Important notes about the Career Ladder:

1. This basic first version is a common starting point to build upon. It will evolve and develop as educators gain experience with it and grow professionally.

2. This ladder includes only educators who work directly with children and families and supervisory positions that support the professional development of other educators. It does not address administrative functions or other positions.

3. Position titles and certifications have been omitted intentionally at this stage of the ladder’s development. The goal is to define responsibilities that cut across early education and out of school time settings rather than tying these and other elements to an identified position or credential.

4. Educators can enter the ladder at any level that they qualify for whether they work in a home-based or center-based setting.

5. The responsibilities identified at each level may look different in different types of care but they require the same underlying skills. An educator at the Leadership Level in center-based care is likely to provide other educators in the program with formal supervision. Her Leadership Level counterpart in family child care may fulfill these same responsibilities in the context of a family child care system or educator support group.

6. Although this ladder reflects some licensing requirements and some QRIS standards, it is not intended to align with either of these.

Please refer to the definitions and clarifications on page 5 for more information.

Leadership Level

Educators at the LEADERSHIP level are responsible for a program or a component of a program. They develop curriculum and supervise its implementation. They supervise and evaluate multiple levels of staff. They guide educators towards continuous improvement through the use of evidence based models and techniques. They develop and conduct professional development for staff and peers. They provide leadership, inspiration and motivation to a network or peer group. They mentor educators to support their professional growth, and they review data to assess progress and to individualize instruction.

For an educator to move to the LEADERSHIP level or to start at this level they must have completed one of the following combinations of education and experience:

1. Bachelor’s degree or higher in early childhood education (ECE) or related field, 60 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8, and 48 or more months of experience in early education or out of school time OR
2. Associate’s degree in ECE or related field, 60 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8, and 60 or more months of experience in early education or out of school time OR
3. Unrelated Bachelor’s degree or higher and
   i. 3 credits or 4 CEUS in child development (competency area 1),
   ii. 30 hours in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6
   iii. 60 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8, and 60 or more months of experience in early education or out of school time.

Educators at the LEADERSHIP level must meet the following in-service training requirement(s):

- Uses an Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP) to plan and exceed annual training hour requirements
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- Develops and provides in-service training for educators and peers
- Meets with staff regularly to give feedback, guidance, and encourage reflective practice

Educators at the LEADERSHIP level must demonstrate continuous professional growth as evidenced in IPDP and Professional Qualifications (PQ) Registry including:
- Current knowledge across all 8 core competency areas
- Specialization in an area (special needs, infant care, assessment, literacy etc.)
- Maintain certifications, credentials, licenses
- May pursue higher degree

❖ Supervisory Level

Educators at the SUPERVISORY level are responsible for one or more groups of children. They plan and implement activities. They consult with, supervise, and guide educators at Beginning, Novice, and Independent levels toward continuous improvement through the use of evidence-based models and techniques. They evaluate educators at Beginning, Novice, and Independent levels. They mentor educators and peers to support their professional growth and model appropriate behaviors and techniques. For an educator to move to the SUPERVISORY level or to start at this level, they must have one of the following combinations of education and experience:

1. Associate’s degree or higher in ECE or related field, 30 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8, and 24 or more months of experience in early education or out of school time OR
2. Unrelated Associates degree or higher and
   i. 3 credits or 4 CEUS in child development (competency area 1),
   ii. 30 hours in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6
   iii. 30 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8,
   and 36 or more months of experience in early education or out of school time OR
3. 3 credits or 4 CEUS in child development (competency area 1) and
   i. 90 hours in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6
   ii. 30 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8,
   and 48 or more months of experience in early education or out of school time.

Educators at the SUPERVISORY level must meet the following in-service training requirements:
- Uses IPDP to exceed annual training requirements and to enhance competency
- Meets with staff regularly to give feedback, guidance, and encourage reflective practice.

Educators at the SUPERVISORY level must demonstrate continuous professional growth as evidenced in IPDP and PQ Registry including:
- Current knowledge across all 8 core competency areas
- Pursuing a higher degree in ECE or a related field
- Specialization in an area (special needs, infant care, assessment, literacy etc.)
- Pursuing degree in ECE or related field
- Maintain certifications, credentials, licenses and
- 30 hours in competency areas 7 and 8.
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- **Independent Level**

  Educators at the INDEPENDENT level are responsible for a group of children. They plan and implements specific activities within a defined curriculum. They lead or guide other educators, volunteers, or staff during activities. They individualize activities for children, and model appropriate behaviors and techniques.

  For an educator to move to the INDEPENDENT level or to start at this level, they must have completed one of the following combinations of education and experience:

  1. CDA OR
     2. High School Diploma or GED or higher, at least 3 credits or 4 CEUs in child development, 30 hours in core competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and 12 months of experience in early education or out of school time OR
     3. 60 or more hours in core competency areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and 24-36 months of experience in early education or out of school time.

  Educators at the INDEPENDENT level must meet the following in-service training requirements:
  - Uses IPDP to meet annual training requirements and to enhance competency
  - Meets regularly with supervisor and/or peers and reflects on practice

  Educators at the INDEPENDENT level must demonstrate continuous professional growth as evidenced in IPDP and PQ Registry including either:
  - Pursuing an Associates or higher degree in ECE or a related filed and/or a certificate for a specific age group/setting OR
  - 3 credits or 4 CEUS in child development (competency area 1) and 90 hours in competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and/or 6 and 30 hours in core competency areas 7 and 8.

- **Novice Level**

  Educators at the NOVICE level are responsible for a small group of children and work under supervision in center-based settings. They seek and receive peer and supervisory support. They plan and lead small group activities. They support each child’s well-being.

  For an educator to move to the NOVICE level, or to start at this level, they must have completed one of the following combinations of education and/or experience:

  1. Vocational High School diploma in Early Childhood Education OR
     2. High School diploma or GED and 3 credits or 4 CEUS in child development (competency area 1) and 9 months experience in early education or out of school time OR
     3. 30 Hours ECE Training in core competency areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 and 9 months experience in early education or out of school time OR
     4. 5+ hours of EEC required orientation and 12 months experience in early education or out of school time OR
     5. 5+ hours of EEC required orientation and 18 months parenting experience (applicable to FCC only).
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Educators at the NOVICE level must have completed the following in-service training:
- PQ Registration
- Uses IPDP to meet annual training requirements and to increase competency
- Meets regularly with supervisors and/or peers and reflects on practice

Educators at the NOVICE level must be doing one of the following for continuing education:
- Pursuing a CDA, a certificate for a specific age group/setting, or a degree OR
- Pursuing a degree in ECE or a related field, using GED, ABE, ESOL, Ability to Benefit (ATB) or Accuplacer resources if needed OR
- Be enrolled in child development for 3 credits or 4 CEUs and 30 hours in core competency areas 2, 3, 4, 5 and/or 6 OR
- 60 hours in core competency areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and/or 6.

❖ Beginning/Entry Level

Educators at the BEGINNING/ENTRY level are not responsible for children without direct supervision. They assist more qualified educators with activities.

Educators at the BEGINNING/ENTRY level are not required to have a high school diploma, a GED or early education training; they must either:
- be at least 16 years old and in high school OR
- be at least 18 years old.

No previous formal experience in early education or out of school time is required.

Educators at the BEGINNING/ENTRY level must have completed the following in-service training:
- EEC orientation
- PQ Registration
- IPDP to meet annual training requirements and to increase competency

Educators at the BEGINNING/ENTRY level must be doing one of the following for continuing education:
- Implements an IPDP with supervisor that includes child development (competency area 1) and Working on HS diploma or GED and/or Working on ABE/ESOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EEC Core Competency Areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth</td>
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<td>2. Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Partnering with Families and Communities</td>
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<td>4. Health, Safety, and Nutrition</td>
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<td>5. Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum</td>
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<td>6. Observation, Assessment, and Documentation</td>
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<td>7. Program Planning and Development</td>
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<td>8. Professionalism and Leadership</td>
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### Professional Development as Defined in this Ladder

- Education results in college credits approved CEUs, recognized credentials or equivalents.
- Competency based training includes theory, practice, observation, and reflection.
- Competency based training is measured in contact hours.
- Related degrees or certificates may include competency development in the specified areas. If the degree or certificate is unrelated, competency development in these areas is required in addition to the degree or certificate.

**Continuing Education:** Professional development that advances an educator’s professional growth with the intent of helping the educator move up the ladder.

**Experience:** Providing direct care and instruction to children during all types of program activities for a minimum of 12 hours per week. Qualifying experience includes regular observation by, and consultation with, a more qualified educator from the Independent Level or above. Observations and consultations must be recorded in the educator’s IPDP.

**IPDP** is an Individual Professional Development Plan. An IPDP is used to plan and record an educator’s professional growth.

**In-service Training:** Intentional, on-going professional development and training to meet established requirements and to increase competency within a given level of responsibility. Often includes ongoing, formative observation and feedback by a supervisor or qualified peer. At a minimum, in-service must meet the number of hours required by the EEC regulations.

**Mentoring:** Activities by which a more experienced educator guides and supports the professional growth of another educator.

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**Related Fields of Study:**
- For early education: Child care, child development, health care, child psychology, social work, or the provision of direct services to children and their families.
- For school age child care: all the preceding fields and early childhood education, elementary education, recreation, physical education, human services, or the arts.

**Supervisor:** An educator at the Independent Level or above who directs or leads the activities of someone at the same or lower level.