

2020 Delaware Stars Standards, Key Practices, Pathways - Revised

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Business Practices

Programs implement policies, procedures, and systems that support stable and strong business practices.

BP Key Practice 1: Program/Agency has a mission that drives operations.			
Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>7. Procedures for Initial Licensure 15. Governing Body 23. Center Policies-Parent/Guardian Handbook 28. General Qualifications 32. Orientation 73. Program Goals and Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders develop a mission statement considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the site’s core values, ○ features that are unique to the program, and ○ benefits those features bring to children and families served by the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders create a shared mission with the educators in the program and uses this information to update their current mission statement if needed. • Program leaders engage staff with the program mission and strategic goals. • Program policies connect to and reflect the program mission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders align the goal of the mission with what occurs within the program. • Program leaders use program mission to drive future planning. • Program leaders collaborate with families and community partners to engage them with the program’s mission.

BP Key Practice 2: Program/Agency implements an effective financial management system.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>7. Procedures for Initial Licensure 15. Governing Body</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders are knowledgeable about budgeting and fiscal management. • Program has a process for maintaining records for all business income, payments, insurance and taxes on a monthly basis. • Program leaders use past data to project a comprehensive annual budget that includes all income and expenses. • Program has policies and procedures in place to minimize financial risk (i.e. Internal Controls). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program formally tracks income received on a monthly basis (i.e. Cash Flow Statement). • Program formally reviews income and expenses monthly (i.e. Income Statement). • Program has a financial statement capturing their assets, liabilities, and net worth, and updates it at least annually (i.e. Balance Sheet). • Program leaders implement policies for collecting full tuition to stabilize income. • Program has a process for annually reviewing tuition and fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program monitors and adjusts budget quarterly, at a minimum, using a variety of reports and adjusts as needed • Program builds a projected 3-5 year comprehensive budget that includes all revenue and expenses • Program uses formal financial systems to adjust for the financial health of the business and for decision-making purposes. • Program implements a consistent separation of financial duties.

BP Key Practice 3: Program/Agency implements an effective marketing plan.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>7. Procedures for Initial Licensure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders have knowledge of marketing. • Program has a basic marketing plan. • Program has marketing materials. • The program’s mission and unique features are represented in the current marketing process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has a minimum of a quarterly internal (for staff and enrolled families) and external (for broader community and prospective families) marketing plan. • Program leaders reflect on their areas of strength and growth to identify marketing needs and challenges both internally as well as externally. • Program leaders determine market audience and best form of communication for that audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has a formal comprehensive monthly marketing plan addressing internal and external needs. • Program leaders develop a programmatic image that differentiates them from those of competitors. • Program leaders collect data on their marketing process to identify marketing tools/needs directly related to their program.

BP Key Practice 4: Program implements a comprehensive risk management plan.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>17. Telephones 19. Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements 20. Positive Behavior Management 21. Food Service Policy 23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian Handbook 28. General Qualifications 29. Adult Health Requirements 32. Orientation 35. First Aid and CPR Training 37. Staff Communication 38. Parent’s Right To Know 39. Enrollment 40. Child Files 45. Hazardous Materials 47. Smoking and Vaping 46. Air Quality and Windows 48. Heating and Cooling 49. Indoor Space 50. Kitchen and Food Preparation 52. Area for Children Who Become Ill 53. Outdoor Area 54. Pools and Swimming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders enrich their emergency preparedness plan anticipating potential problems that could arise to develop ways to reduce those risks. • Program leaders assign roles and responsibilities for each identified risk. • Program leaders review the current Emergency Plan annually. • Program leaders develop a detailed plan to orient new staff to the emergency procedures upon hiring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders engage in ongoing professional development in a variety of risk management topics. • Program leaders develop data collection systems to assess foreseeable problems. • Program leaders review their formal plans updating with any new foreseeable problems to the success of the business. • Program leaders share the full plan with all updates with the program educators annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders are involved in assessing threats to the success of the childcare facility and updating their formal plan as needed. • Program leaders use data to build a formal comprehensive plan to reduce all identified risks (i.e. Risk Management Plan), which is reviewed annually.

55. Riding Toys 56. Sleeping Accommodations and Safe Sleep Environments 57. Equipment 58. Sanitation 60. Standard Precautions 63. Administration of Medication 64. Child Accident and Injury 66. Emergency Planning 67. Transportation 68. Field Trips and Program Outings 71. Meals and Snacks 72. Feeding of Infants 76. Activity Schedule 77. Infant and Toddler Care			
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BP Key Practice 5: Program implements varied procedures to recruit and orient staff.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>15. Governing Body 18. General Human Resources and Personnel Policy 24. Staff Qualifications 26. Staffing 32. Orientation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders have knowledge of state and federal labor laws and federal employee legislation. • Program leaders have knowledge regarding effective recruitment and orienting practices. • Program leaders have procedures for recruitment of educators and have established a formal interview processes. • Program leaders have developed a multi-day orientation process to ensure that the new educator has received information on all areas as mandated by licensing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders use their center mission as a baseline for building recruitment and hiring procedures. • Program leaders orient new educators over the course of the probationary period. • Program leaders complete a formal review at the completion of the staff probationary period. • Program leaders develop a mentoring system to support new educators. • Program recruitment policy includes a commitment to seek a diverse staff that reflects the children and community served. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders use adult learning theories to design a comprehensive orientation system. • Program leaders reflect on retention data to determine the effectiveness of recruitment and orientation procedures. • Program leaders use feedback from employees to update the orientation system annually.

Professional Growth and Well-Being

Programs promote a working environment centered around the success and well-being of all educators.

PG Key Practice 1: Program creates an effective and positive organizational climate.			
Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>15. Governing Body 18. General Human Resources and Personnel Policies 37. Staff Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders have knowledge about building a positive organizational climate where educators can feel satisfied in the work environment. • Program has a policy related to developing and maintaining a positive organizational climate and communicates it to all educators. • Program leaders collect data on educators' thoughts and opinions about the organizational climate. • Program leaders commit to supporting respect and professionalism among all educators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders support autonomy, collaboration, and collegiality among educators. • Program uses data on from educators to enhance the organizational climate. • Program leaders implement healthy conflict resolution practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders use evidence based tools to inform, reflect on, and continually improve positive organizational climate, considering individual needs. • Program provides leadership opportunities and encourages autonomy and innovation of educators. • Educators regularly collaborate. •

PG Key Practice 2: Program promotes positive well-being for all educators and staff.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>20. Positive Behavior Management</p> <p>27. Ratios, Group Size, and Supervision</p> <p>34. Annual Professional Development Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders have knowledge about strategies and initiatives to promote well-being. • Program collects data on educators' morale and well-being needs. • Program leaders ensure fair and respectful treatment of all educators and cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders use data from educators to develop and implement a plan to support morale and well-being. • Program leaders encourage ECP to create goals related to their well-being and growth. • Program leaders support the goals of educators. • Program leaders support educators in using stress reducing practices both in and out of the classroom. • Program consistently provides opportunities for social connection and development of community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program consistently provides opportunities to promote educators well-being. • Program looks for opportunities to empower staff to take the lead on wellbeing and morale activities. • Program celebrates culture and considers it an integral part of the program. • Program leaders demonstrate flexibility in scheduling to meet the needs of all educators.

PG Key Practice 3: Program promotes professional growth for all educators and staff.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>33. Annual Training 34. Annual Professional Development Plan 35. First Aid and CPR Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program supports educators' use of a self-reflection tool for their professional growth. • Program leaders meet with educators to discuss their needs, goals, and professional development plans. • Program has processes to follow through on professional development plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program provides information on PD opportunities and leaders encourage staff to attend. • Professional growth opportunities are planned to encourage collaboration among colleagues and other professionals outside the organization. • Program provides training and opportunities to serve as a mentor, as well as encourages staff members to engage in mentoring relationships. • Program uses data to plan for site-wide and individual professional growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program encourages and helps to finance enrollment in a variety of PD opportunities aligns to PD plans. • Program encourages educators to engage in sequential, in-depth (i.e., multiple-session) Professional Development. • Program leaders ensure Professional Development opportunities include intentional follow-up. • Program supports opportunities for educators to regularly observe each other's practice and engage in discussions around PD.

PG Key Practice 4: Program provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>3. Definition of Terms – “Supervision of staff”</p> <p>73. Program Goals and Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders review policies and procedures to ensure inclusion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frequent and consistent observations with a purpose of providing feedback ○ Opportunities for educators to identify strengths, concerns, and challenges • Program leaders ensure supervision is supportive and focused on teaching practices rather than punitive in nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders consistently observe and provide feedback on teaching practices for all educators. • Program supports educators in accessing professional growth opportunities that are in line with feedback from observations. • Program has a system for educators to request observations as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders provide follow up support as educators develop their skills and work to improve practice. • Program leaders observe using a reliable, valid tool or a curriculum implementation checklist. • Program leaders ensure there is a timely feedback meeting that is bi-directional and focused on strengths. • Program helps educators reflect on their own practices, values, and beliefs.

PG Key Practice 5: Program supports competitive compensation and benefits attached to comprehensive qualifications.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders stay informed on competitive wages and opportunities to fund wage increases. • Program helps staff access financial supports for degrees. • Program implements salary scales with different levels of pay for educators according to their levels of education and years of experience, not based on the ages of the children they work with. • Program provides some benefits to educators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implements a yearly cost of living salary increase. • Program provides multiple benefits to educators. • Program ensures paid time for professional responsibilities of educators. • Program encourages educators to earn an associates degree or specialized credential in early childhood and increases compensation for those who do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implements a merit bonus system for ECP in addition to yearly cost of living salary increase. • Program provides a wide range of benefits to educators. • Program is involved in advocacy opportunities for increasing ECE wages. • Program encourages educators to earn a bachelor's degree in early childhood and increases compensation for those who do. • Program works to hire and retain educators for roles aligned to an ECE I, II, and III designation.

Relationships with Families

Programs partner with parents/caregivers to promote them in their role as their child’s first teacher and to connect them with their child’s learning experiences in the program.

RF Key Practice 1: Program offers families practical opportunities to be involved and connected.			
Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian Handbook</p> <p>32. Orientation</p> <p>39. Enrollment</p> <p>42. Documenting Children’s Progress</p> <p>74. Lesson Plans</p> <p>77. Infant and Toddler Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders guide all staff in building skills and knowledge regarding communicating with families and the importance of family engagement to program quality. • Program provides information and implements an orientation process to support newly enrolled families. • Program has policies in place that encourage family engagement in program activities. • Program collects information from families about their background, culture, traditions, and their children’s needs and develops ways to use this information to connect with families. • Program employs strategies that facilitate access for all families (e.g., home language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implements a system of timely two-way communication with families regarding various issues, concerns, and children’s needs. • Program provides a variety of opportunities for families to engage in activities that promote their child’s learning and development as well as more general program activities. • Program gathers information from families regarding their priorities and needs for learning more about child development, parenting, etc. • Families are encouraged to share their cultures and traditions within the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program uses family needs information to develop a plan of family engagement activities that is updated annually. • Program maintains an advisory board that actively engages families and allows them to have a voice in program activities and operations.

	materials, different modes of communication, etc.).		
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RF Key Practice 2: Program supports families in building healthy relationships with their children.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>22. Breast Feeding 23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian Handbook 28. General Qualifications 32. Orientation 74. Lesson Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders have knowledge about the importance of healthy parent-child relationships and their impact on children. • Program has a plan to offer opportunities for families to understand the development and learning needs of children and to engage in learning experiences with their child. • Program collects information on family challenges to inform planning of opportunities to reduce parental stress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program provides families with information on relevant community resources to reduce parental stress. • Program provides families information on child development and parenting strategies. • Program provides opportunities for families to engage in learning experiences with their child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program educators have an ongoing collaboration with parents that ensures the individual child is at the forefront of the partnership and decision-making. • Program engages families in evaluating and adjusting the opportunities offered to families.

RF Key Practice 3: Program partners with parents and guardians in support of their role in their children’s development and learning.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian Handbook</p> <p>32. Orientation</p> <p>38. Parent’s Right To Know</p> <p>39. Enrollment</p> <p>42. Documenting Children’s Progress</p> <p>74. Lesson Plans</p> <p>77. Infant and Toddler Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has written policies for communicating with families about family concerns, priorities, and children’s progress. • Program operates an open-door policy for families to share their concerns and perspectives regarding their child and program operations. • Program assists families in partnering in educational or other services for their child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has a system for identifying family priorities, concerns, and resources to assist with meeting children’s needs. • Program has strategies for encouraging family participation in parent-teacher meetings. • Program formally collects information from families regarding perspectives on program operations and shares results with all families. • Program supports families to actively engage in services to support their child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program offers families opportunities to provide feedback on a wide range of aspects of the program and uses parent input to guide quality improvement efforts. • Program leaders ensure that information shared with families on their child’s progress on interventions and activities are parent-friendly and sensitive to cultural and linguistic diversity of families. • Program supports families in becoming advocates for their children. • Educators partner with families to build educational plans with goals and activities that the families can support at home and communicate with the family about engaging with the plan.

Relationships with the Community

Programs establish community relationships that support children and their families.

RCO Key Practice 1: Program supports children and families with transitions to and from new learning environments.			
Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian</p> <p>39. Enrollment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about the importance of seamless transitions for young children and families. • Program has a policy that states how they partner with families during transition processes. • Program ensures that families exiting the program are connected to community resources and supports that facilitate the transition to the next setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has working relationships and routinely communicates with community agencies and settings that serve their children and families (e.g. programs that both “send and receive” children) • Program routinely shares information with families about other programs in the community that may be involved in children’s transitions (e.g. school district information) • Program routinely follows up with families after they exit the program to “check in.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program partners to plan transitions to meet the individualized needs of young children and their families (timing is flexible). • Program partners with other agencies/schools in their communities to plan and implement transition activities (e.g., cross-site visitation, shared PD, videos of new environments, etc).

RCo Key Practice 2: Program engages with community organizations to support the needs and learning experiences of all children enrolled in the program.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian Handbook</p> <p>25. Substitutes, Volunteers, and Contracted Special Services Persons</p> <p>42. Documenting Children’s Progress</p> <p>44. Observation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program staff are knowledgeable and maintain updated information on community resources that respond to the needs of children in the program. • Program has a policy that addresses community relationships, community resources, referrals, and implementation. • Program provides information about community agency supports and referral systems in families’ home language to the extent possible/available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program develops partnerships with early intervention and school districts, teachers, and families to meet the needs of individual children with disabilities. • Program routinely makes referrals to meet the needs of children. • Program maintains relationships with community agencies that extend high quality practice. • Program supports diversity in engaging with local community agencies. • Program partners with community agencies to maintain current information about community resources and activities and share this information with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program actively partners with schools, Child Development Watch, and Child Find to plan and implement IEPs/IFSPs to meet the needs of young children with disabilities. • Program develops formalized relationships/agreements with partnering agencies. • Program actively participates in community-wide efforts to improve the well-being of young children.

RCO Key Practice 3: Program engages with community organizations to support and promote the family well-being.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>20. Positive Behavior Management</p> <p>66. Emergency Planning</p> <p>68. Field Trips and Program Outings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program staff are knowledgeable and maintain updated information on community resources that respond to the needs of families in the program. • Program has a policy that addresses community relationships, community resources, referrals, and implementation. • Program provides information about community agency supports and referral systems in families' home language to the extent possible/available. • Program collects information from parents on what is important for family well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program maintains connections with community agencies that assist the program in supporting family education, family as the child's first teacher, and overall family well-being. • Program partners with community agencies to maintain current information about community resources and activities and share this information with families. • Program routinely provides referrals to meet the needs of families. • Program supports diversity in engaging with local community agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program develops formalized relationships/agreements with family service partnering agencies. • Program actively participates in community-wide efforts to improve the well-being of families. • Program supports staff in understanding, expertise and practices regarding family well-being.

Relationships with Children

Programs support relationships between educators and children through intentional and responsive interactions.

RCh Key Practice 1: Program seeks to build meaningful connections over time between children and their primary educators.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>23. Center Policies- Parent/Guardian Handbook</p> <p>27. Ratios, Group Size, and Supervision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about the importance of stable adult-child relationships and how to build them. • Program has a policy that states how they support meaningful connections between children and educators over time. • Program leaders and educators support families and children through transitions within the program (e.g., in and out of classrooms and throughout the program day). • Educators engage in simple social interactions with children throughout the day (e.g., respond briefly to children’s requests, give directions, or ask simple questions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implements procedures that support their policy on building meaningful connections between children and educators over time. • Program supports educators to use a variety of strategies that promote meaningful connections with the children in their care. • Educators engage in many sustained, reciprocal social interactions with individual children. • Educators are responsive to children’s interests and needs. • Program leaders and educators collaborate with families to plan for transitions within the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators are consistently available to children and show enjoyment when engaging with children during activities and play. • Program implements primary caregiving practices for children. • Educators use a variety of strategies that promote meaningful connections between primary caregivers and the children in their care. • Program implements staffing practices that ensures continuity of care.

RCh Key Practice 2: Program supports educators to guide children’s behavior through intentional strategies.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>3. Definition of Terms – “Professional development”</p> <p>20. Positive Behavior Management</p> <p>23. Suspension & Expulsion policy</p> <p>24. Staff Qualifications</p> <p>32. Orientation</p> <p>34. Annual Professional Development Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about strategies to guide children’s behavior. • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about factors that contribute to children’s behavior, including trauma. • Program has a policy on how professionals guide children’s behavior. • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about resources to support children with challenging behaviors and share relevant information with families. • Program leaders support educators to positively guide children’s behavior using a variety of strategies. • Program leaders collect data on children’s behavior incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program supports educators to maintain developmentally and culturally appropriate behavioral expectations. • Program supports educators to practice intentional, proactive strategies to promote positive behavior among children. • Program supports educators to promote families’ understanding of children’s behavior. • Program supports educators to review data on children’s behavior regularly to uncover trends and better understand needs. • Educators use strategies to resolve peer conflict that focus on helping children find alternative, more appropriate ways to interact with peers, rather than focusing exclusively on what children should not do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators use proactive strategies to promote positive behavior among children. • Program leaders and educators partner with families to support children’s behavior through goal setting, planning, and review. • Program supports educators to understand the function of children’s challenging behaviors and to develop alternative means to address the children’s needs. • Program supports all educators to explore their own implicit biases and be aware of their interpretations of and reactions to children’s behaviors.

RCh Key Practice 3: Program supports educators to facilitate children’s purposeful play to foster meaningful learning experiences.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>57. Equipment 73. Program Goals and Planning 74. Lesson Plans 75. Activity Area 76. Activity Schedule 78. Interactions with Infants 79. Interactions with Toddlers 80. Interactions with Preschool and School-Age Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about different types of play and their benefits, as well as developmentally appropriate ways to facilitate play to foster meaningful learning experiences. • Program supports educators to provide opportunities for various types of play (e.g., teacher-supported, child-led, guided play, spontaneous play, etc.). • Educators monitor children’s involvement during play and support all children to engage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators proactively support positive play experiences. • Programs supports educators to implement intentional strategies to allow for extended play opportunities. • Educators use transitions between playtimes as learning experiences (clean-up time, etc.). • Program supports educators to provide planned play experiences and free play experiences during outdoor time. • Educators provide children many opportunities to make choices during play and provide the necessary support to help children express their choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators strategically choose their facilitative role in play to meet the needs of children and the play experience. • Educators design play experiences that are relevant and adaptable to the individual needs of all children. • Educators support children’s own reflections on their play and learning. • Educators observe children’s response to support and adjust their level and type of scaffolding as needed to facilitate sustained engagement. •

RCh Key Practice 4: Program promotes communication and emotion expression of all children.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>20. Positive Behavior Management 28. General Qualifications 73. Program Goals and Planning 74. Lesson Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about how children develop in their ability to communicate and express emotion. • Educators are aware of what children are communicating about and respond to children’s initiated communication. • Educators make some efforts to adjust their communication to children’s level of understanding, as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program supports educators to respond to children’s individual needs for communication. • Program supports educators to use a variety of verbal and visual strategies to promote communication throughout the day. • Educators listen to and acknowledge each child’s perspective while also providing the necessary support that helps children understand and express their own perspectives. • Program supports educators to intentionally plan for experiences to promote social-emotional skill development. • Program supports educators to help children acknowledge and respond to communication and emotion expression of peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators adapt their interactions with children to support children’s individual needs for communication. • Educators utilize alternative means of communication in inclusive ways that enable all children to communicate and participate in activities with their peers, while adults provide the necessary scaffolding to ensure functional communication. • Educators create many opportunities to facilitate communication among children and help children sustain meaningful communication. • Educators consistently use a variety of strategies to promote children’s meaningful communication and emotion expression throughout the day. • Educators utilize a supplemental curriculum to plan for additional experiences

			for social and emotional development.
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RCh Key Practice 5: Program supports educators to foster a sense of community within the classroom.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>20. Positive Behavior Management</p> <p>74. Lesson Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about the importance of fostering a sense of community in the classroom. • Program has a policy and procedures for how they foster a sense of community within the classroom. • Program supports educators to maintain classroom environments that provide opportunities for children to feel ownership and/or show responsibility. • When educators provide opportunities for children to assume social roles and responsibilities, all children are encouraged to assume such roles and responsibilities. • Program displays books, materials, and visuals that describe and reflect individual differences in positive ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program supports educators to use a variety of strategies to promote a sense of community (e.g., problem-solving, shared decision-making, environmental supports, and promoting caring behaviors). • Program supports educators to implement classroom practices that encourage cooperative play and positive social interactions. • Educators respond to children’s comments and questions about individual differences in supportive and constructive ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators consistently use a variety of strategies that promote a sense of belonging and membership. • Educators actively facilitate, encourage, and support peer interactions, as developmentally appropriate, through cooperative play, work, and/or problem-solving. • Program leaders and educators are intentional about modeling empathy and promoting social justice. • Educators embed activities to promote understanding of individual differences.

Promoting Children’s Learning

Programs use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate approaches to support each child’s learning and development.

PCL Key Practice 1: Program implements a comprehensive and research-based screening that is linked to follow-up.			
Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders are knowledgeable about developmental milestones and the purpose of developmental screenings. • Program has a policy for implementing developmental screenings and making appropriate referrals. • Program selects an approved screening tool and program leaders are knowledgeable in the components and implementation process. • Program provides families with resources to support family understanding of developmental milestones and the purpose of developmental screenings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators in each classroom are knowledgeable about developmental milestones and the purpose of developmental screenings. • Educators in each classroom are knowledgeable about the selected screening tool. • Program leaders are knowledgeable about referral organizations that provide follow-up evaluations and services. • Program leaders ensure that annual screenings are completed for all children and that results are reviewed and shared with families. • Program provides relevant referral resources and supports families in completing referrals for evaluation and/or obtaining services for all identified children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program ensures that screenings are completed within 45 days of enrollment, as well as every 6 months for children up to age 3, and annually for all children ages 3 to 5. • Program conducts screenings more frequently, in accordance with the selected screening tool, with children identified as benefitting from more frequent monitoring. • Educators review individual milestones and discuss screening results with families. • Program collaborates with families and organizations to provide appropriate services for all children.

PCL Key Practice 2: Program utilizes a comprehensive curriculum aligned with program philosophy to implement daily routines and developmentally appropriate activities that support children’s learning and development.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>73. Program Goals and Planning 74. Lesson Plans 76. Activity Schedule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about the Delaware ELFs. • Program has a policy about curriculum and its role in the program learning environment. • Program selects an approved curriculum that aligns with the program mission. • Program leaders are knowledgeable about the components and implementation of the selected curriculum. • Program requests copies of IEPs/IFSPs for each eligible child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program educators in each classroom are knowledgeable about the components and implementation of the selected curriculum. • Program leaders support educators to use the curriculum to develop their daily schedule. • Program leaders support educators to develop lesson plans aligned with the curriculum. • Program leaders offer a variety of strategies to support educators to implement the curriculum. • Program leaders consistently monitor and provide feedback on lesson plans. • Program provides support for educators to attend intervention planning meetings with service providers and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators consistently and fully implement the selected curriculum in all classrooms. • Program educators use child data to inform curriculum planning, incorporating activities designed to support identified skills, knowledge, and abilities for each and every child. • Program intentionally selects and implements supplemental curricula, based on consideration of program philosophy and the needs of enrolled children. • Program leaders consistently monitor and provide feedback on fidelity of curriculum implementation.

PCL Key Practice 3: Program conducts ongoing curriculum-based assessment for all children.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>42. Documenting Children’s Progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about appropriate developmental expectations. • Program leaders and educators are knowledgeable about conducting observations and ongoing assessment of children’s learning. • Program has policies and procedures in place for observing, documenting, and assessing children’s learning, as well as how to share information with families. • Program intentionally selects an approved assessment system. • Program leaders are knowledgeable about the components and implementation of the selected assessment system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program educators in each classroom are knowledgeable about the components and implementation of the selected assessment system. • Program leader supports educators to intentionally plan for observations in a variety of settings at different times of day. • Program leader supports educators to collect observations and develop an organized system for documentation. • Educators use child observations when completing benchmark assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators in all classrooms intentionally plan for observations and engage in full implementation of selected assessment system. • Program leader supports educators to review assessment data in a variety of ways to better understand the needs of children in their classrooms. • Educators use observations and assessment data to inform and adjust future goals, experiences, and instructional supports for each and every child in the classroom. • Educators and families collaborate to jointly plan in support of individual children’s needs. • Program leader uses child assessment data in long-range planning and program evaluation.

Playful Learning Environments

Programs create playful indoor and outdoor learning environments that are healthy, safe, and child-centered.

PLE Key Practice 1: Program creates and maintains an accessible learning environment that promotes children's interests, development and learning.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>39. Enrollment 42. Documenting Children’s Progress 78. Interactions with Infants 79. Interactions with Toddlers 80. Interactions with Preschool and School-Age Children 74. Lesson Plans 75. Activity Area 76. Activity Schedule 57. Equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders are knowledgeable about the importance of room arrangement and materials in the classroom. • Program leaders support educators to ensure that classrooms have some child-centered interest/learning areas. • Program leaders support educators to develop and implement systems to include a variety of materials in the classroom. • Program leaders support educators to put systems in place, based on children’s needs, to encourage children’s independent access and use of materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators provide all children with opportunities to engage in a variety of interest areas, including dramatic play, reading, blocks, math manipulatives, music, science and sensory. • Program leaders and educators use family and child data to identify and update materials and room arrangements to support children’s interest, development, and learning needs. • Educators monitor how children use materials and equipment and help children use materials when they have difficulty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders support all educators to incorporate materials to extend play themes in a purposeful way. • Educators design the environment based on children’s interests and to accommodate individual children’s needs. • Educators select materials to support children’s targeted learning goals and use those materials to facilitate experiences with children. • Educators consistently support each child who has difficulty using materials/equipment purposefully while at the same time encouraging child independence.

PLE Key Practice 2: Program provides accessible outdoor environments that promote curiosity and playful exploration.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>53. Outdoor Area 55. Riding Toys 57. Equipment 76. Activity Schedule 78. Interactions with Infants 79. Interactions with Toddlers 80. Interactions with Preschool and School-Age Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders are knowledgeable about the importance of outdoor experiences. • Program leaders ensure that large motor materials meet the needs of all children served and are accessible daily for all children to explore, create and have free movement opportunities. • Program has large motor play spaces that provide natural and season-dependent materials to offer opportunities to explore nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators use family and child data to identify and update materials for the outdoor environment that support children’s interest, development, and learning needs. • Educators engage with the children during their large motor play experiences. • Program has a variety of unique materials or loose parts to encourage imagination and provide experience with natural and novel materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders support educators to incorporate active play materials to extend play themes in a purposeful way. • Educators connect and extend indoor learning experiences to the outdoor environment. • Program has outdoor environment that meets the needs of all children enrolled. • Program provides opportunities for interesting and unique outdoor experiences (e.g., a garden, a stage, an obstacle course).

PLE Key Practice 3: Program provides an environment that is responsive to the developmental, cultural, and linguistic needs of all children enrolled in the program.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>20. Positive Behavior Management 28. General Qualifications 39. Enrollment 42. Documenting Children’s Progress 49. Indoor Space 57. Equipment 73. Program Goals and Planning 74. Lesson Plans 75. Activity Areas 76. Activity Schedule 78. Interactions with Infants 79. Interactions with Toddlers 80. Interactions with Preschool and School-Age Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders are knowledgeable about the importance of diversity and inclusion as part of a quality experience for children and provide guidance to educators. • Program has a written policy that is shared with families on the why and how diversity and inclusion are to be integrated as part of everyday experiences for children. • Program collects information about the uniqueness of children, families, and the community. • Program leaders and educators collaboratively develop and monitor a plan to implement an environment that is purposeful to diversity and inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has a variety of multicultural, DLL, and inclusive materials available that are reflective of the children and community and promote appreciation for diversity and inclusion. • Program and classrooms are welcoming and accessible, providing accommodations to allow all children the same experiences in the physical environment. • Program leaders support educators in using resources from early childhood specialists (e.g., ECMH, OT, PT) to incorporate individualized learning experiences for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators celebrate and support children in expressing and recognizing their differences. • Program leaders provide the necessary time, space, resources, support, and facilitation for educators and all staff to be part of the process of change.

PLE Key Practice 4: Program ensures all indoor and outdoor environments are healthy and safe.

Entry	Emerging	Developing	Advanced
<p>DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers:</p> <p>14. Notification to OCCL</p> <p>15. Governing Body</p> <p>32. Orientation</p> <p>45. Hazardous Materials</p> <p>46. Air Quality and Windows</p> <p>47. Smoking and Vaping</p> <p>48. Heating and Cooling</p> <p>49. Indoor Space</p> <p>50. Kitchen and Food Preparation</p> <p>51. Toilet Facilities</p> <p>52. Area for Children Who Become Ill</p> <p>53. Outdoor Area</p> <p>54. Pools and Swimming</p> <p>55. Riding Toys</p> <p>56. Sleeping Accommodations and Safe Sleep Environments</p> <p>57. Equipment</p> <p>58. Sanitation</p> <p>60. Standard Precautions</p> <p>61. Diapering and Soiled Clothing</p> <p>63. Administration of Medication</p> <p>66. Emergency Planning</p> <p>69. Pets</p> <p>71. Meals and Snacks</p> <p>77. Infant and Toddler Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has policies and procedures that create hazard-free spaces to keep all environments safe and secure. • Program leaders establish and train educators on a system of health & safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times. • Program leaders develop and implement systems to monitor and maintain all safety policies and procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders collect data on the effectiveness and efficiency of health & safety procedures and use to inform policies. • Educators are knowledgeable about each child’s individual needs to adapt spaces to ensure a safe environment for all children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program leaders and educators engage families about safety issues and partner with them on how to reduce risks that occur in the home environment. • Program leaders communicate with educators to create lesson plans around health and safety.

