not next to Blocks)	
Other areas (e.g. dramatic play, blocks) provide choices for more physical activities	
Classroom layout provides opportunities for children to form small groups	
Interest areas are strategically placed near needed resources (i.e. tile floor for art)	
Everything has a "place" and children participate in cleanup and general care of the room (i.e. cubby for blocks, shelves for puzzles)	
Labels appear frequently in the classroom, should include both pictures (of the object/location) and words, and promotes independence during clean up	
There is a clearly defined area for large group activities—floor space is sufficient to accommodate all children, children have a soft/comfortable place to sit (e.g. carpet)	
Classroom "traffic" moves smoothly throughout all areas of the classroom	
Children with disabilities should have access to all areas of the classroom; traffic patterns/aisles between interest areas will accommodate a wheelchair, if needed	
Materials are arranged in such a way that children can access them independently	

Possible post walk through questions:	Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe transitions during the preschool day. How does your classroom arrangement support or hinder transitions?</li> <li>• Describe how your classroom arrangement follows principles of universal design (classroom arrangement is accessible/useable by all children and adults). If it does not, what changes do you intend to make?</li> <li>• How will you adjust your classroom arrangement based on this information?</li> <li>• (If applicable) How did you use the results of the ECERS-R observation when setting up your classroom? Were there areas for improvement? What are your identified strengths in regard to classroom environment?</li> <li>• Describe how the preschoolers respond to large group...how does your classroom arrangement support (or hinder) their engagement during large group instruction?</li> <li>• Between now and my next opportunity to observe, what would you like to see happen in regard to your classroom environment? What will your next steps be in regard to achieving those goals?</li> <li>• How can I support you as you seek to improve your classroom arrangement/environment?</li> </ul>	
<b>Additional Notes/Discussion/Action Plan:</b>	

## Quick 'Look Fors' in Early Childhood Settings

### Adult/Child Interactions and Climate

<p><b>Communications</b> (verbal and physical) and interactions between staff and students are warm and positive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tally positive interactions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Respect</b> for one another is evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye contact</li> <li>Warm, calm voice</li> <li>Respectful language</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher anticipates the need for additional <b>support</b> and matches the support to the individual needs and abilities.</p>	<p>There are many opportunities for <b>student talk</b> and responses.</p>
<p>Teacher is <b>flexible</b> and goes along with student ideas and interests.</p>	<p><b>Rules and expectations</b> are clear and consistently enforced.</p>	<p><b>Transitions</b> between activities are quick and efficient.</p>	<p>Children and staff know the <b>routines</b>. Everybody knows what is expected and how to go about it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little wandering</li> </ul>
<p>Teacher actively facilitates student <b>engagement</b> in activities to encourage interest and expand involvement</p>	<p>Teacher uses <b>why and/or how</b> questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tally number of why/how questions</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher <b>links</b> concepts and activities to one another and previous learning.</p>	<p>There are <b>back and forth exchanges</b> between teacher and student.</p>

## Quick 'Look Fors' in Early Childhood Settings

### Adult/Child Interactions and Climate

Teacher asks <b>open-ended questions</b>	Teacher <b>repeats or extends</b> student responses	Class <b>schedule</b> is posted	Staff are <b>directly involved</b> with children
At least 2 types of <b>blocks</b> and a variety of accessories are available in the block area.	Teachers are proactive to <b>reduce wait time</b>	Staff encourage communication <b>among children</b>	Sand/Water area has a <b>variety</b> of toys

Adapted from: Classroom Assessment Scoring System by Robert Pianta, Karen M. LaParo & Bridget Hamre & ECERS Materials Checklist

Admin Days. Feden & Ubbelohde 7/14/14

## Quick 'Look Fors' in Home/Community Settings

<p><b>Communication</b> and interactions are respectful and warm</p>	<p>Staff member asks <b>open-ended questions</b> or follow-up questions</p>	<p>Staff member <b>links</b> previous home visit (and learning) to current visit.</p>	<p>Staff member follows parent and child lead in <b>family activities &amp; routines</b></p>
<p>Staff member is <b>flexible</b> and goes along with parent/child ideas and interests.</p>	<p>Staff member and parent are <b>relaxed</b> and parent shares information, problems or concerns openly.</p>	<p>Staff member is respectful and shows <b>acceptance</b> of the family system.</p>	<p>Staff member encourages parent/child <b>interactions</b></p>
<p>Staff member models <b>engagement</b> in activities to encourage interest and expand involvement.</p>	<p>Staff member uses <b>materials already in the home</b> (not materials brought into the home by provider) to promote parent child interactions.</p>	<p>At the end of the visit, staff member <b>summarizes the session</b> and gives the parent strategies to use in the coming weeks.</p>	<p>There are <b>back and forth exchanges</b> between staff members/parent.</p>
<p>In <b>team meetings</b>, concerns regarding individual children are brought to the team for problem solving.</p>	<p>In <b>team meetings</b>, professional collaboration/problem solving is the norm.</p>	<p>In <b>team meetings</b>, mutual respect is evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Staff member is open to ideas</li> </ul>	<p>In <b>team meetings</b>, an agenda is provided and scheduling of evaluations/IFSPs is not the dominating topic.</p>

## Reflective Questions for Early Childhood Staff

WHEN	Ongoing	Fall Checkpoint Due 10/31/14	Winter Checkpoint Due 2/14/15	Spring Checkpoint Due 5/31/2015
<b>QUESTIONS TO ASK</b>	<p>What reports have you run in GOLD to help guide your instruction?</p> <p>How does your PLC use reports from GOLD?</p> <p>What modifications have you made to your classroom environment based upon your last ECERS-R observation?</p> <p>What methods of data collection do you find most useful?</p> <p>When a child demonstrates a weakness in one of the domains, what resources do you find helpful when coaching a parent/childcare provider?</p> <p>How did you utilize the entry data for one your newly verified children?</p>	<p>What patterns of strengths/weaknesses show in the fall checkpoint data?</p> <p>What percentage of students are below expectations in each domain on the <i>Widely Held Expectations</i>?</p> <p>What percentage of students have met or exceeded expectations in each domain on the <i>Widely Held Expectations</i>?</p> <p>When looking at the <i>Class Profile Report</i>, how have you adjusted your instruction?</p>	<p>Which students are performing below age expectations?</p> <p>What other data do you have to show progress with students who are performing below age expectations?</p> <p>What patterns do you see in the data?</p> <p>What have been areas of growth thus far?</p> <p>What areas continue to be a challenge? What are some steps you plan to take to address those challenges?</p> <p>What are your hunches as to why XXX area of development (or student name) is below expectations?</p>	<p>What were the greatest areas of growth this year?</p> <p>What might your indicators be that you are successful?</p> <p>What reports in GOLD did you find helpful when coaching families and child care providers?</p>

## Reflective Questions for Early Childhood Staff

<b>GOLD REPORTS TO USE</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widely Held Expectations Report</li> <li>• Individual Child Report</li> <li>• Class Profile</li> <li>• Snapshot Report</li> <li>• Alphabet Knowledge</li> <li>• Number Concepts</li> <li>• Shapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance &amp; Growth Reports</li> <li>• Growth Report</li> <li>• Individual Child Report</li> <li>• Class Profile</li> <li>• Alphabet Knowledge</li> <li>• Number Concepts</li> <li>• Shapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance &amp; Growth Reports</li> <li>• Growth Report</li> <li>• Individual Child Report</li> <li>• Class Profile</li> <li>• Alphabet Knowledge</li> <li>• Number Concepts</li> <li>• Shapes</li> </ul>
<b>REPORTS FOR ADMINISTRATORS TO USE IN GUIDING CONVERSATIONS</b>			Comparative Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative Report</li> <li>• Kindergarten readiness Report</li> <li>• OSEP Report</li> <li>• SOSR Data Summary</li> </ul>

Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model:	Danielson Framework for Teaching:	What this could look like in Family Home/Community Childcare Settings:	What this could look like in Center-Based Preschool Settings :
Domain 2: Planning and Preparing	Domain 1: Planning and Preparation		
<p align="center"><b>Nebraska’s Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals</b></p> <p>Related Competencies:</p> <p>A. Child Growth and Development</p> <p>C. Learning Environments</p> <p>D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum</p> <p>E. Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children</p> <p>F. Observation, Documentation and Assessment</p> <p>G. Partnerships with Families and Communities</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early interventionist reflects on previous visit with family/caregiver (e.g. reviews action steps as documented on visit note from previous session—asks family/caregiver how things are going with that action step)</li> <li>• Instructional outcomes are based on family concerns and priorities (Individual Family Service Plan—IFSP, or Individual Education Plan—IEP)</li> <li>• Early interventionist has a copy of the child’s outcomes (as determined at the IFSP/IEP meeting) for reference at the visit and provides or has provided a copy of the outcomes to the family/caregiver</li> <li>• Early interventionist asks family/caregiver about the child’s interests and daily activities</li> <li>• Evidence of accessing Services Coordination or other support services to address family needs based on family concerns/needs raised during the visit</li> <li>• Recommendations/activities are embedded in the child’s daily routine</li> <li>• Early interventionist discusses “next steps” in development with the parent/caregiver (EI demonstrates strong child development knowledge) or brings printed information to the parent/caregiver related to upcoming developmental milestones</li> <li>• Early interventionist shares resources with families and caregivers (e.g. upcoming parent trainings, upcoming childcare provider trainings, community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early interventionist plans reflect developmentally appropriate activities</li> <li>• Early interventionist responds to questions from preschoolers (care is taken to redirect off-topic comments/questions which can be characteristic of preschool settings)</li> <li>• Evidence of planned questions related to the learning target—these questions are differentiated to accommodate different learning needs of preschoolers (e.g. after reading a story early interventionist asks one child with significant language delays “What animal?” while pointing to a picture of a cat, and a child with typical language development “Why did the cat hide under the couch?”)</li> <li>• Outcomes include modifications and differentiated instruction (e.g. if the class is stringing fruit “O” cereal to make a necklace, some children are using string while others might use a pipe cleaner to provide more stability; Some might be asked to make a specific ABBA pattern while other children are asked to “find green” for their necklace)</li> <li>• Early interventionist invites guest speakers (e.g. local health and wellness office, local library,</li> </ul>



	<p>activities—this might also be provided to families by the Services Coordinator)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early interventionist assists the family/caregiver with locating learning resources already <u>in their home/childcare setting</u> that can be used to facilitate the child’s development</li><li>• Early interventionist demonstrates evidence of using their team to address areas of concern (e.g. “I visited with the Occupational Therapist in regard to the concern you raised at our last visit with the limited amount of food Terri is able to chew during mealtime...”)</li><li>• Early interventionist obtains information through a variety of sources (e.g. parent/caregiver report, direct observation) related to the Objectives for Development and Learning in GOLD</li></ul>	<p>parents) to share information related to learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Materials for learning are prepared and ready</li><li>• There is limited “wait time” between activities; Early interventionist has transition activities prepared (e.g. singing a song) to minimize unstructured time</li><li>• Learning activities are engaging for preschoolers as demonstrated by their participation, comments, and questions</li><li>• Paraeducators and other support staff are engaged with children during learning activities</li><li>• Paraeducators have clear expectations (e.g. written daily schedule) and efficiently carry out their duties in the classroom</li><li>• Written schedules reflect direct contact with children not simply materials prep</li><li>• Learning activities naturally include opportunities for GOLD data collection (e.g. when finished with circle time, children are asked to “hop on one leg” to line up at the door)</li><li>• There is evidence of ongoing observation/data collection (e.g. use of Assessment Opportunity tools, multiple child data collection tools, paraeducators/support staff taking notes during center time)</li></ul>
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Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model:	Danielson Framework for Teaching:	What this could look like in Family Home/Community Childcare Settings:	What this could look like in Center-Based Preschool Settings :
Domain 1: Classroom Strategies and Behaviors	Domain 2: The Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Child goals/outcomes are based on family concerns and priorities—the agenda for the visit is established by the parent/caregiver (e.g. Early interventionist might start with a question such as “How have things been going?” <i>(from McWilliam Vanderbilt Home Visit Script—VHVS)</i>)</li><li>Early interventionist is responsive to and empathetic with families (e.g. asks questions, incorporates siblings into activities)</li><li>Early interventionist might ask questions such as “Do you have anything new you want to ask me about?” <i>(from McWilliam Vanderbilt Home Visit Script—VHVS)</i></li><li>Intervention is focused on increasing parent/caregiver competence in naturally occurring, developmentally appropriate activities with peers, siblings, family members</li><li>Early interventionist might ask the parent/caregiver if they would like them (EI) to demonstrate a particular strategy (e.g. “Would you like me to show you?”)</li><li>Daily routines are established by the parent/caregiver</li><li>Intervention activities utilize materials found in the home or community setting</li><li>Early interventionist works with parent/caregiver to adapt existing materials/toys to meet the needs of the child</li><li>Early interventionist has a relationship with parent/caregiver (e.g. EI is greeted</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised) is completed annually in accordance with Results Matter requirements</li><li>ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised) data is used to make adjustments to the classroom environment/arrangement</li><li>Social skills are specifically taught</li><li>Paraeducators/adults in the classroom use modeling and direct instruction to ensure children understand classroom rules and expectations</li><li>GOLD assessment data is used to adapt and modify activities to meet the social emotional needs of children in the classroom</li><li>Children are engaging in self-directed (not teacher-directed) activities for a substantial portion of the instructional day</li><li>Learning activities include opportunities to engage in a variety of developmental skills (e.g. classroom has a “restaurant” center which includes pencils and notepads for taking “orders,” children work on math skills by placing one plate on the table for each child, social-communication skills are used to take “orders,” etc.)</li><li>Children are encouraged to ask and find answers through active</li></ul>
<p><b>Nebraska’s Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals</b></p> <p>Related Competencies:</p> <p>A. Child Growth and Development</p> <p>B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies</p> <p>C. Learning Environments</p> <p>D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum</p> <p>E. Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children</p>			

	<p>warmly by the parent/caregiver, EI appears to understand the family routine/blends naturally into whatever activity was occurring at the time of the visit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early interventionist builds on existing parent/caregiver resources, works with Services Coordinator to identify additional resources/supports as needed</li><li>• Parent/caregiver works with early interventionist to establish criteria for tracking child progress</li><li>• Early interventionist not only has a relationship with the family, but they clearly have a relationship with the child (e.g. interactions are warm, child is engaged, EI makes adjustments based on the reaction of the child—for example, they lower their tone of voice if the child begins crying during vocal interactions)</li><li>• Conversation with parent/caregiver is focused on what the child can do, and activities/interventions include developmentally appropriate “next steps” in the child’s developmental trajectory</li><li>• Early interventionist engages in problem-solving discussions with their EI team during regular team meetings; information gathered during coaching sessions with the EI team is shared with the family</li></ul>	<p>exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning activities are founded on what children know—early interventionists use scaffolding to build on this existing knowledge</li><li>• Learning activities include motor/movement and reflect the need for young children to be active participants during learning activities</li><li>• Behavior in the classroom is managed through positive direct and indirect guidance (e.g. re-direction, problem solving, prompts)</li><li>• Transitions are smooth, daily routines are predictable and clearly communicated (e.g. daily visual schedule)</li><li>• Changes in the daily routine are anticipated and early interventionist plans to prevent potential problems</li><li>• Children are active participants in the management of the preschool day (e.g. preschoolers have daily jobs)</li><li>• Early interventionist demonstrates flexibility during instruction (e.g. teaching/activity is adjusted to accommodate restless preschoolers)</li><li>• Materials are prepared ahead of time to minimize transitions and “wait” time; materials are accessible and organized</li></ul>
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Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model:	Danielson Framework for Teaching:	What this could look like in Family Home/Community Childcare Settings:	What this could look like in Center-Based Preschool Settings :
Domain 3: Reflecting on Teaching	Domain 3: Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early interventionist asks the parent/caregiver how things are going— reflection on the intervention/instruction is based on parent/caregiver response and feedback</li><li>• Early interventionist is aware of the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 0-3 and 3-5</li><li>• Early interventionist has a plan for sharing assessment information with families (e.g. awareness of various report features in the Teaching Strategies GOLD online system)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early interventionist records children’s explanations on projects, art work, block designs, and related learning moments</li><li>• Early interventionist is aware of the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 0-3 and 3-5</li><li>• Early interventionist (and other adults—paraeducators) collect and organize information on each child (e.g. anecdotal notes, photos of art projects or block designs created during center time)</li><li>• Early interventionist has a plan for sharing assessment information with families (e.g. awareness of various report features in the Teaching Strategies GOLD online system)</li><li>• Early interventionist involves families and other professionals in observation, documentation and assessment</li><li>• Early interventionist utilizes GOLD data at each checkpoint to monitor and/or adjust instruction and/or to target specific areas of development</li></ul>
<p><b>Nebraska’s Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals</b></p> <p>Related Competencies:</p> <p>A. Child Growth and Development</p> <p>C. Learning Environments</p> <p>D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum</p> <p>E. Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children</p> <p>F. Observation, Documentation and Assessment</p>			

Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model:	Danielson Framework for Teaching:	What this could look like in Family Home/Community Childcare Settings:	What this could look like in Center-Based Preschool Settings :
Domain 4: Collegiality and Professionalism	Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early interventionist understands Nebraska Department of Education Rule for special education/early intervention eligibility and services</li><li>• Early interventionist understands the differences between an IFSP and IEP and can explain these differences effectively to parents</li><li>• Early interventionist participates in team meetings and regular coaching opportunities with other team members</li><li>• Early interventionist understands and complies with Results Matter</li><li>• Early interventionist recognizes family outcomes are a shared responsibility between the EI team members (including parents/caregivers)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early interventionist understands Nebraska Department of Education Rule for special education/early intervention eligibility and services</li><li>• Early interventionist understands and complies with Results Matter</li><li>• Paraeducators are treated with respect (e.g. tone of voice used to give directions/feedback is positive)</li><li>• Early interventionist demonstrates flexibility when working with related service providers</li></ul>
<p><b>Nebraska’s Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals</b></p> <p><u>Related Competencies:</u></p> <p>H. Professionalism and Leadership Competencies</p>			