Beyond Wages and Benefits:
What Makes Teachers Stay, Grow, and Thrive?

Sharon Easterling & Amy Friedlander, Opportunities Exchange | December 13, 2022

Agenda

➢ **Welcome/Agenda review**

➢ **Background and Context**

➢ **Best Practice Guidance**

➢ **Creating Positive Work Environments**

➢ **Resources/Discussion**

Let's get started!

Background and Context
3 words: Workforce, workforce, workforce

NAEYC survey conducted November 2022:

- 46% of programs are serving fewer children than pre-pandemic levels

- 70% of these cite staffing shortages as the reason for lower enrollment

- Almost half (45%) of respondents new to the field (1 year or less), say they are considering leaving the field; a trend with dramatic consequences for the workforce pipeline

We must urgently address the issue of salary and benefits for the field

Compensation Necessary, but not Sufficient
K-12 is a cautionary tale

From the Public K-12 system:

- Enrollment in teacher preparation programs is also plummeting, down 33% between 2010 and 2020 (CNN, Aug. 2022)

- 44 percent of public schools will report teaching vacancies at the start of this year (PBS NewsHour, Aug. 2022)

- At least 300,000 public-school teachers and other staff left the field between February 2020 and May 2022, The Wall Street Journal reports.

- K-12 teachers report the highest burnout rate of all U.S. professions, according to a June 2022 Gallup poll. (ECE was NOT on the list!)
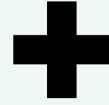
We Believe...

◐ Every director deserves an administrative team.

◐ Every teacher deserves pedagogical leadership.

◐ Every child deserves a reflective teacher.

Technology Makes it Possible

Effective use of business automation tools reduces time spent on operations and **puts hours back** into the Director's day to focus on Pedagogical Leadership

Streamlined Operations

Skilled Financial Management

Supports for Reflective Practice

Engaging with Families

Instructional Leadership

Classroom Coaching
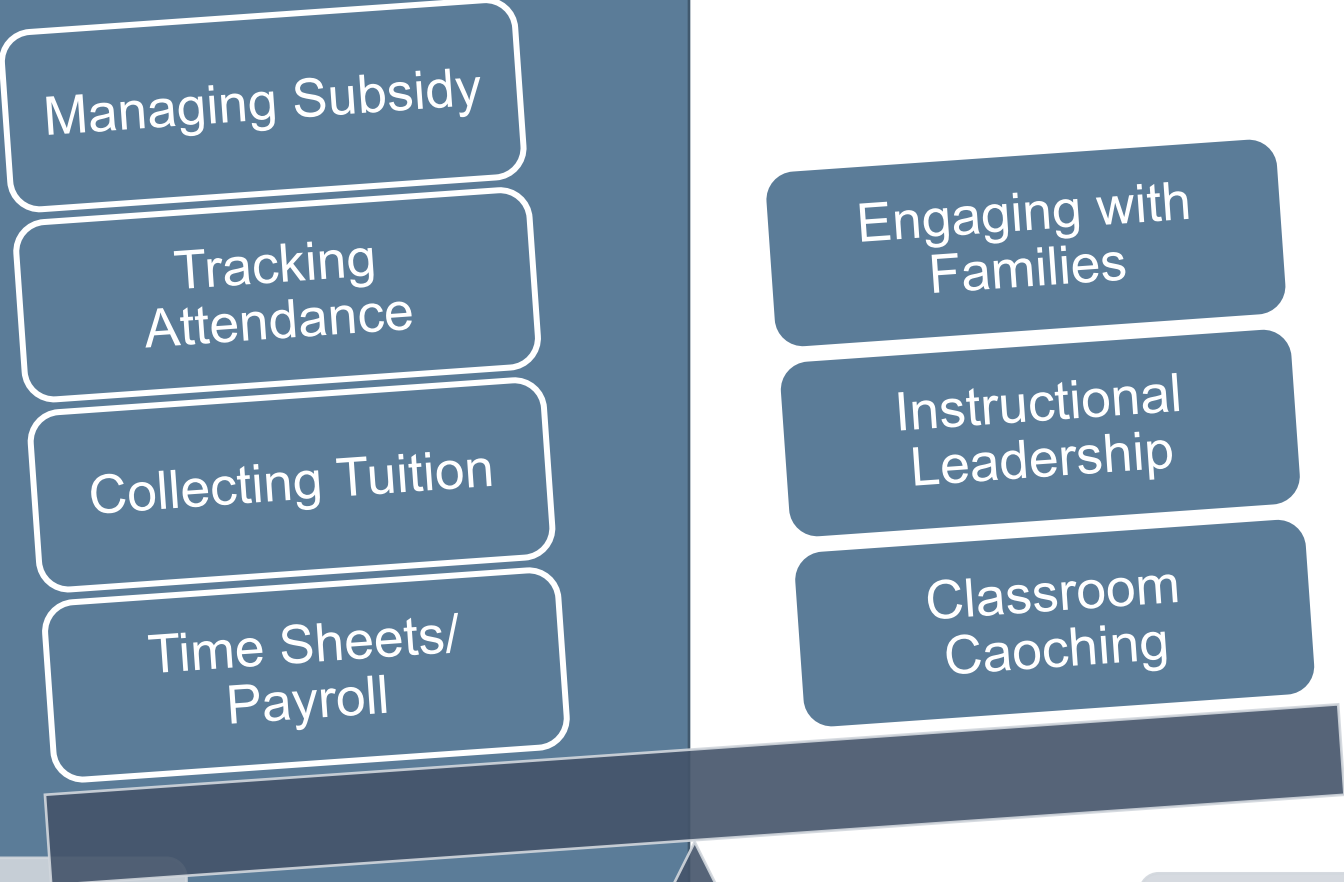
Administration

Education/Program
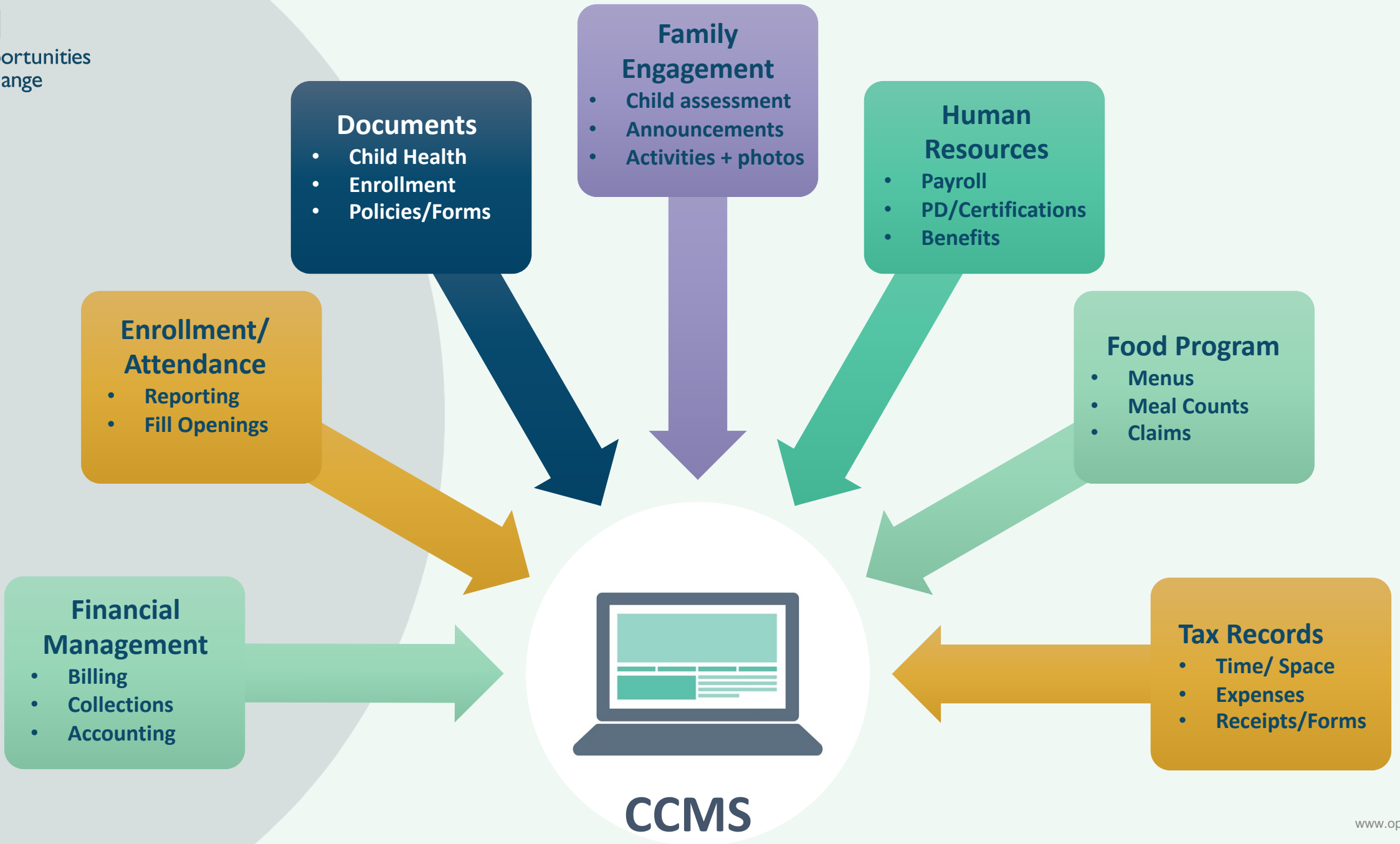
Shared Services Makes it Possible

- **Marketing + Enrollment**
- **Tuition Collection (private + subsidy)**
- **P+L - Business Metrics**
- **Automation + Technology support**
- **Accounting + Tax Prep Support for** **Licensing + quality rating**
- **Professional Development**
- **Family Supports**
- **Child Assessments + screening**
- **Fundraising and Development** **(from government + philanthropy)**

Center

Center

FCC home

Network HUB

FCC home
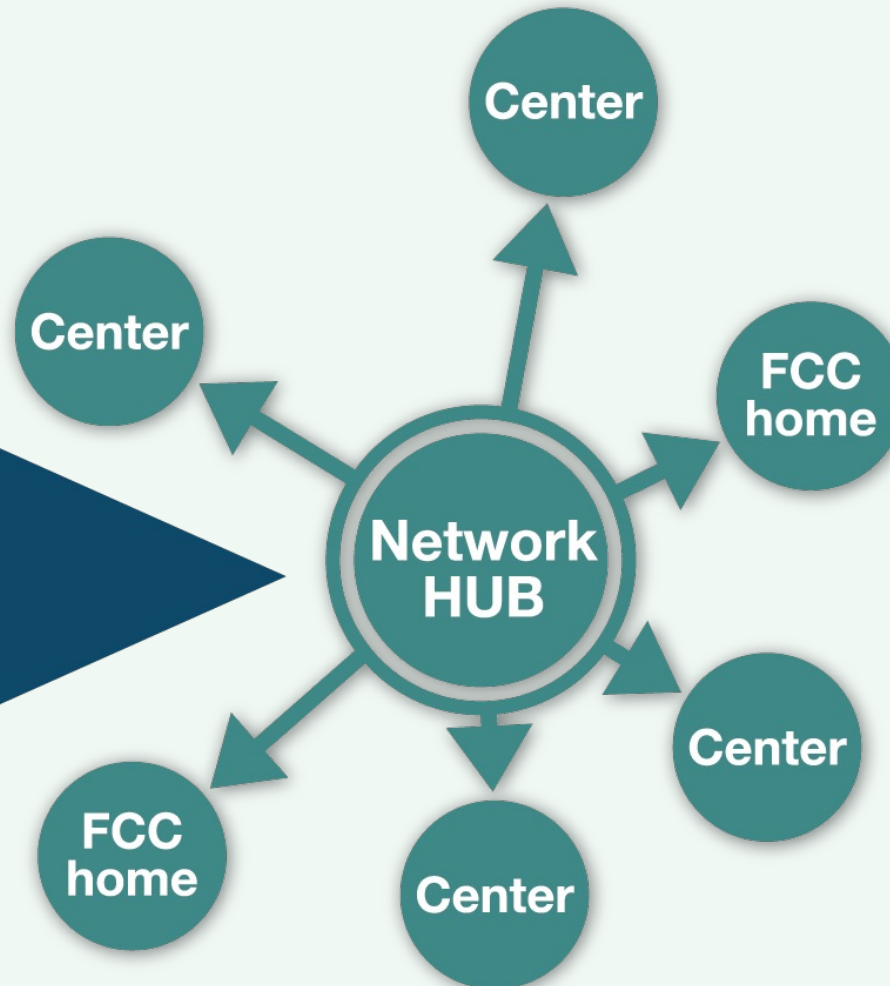
Center

Center

The Network Hub is part of the solution, so center- and home-based providers can focus on what they do best—caring for children.

Opportunities Exchange

Non-monetary reasons Educators leave the field

✓ Lack of respect - perception of ECE Educators as "babysitters"

✓ Lack of Autonomy

   ✓ "Push down" academics

   ✓ Prescribed curriculum

✓ Understaffed classrooms, no time off the floor

✓ Lack of resources to serve kids/families with "high needs"

Employers/Owners...will be accountable for providing **comparable compensation, benefits**, and **working conditions** that promote the **well-being, autonomy, and effectiveness of employees**...

Source: Unifying Framework, Power to the Profession

www.oppex.org

Best Practice Guidance

✓ Model Work Standards

What are the elements of supportive work environments?

✓ National Accreditation Standards

Creating climate that empowers staff as professionals

✓ Standards for ECE Educators

What are we supporting staff to know and do?

Roadmaps for Change!

Model Work Standards

Center for the Study of the Child Care Workforce

Model Work Standards – Centers

- ❑ Professional Development

  Example: Reflective Supervision

- ❑ Staffing and Teaching Supports

  Example: Trained/qualified subs/floaters for coverage for planning, assessment, etc.

- ❑ Communication and Team Building

  Example: Teaching staff make decisions re: daily activities, room arrangement, etc.

- ❑ Health Safety, and Physical Setting

  Example: Program accepts responsibility for providing a safe and healthy work environment

Model Work Standards -- Family Child Care

Table of Contents

oppex.org

NAEYC Accreditation Standards
Standard 6: Staff Competencies, Preparation, and Support

Program Standard: The program employs and supports a teaching and administrative staff that have the qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.

Rationale: Children in early learning programs benefit most when teaching staff... have opportunities to receive **supportive supervision** and to participate in ongoing professional development ensure that their knowledge and skills reflect the profession's ever-changing knowledge base.

6A.6	Show or describe two or more examples of staff-related policies, practices, or projects that have promoted a collaborative, inclusive organizational climate.
6A.7	Show that the program's employee policies include information about staff planning time.
6A.8	Show that your program's written health and safety policy includes rules stating when sick staff members must be excluded from working at the program and when they can return to work.
6A.9	Show that your program's staff handbook includes information about how staff can locate resources that support them in stress management, prevention and treatment of depression, and/or general wellness.

Source: NAEYC Program Accreditation Standards

5.17 The provider or sponsoring agency has a signed child care contract with each family.

Areas covered in the contract include:

- Hours
- Fees
- Payment schedule
- Provider's and child's vacation
- Provider's and child's sick leave and absences
- Responsibility for alternate care
- Termination policy

5.29 **New 2017** The provider keeps records of all business and income expenses.

5.23 **Updated 2017** The program is covered by insurance, including accident insurance for children and assistants (if employed), professional business liability insurance, and vehicle insurance.

ECE Educator Professional Standards
What should educators know and be able to do?

Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

STANDARD 1

Child Development and Learning in Context

STANDARD 2

Family–Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

STANDARD 3

Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

STANDARD 4

Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

STANDARD 5

Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

STANDARD 6

Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

Source: Unifying Framework, Power to the Profession

Imagine what could happen if Program Leaders had time to cultivate competencies for these standards/practices with staff

Creating Positive Work Environments

- **Professional Administrative Practices**

  - **HR infrastructure**

  - **Model Work Standards**

- **Pedagogical Leadership**

  - **Leading with intentionality**

  - **Reflective Supervision**

- **Autonomy to practice**

- **Opportunities for Leadership and Growth**

Professional Human Resources Practices
Tools of the trade

- ✓ **Job description**

- ✓ **Performance Evaluation tool aligned with Job duties**

- ✓ **Conduct Annual Review, with related increased compensation**

- ✓ **HR policies**
  - ✓ **In compliance with labor law and best practices**
  - ✓ **Implemented with fidelity**

Clear, consistent practices promote fairness and equity

Fostering Pedagogical Leadership
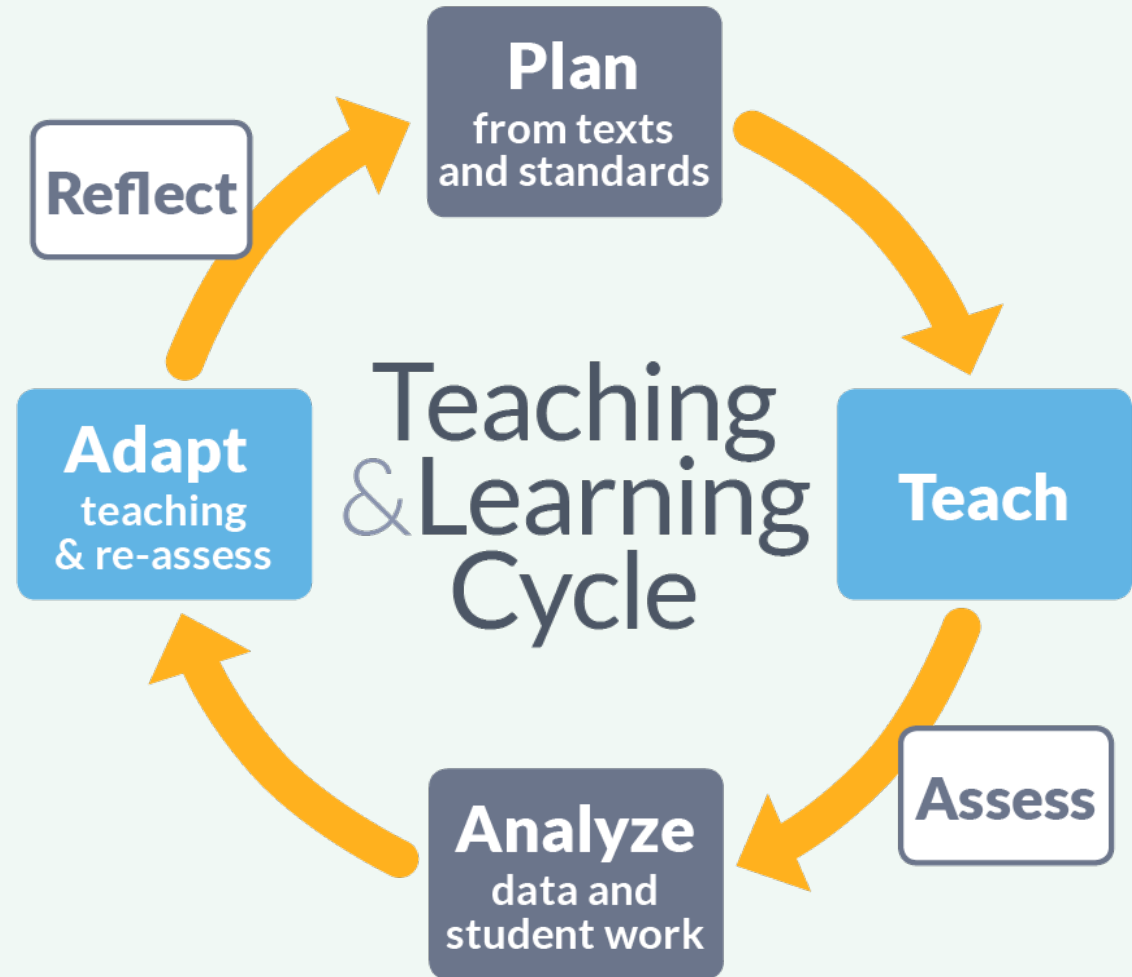*Will require intentionality*

Pedagogical leadership is about supporting teaching and learning. It includes instructional leadership—supporting classroom teachers in their key role of implementing curriculum. But, pedagogical leadership is a broader term that encompasses many roles and functions in learning organizations. For example, pedagogical leadership impacts teaching and learning by establishing organizational norms of **continuous quality improvement**. Pedagogical leaders influence children's learning by **fostering family engagement**, ensuring fidelity to the organization's **curricular philosophy**, using **data to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning program**, and **meeting standards** established to optimize learning environments.

--Michael B. Abel, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership

Job-Embedded Pedagogical Leadership

Professional Development that is characterized by:

✓ **Less passive training**

✓ **Observation & feedback**

✓ **Individualized learning & growth**

✓ **Commitment to continuous growth**

✓ **Shared learning with peers**

Teaching & Learning Cycle

- **Plan** from texts and standards
- **Teach**
- **Assess**
- **Analyze** data and student work
- **Adapt** teaching & re-assess
- **Reflect**

Educators are empowered to take responsibility for their own learning

Opportunities for Leadership and Advancement

A crisis that took the Director out of the program for months led to a re-structuring where operational responsibilities are shared by members of the leadership team

Traditional Leadership

Academy Director

Assistant Director

Staff

It had such a positive impact that they kept the design after the Director returned and now use it as an opportunity to grow new leaders for the program and the wider community

Shared Leadership

Staff

Staff

Academy Director
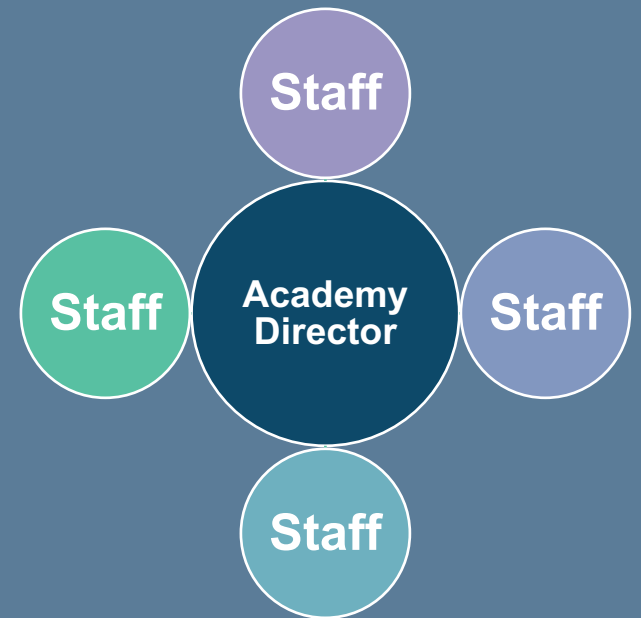
Staff

Staff

Positive Work Environments in Home Based Child Care

✓ **Compensation** (support appropriate standard of living)

✓ **Health Insurance**

✓ **Retirement Savings**

✓ Access to **Substitute/ Relief staff** (to cover illness and other paid time off)

✓ **Work/Life Balance**

✓ Access to **Professional Development** that supports growth and learning

✓ Access to **peer support**

✓ Access to **comprehensive resources** to serve children and families with special needs

What is the role of a Shared Service Alliance Hub...

...in Creating Positive Work Environments?

- Reducing time directors spend on **administration**
  - Supporting automation
  - Administrative expertise/back office supports

- Offering **pedagogical expertise** to members
  - Facilitating reflective practice groups across the network
  - Delivering professional development aligned with learning goals
  - Educator observations/classroom coaching
  - Supporting Director role as pedagogical leader

- Standing up **substitute pools** for "time off the floor" for teachers to reflect and plan

Opportunities Exchange

www.oppex.org

Resources

Opportunities Exchange

ECE Shared Resources™
An Innovation of CCA For Social Good®

HR Resources
- ✓ Policy Manual Template
- ✓ Job Descriptions, Performance Review Template
- ✓ Best Practice Management Guidance

https://www.ecesharedresources.com

- Job Descriptions
- More HR Forms, Policies & Templates
- Organization Charts
- Payroll Practices
- Performance Appraisals

Opportunities Exchange

About   Resources
ECE Technology
SFCCN Start-Up Guide
SSA Start-Up Guide
Multi-Site Agency Guide
Financial Management Toolkits
Additional Resources

Financial Management Toolkits

The OppEx Financial Management Toolkits are available for use in supporting business practices of providers.

New tools on the OppEx website:
- ✓ Technology resources
- ✓ Financial Management Resources
- ✓ New Issue Brief on ECE Workforce

https://www.oppex.org

Business Tools
- ✓ Tax Prep Guides
- ✓ Budgeting
- ✓ Relief Funds/Loans
- ✓ Operational Best Practices

https://www.civstrat.com/cses

Helping organizations **thrive**

CIVITAS STRATEGIES
Early Start

Building Resilient Child Care Businesses

www.oppex.org

Opportunities Exchange

For More Information …

Opportunities Exchange

Profiles, Tools, Resources, Metrics, Issue Briefs and more …

www.oppex.org

www.oppex.org