

Principles of Professional Development Meeting

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We, as regional leaders from across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, have the distinct opportunity and challenge to design a state-wide professional development system for the field of early care and education. As we begin this work, we recognize that two perspectives shape our work:

- We celebrate the diversity of the early childhood and out of school time workforce and will build on this diversity as a foundational strength.
- We value and recognize the importance of these educators to child outcomes.

With these perspectives in mind, it is important to establish a firm foundation for professional development amid fiscal restraints. Therefore, we adopt the following four core principles as guidelines for our work.

Our focus is on the children!

Professional development is a means through which we strive to enhance the workforce to create strong outcomes for children. They are ALL our children regardless of setting, language, race, class or geography.

We are a learning community.

“All in one boat,” we aim to be open and welcoming with each other and with the professionals with whom we work. We are peers without borders, striving for high quality professional development across all regions and avoiding duplication. To achieve this we will respect the unique strengths and challenges of each region, work collaboratively rather than competitively; always acknowledge our common agenda; and proactively address conflict with clear communication. Resources must be directed toward supporting and strengthening our work as a learning community.

Our work with adult learners is evidence-based and supportive.

“No professional will be left behind” as we facilitate learning opportunities among diverse staff with qualities such as different educational backgrounds or primary languages. We learn about and implement effective practices, and emphasize partnerships, especially with institutions of higher education. Risk taking and innovation are encouraged as we set and achieve clear outcomes. Our goal is to provide professional development that will help educators put their knowledge into practice and positively impact their work with children and families. We understand that our work must ultimately be tied to increased compensation for the early care and education and OST workforce. Further, we strive to be inclusive of settings such as out-of-school time that may have received less attention in the past.

Results matter.

We aim to advance the field in many ways including more useful data collection; stronger state-wide systems for selecting and evaluating trainers; and clarifying the range of evidence that will demonstrate how the capacity of the field is advanced.