

Compared with competencies for educators, which show considerable agreement in the stated expectations, there is a more pronounced disconnect in expectations for leaders between elementary school settings and early childhood settings outside of elementary schools. Competency statements for leaders from organizations representing elementary school principals and chief state school officers are much more focused than those representing early childhood professions on knowledge and skills required for instructional leadership. Most of the NAESP and CCSSO competencies are related to leaders' ability to create working environments and supports for educators that help them improve their instructional practice. In contrast, most of the competencies specified by the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership and Head Start have to do with how well a leader can develop and manage a well-functioning organization. In fact, the "Technical Competencies" described as part of the "core" for Head Start directors recommend only that directors have "general knowledge" of the content areas of the Head Start program performance standards and not necessarily of how they need to use that knowledge to support Head Start educators' practice. The other skills described under "Technical Competencies" could be considered related more to organizational development and management than to instructional leadership.

This emphasis on organizational management for early childhood program leaders relates to an important aspect of their work. Many early childhood providers are essentially small businesses with minimal to no support infrastructure (compared with a school district). Therefore, it is important for leaders to get the business side of their job right. Yet, given the science of child development and early learning reviewed in Part II, the complex and sophisticated professional competencies needed by the practitioners in these settings, and the importance of the work environment in supporting quality professional practice, adequate attention also needs to be paid to the ability of leadership to support high-quality instruction.

CCSSO's standards include some of the most specific mentions of child development and other principles that may be associated with early childhood research and best practices. For example, the standards state that leaders are expected to

- ensure that instruction is anchored in the best understandings of child development;
- emphasize assessment systems congruent with understandings of child development and standards of measurement;
- ensure that each student is known, valued, and respected;
- ensure that students are enmeshed in a safe, secure, emotionally protective, and healthy environment; and

- ensure that each student has an adult

support.

Based on what is needed to foster the early learning of children, effective educational leadership in all settings needs to be driven by a common impetus, one that is articulated in the CCSSO standards as the expectation that leaders focus first and foremost on supporting student and adult learning.

Conclusion About Competencies for Leadership

The complexity of childhood development and early learning and the sophisticated knowledge and competencies needed by care and education professionals have important implications for the knowledge and competencies of leadership in settings for children from birth through age 8. These leaders and administrators need to understand developmental science and instructional practices for educators of young children, as well as the ability to use this knowledge to guide their decisions on hiring, supervision, and selection of tools for assessment of children and evaluation of teacher performance, and to inform their development of portfolios of professional learning supports for their settings.

Conclusion About Core Competency Statements for Leaders

To create a more consistent culture of leadership expectations better aligned with children's need for continuous learning experiences, states' and organizations' statements of core competencies for leadership in elementary education would benefit from a review of those statements to ensure that the scope of competencies for instructional leadership encompasses the early elementary years, including pre-K as it increasingly becomes included in public school systems. States and organizations that issue statements of core competencies for leadership in centers, programs, family childcare, and other settings for early childhood education would benefit from a review of those statements to ensure that competencies related to instructional leadership are emphasized alongside administrative and management competencies.

KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES FOR INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

A critical competency for all professionals with roles in seamlessly supporting children from birth through age 8 is the ability to work in synergy both across settings within the care and education sector and between the care and education sector and other closely related sectors, especially