

Assessing Trainers of Early Childhood Practitioners: A Review of Current Literature

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By

The Center for Early Education and Development (CEED)

University of Minnesota

Beth Menninga

Amy Susman-Stillman



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Introduction

Purpose and Guiding Questions

Currently there are many efforts to build comprehensive early childhood professional development systems around the country, often linked to Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) efforts and fueled by Race to the Top funds. Elements of these efforts include development or refinement of practitioner registries, training and trainer registries, trainer and training approval criteria and processes; standards such as early learning standards, and knowledge and competency standards for practitioners; statewide credentials for different roles in the field; training standards and curriculum content for practitioner training. Trainer assessment is an area that is about to receive greater attention with the continued development of the infrastructure for professional development systems.

This literature review is made possible with a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services using federal funding. The purpose of this literature review is to summarize research and best practices on assessing trainer skills and competencies.

Guiding questions for the literature review are:

- What early childhood trainer competencies have been identified?
- To what extent have those competencies been assessed, and in what ways?

Definitions

When available, definitions from Minnesota's state level early childhood professional development systems are used. Alternately, definitions are used from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRA)'s work on professional development glossaries (NAEYC & NACCRA, 2011a, 2011b). Additional definitions raising other pertinent concepts are also included.

Professional development. Together, NAEYC and NACCRA developed two glossaries to promote the use of common terminology and meaning across sectors as states, communities and organizations work to develop coherent and aligned early childhood professional development systems (NAEYC & NACCRA).

“Early Childhood Education Professional Development is a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early education professionals. Professional development encompasses education, training, and technical assistance” (NACCRA-NAEYC, 2011b, p. 5).

Professional learning. This definition from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) 2015 report on the workforce is included because it describes the research base for high quality professional development relevant to this report:

“This report puts forth a concept of “professional learning” that is both broader and more cohesive than the siloed ways in which these activities often are implemented in the care and education sector. This concept encompasses all of the activities that contribute to developing and sustaining quality professional practice and draws attention to common features of high-quality professional learning that contribute to quality practice. These features include

- clarity of purpose;
- content based in the foundations of the science of child development and early learning;
- approaches based on the science of adult learning;
- emphasis on applying theory to practice, including field- and practice-based professional learning experiences;
- alignment with professional standards and guidelines;
- accountability for the quality of professional learning; and
- affordability and equitable access to professional learning, including adequate funding and financing (p. 358).”

Training and trainer. Minnesota does not have a recognized definition of “training” that is used across early childhood systems (Stone, K. personal communication on January 12, 2016; Hewitt, D. personal communication January 7, 2016; Woosley, C. personal communication January 5, 2016). Other sources, including NAEYC and NACCRA, describe training as a subset of professional development:

“Training is a learning experience, or series of experiences, specific to an area of inquiry and related set of skills or dispositions, delivered by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills. A planned sequence of training sessions comprises a training program” (NACCRRRA-NAEYC, 2011b, p. 5).

In a literature review of features of effective professional development in early childhood, Zazlow et al (2010) further define training as:

“Training refers to professional development that does not result in credits toward a higher education degree. Training may be provided through workshops or professional meetings. Ongoing training may be an in-service requirement in different types of early

care and education. There may also be initial or pre-service training requirements for licensing in child care.” (Zazlow, et al.)

NAEYC and NACCRA do not provide a specific definition of “trainer,” stating instead:

“The job titles of the individuals who provide PD are many and varied—higher education faculty, trainers, program administrators in their training and TA roles, individual consultants, child care resource and referral training and TA staff, and others. These professionals provide education, training, and/or TA to individuals working or preparing to work with young children and their families and those working or preparing to work on behalf of children in training, licensing, resource, and other administrative roles related to early childhood education. While NAEYC, NACCRA, and the Alliance of Early Childhood Teacher Educators believe that those who provide PD should possess a high level of knowledge and skills and participate in ongoing professional development, this glossary does not define the core knowledge and capabilities expected of these professionals.” (NAEYC & NACCRA, 2011b)

NAEYC (2015) and other sources (Kipnis, Whitebook, Austin, & Sakai, 2013) note that several states and other entities delivering training or promoting the delivery of training to early childhood practitioners have defined specific qualifications for trainer approval. The report *2012 The State of the Nation's Training and Trainer Registries and Approval Systems* (National Registry Alliance, 2013) provides links to many state level trainer approval processes and qualification requirements. It is notable that, once trainers are approved, few of those systems include a formal trainer assessment process (Kipnis, et al, 2013).

Relationship-based professional development. The Minnesota Center for Professional Development, Minnesota Department of Human Services and Minnesota Department of Education have agreed on definitions of relationship-based professional development (RBP) in the categories of coaching, consultation, mentoring and professional development (often referred to as career counseling, as opposed to someone who delivers professional development). Since coaching and consultation (sometimes termed “technical assistance” or “TA” in the literature) are referenced in this paper, here are those definitions:

“Coaching: Coaching is a relationship-based process that requires interactions that are built on trust, respect, and reflection. Coaching is designed to promote capacity-building around professional skills, behaviors and/or dispositions, and is focused on a specific goal or goals for an individual or group. The coach could be either a peer or an external expert, depending on skills needed and organizational cultural considerations.

Consultation: Consultation is a collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and an individual or group from one program or organization. The consultant assess issue specific needs and works collaboratively to resolve issue-specific concerns — a program/organizational, staff, or child/family-related issue.” (MNCPD, CEED, DHS & MDE; n.d.. p.1)

Contextual Considerations

The diverse settings, composition and education of the early care and education workforce have implications for professional development, such as informing identification of trainer competencies and/or impacting trainer competencies (Whitebook & Ryan, 2011; Partnerships for Education, Articulation and Coordination through Higher (PEACH), 2014; Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC), 2015). The PEACH initiative of Los Angeles county notes:

“There are some unique aspects of the ECE workforce that should be considered in the successful design and delivery of ECE provider training and ECE trainer competencies that include: (a) the major categories of ECE workplaces (e.g., family child care, center-based ECE programs, license-exempt programs), (b) variations between the content and level of minimal preparatory education among those in the ECE workforce, and c) cultural and linguistic characteristics of the ECE workforce. Given these factors, an ECE professional development system needs to (a) include training options for all sectors and populations of the ECE professional audience working with children from birth to eight years of age, (b) provide multiple points of entry to training and education, (c) respond to ECE professionals’ workplace factors to optimally plan scheduling, sequencing, delivery mode(s) as well as location of pre-service and in-service training. All of these aspects will be described in this section” (2014, p. 20).

The report *Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation* (IOS and NRC, 2015) recognizes the varied pathways that early childhood practitioners take to their work, noting that what serves as in-service for some practitioners may be serving as professional preparation for others in the field.

Whitebook & Ryan (2011) identify the related need to increase the number of teacher educators with skills commensurate with the unique needs of the workforce.

“Because early care and education teacher preparation, to a far greater extent than K–12, serves both a traditional and a nontraditional student clientele, experts have questioned whether there are sufficient skilled teacher educators and trainers with current knowledge in ECE, recent teaching experience in ECE classrooms, and experience with teaching diverse adult learners to meet current workforce need” (p. 5).

Need for Research on Early Childhood Trainer Competencies and Assessment

Trainers play an active role delivering professional development in many of these statewide professional development systems. There is a clear need to identify evidence-based trainer competencies and methods for assessing those competencies.

Speaking at a 2011 workshop on the early childhood workforce, hosted by the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council, Pam Winton addressed the question: “To what extent are professional development providers certified, expected to demonstrate specific knowledge and skills, and supported in their own development?” (Committee on Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce, 2011, p. 72). Winton laid out needs for research and development in relation to those delivering professional development:

“In summary, Winton identified four primary challenges related to the professional development of the ECCE field: (1) lack of a clear definition of professional development; (2) existence of many varied national standards; (3) lack of attention to the quality of professional development, including the use of evidence-based practices and the providers of professional development; and (4) the voluntary and fragmented nature of existing efforts to improve the quality of professional development in ECCE. She closed with four recommendations for improving professional development. Leaders representing the major early childhood sectors should work together to accomplish the following goals:

- Develop a shared definition of key terms related to professional development;
- Develop a uniform certification/licensure program based on national standards and related core competencies that are linked to research-based practices;
- Develop expectations and supports for the providers of professional development; and
- Invest in rigorous experimental investigations of professional development interventions.” (Committee on Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce, 2011, p. 73-74.)

Karoly (2012) points to the development of trainer competencies as an opportunity for improved quality in California’s early childhood professional development system:

“The same issue of emphasizing participation over impact applies to the array of workforce investment activities, many of which do not necessarily draw on proven models or are rigorously evaluated as new models. These issues also apply to the local informal training opportunities where there are no standards for program content and the competencies of the trainers.” (Karoly, 2012, p. xxii)

There is a clear need to develop both competencies and assessments for those delivering professional development for the early childhood workforce. Minnesota has developed competencies for those who provide relationship-based professional development (National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives, 2013). Logical next steps are to develop competencies for trainers, and to development means of assessing trainers as well as those providing relationship-based professional development. Information gathered in this review will inform this process.

Methods

Databases and Other Sources

Databases and key search terms. Materials included in this review were gathered through database searches using relevant key terms.

Databases searched include: Child Care and Early Education Research Connections; EBSCO (Education Source and Business Source Premier); ERIC; Google; National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER); Research Gate; the Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System website and the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment website.

Key search terms: trainer effectiveness, trainer assessment, trainer competencies, early childhood, trainer, professional development, adult education, trainer approval, trainer credential.

Links and articles identified in key articles. Additional materials were gathered through references listed in key articles. These were primarily articles with highly relevant content or those reporting on national trends. Websites reviewed for relevant content include state based websites dedicated to early childhood professional development, including training and trainer registries, child care resource and referral, and state offices of early childhood education.

Contacts. Contacts to answer specific questions were made with state level contacts in MN (CCA staff, MnCPD staff, MDE & DHS staff) as well as with contacts in state training registry programs (Texas and New Jersey).

Summary of Articles Reviewed

Table 1 lists the key articles reviewed for this report, highlighting content related to trainer competencies and trainer assessment, pertinent definitions or other relevant material.

Table 1. Key sources review

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
Bernhardsson, N., & Lattke, S. (2011). <i>Core competencies of adult learning facilitators in Europe. Findings from a transnational Delphi study for the project "Qualified to Teach."</i>	Conducted a Delphi study to hone in trainer competencies: based on a competencies developed through prior studies including review of the literature and expert consultation, this study used the Delphi-method to arrive at a final set of competencies for adult learning facilitators in Europe ¹ . The resulting competencies are contained in Table 3 of this report.			The resulting competencies are intended to address competencies specific to European adult educators/trainers. (p21-22)
Committee on Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce: A	p. 72 "To what extent are professional development providers	P. 72-73 Include presentation from Pam Winton on standards for		

¹ "The Delphi-Method is an expert-panel research design operating both with standardised as well as with open questions and analysing data both with quantitative as well as with qualitative procedures. Experts are asked in several (usually two or three) waves. For every new wave the results of the foregoing are submitted to the experts who then get the opportunity to reflect and to modify their *independently* uttered opinion on the background of the aggregated feedback of the group. Thus, a *dependent* statistical group opinion is created." (Bernhardsson, & Lattke, 2001, p. 24)

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
Workshop; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council. The Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce: Challenges and Opportunities: A Workshop Report. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2011 Nov 15.	certified, expected to demonstrate specific knowledge and skills, and supported in their own development?"	those delivering professional development related to evaluation, preparation and systems monitoring and supporting their development and ongoing work. there is a lack of data in this area of PD for early childhood practitioners, including a lack of data on the "knowledge, skills and practices of those who are delivering education and training (Hyson et al., in press)."		
Gauld, D. & Miller, P. (2004). The qualifications and competencies held by effective workplace trainers. <i>Journal of European Industrial Training</i> , 28 (1), 8 – 22.	P. 11 Highlights competencies generated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Set goals and objectives Develop lesson plans •Keep current/up to date •Conduct needs 	p.17 Content knowledge alone does not automatically make one a good trainer, specific competencies in training adults are key to		P. 9- 10 Identifies the following additional competencies of trainers of adults noted in the

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
<p>A study generating a list of training competencies, from the literature and expert review, to be used in a survey to compare trainer self-ratings, trainer qualifications, and trainer ratings of the importance of the identified trainer competencies.</p>	<p>assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsel students about other matters • Provide positive reinforcement • Blend different training techniques • Use questioning to involve participants Facilitate group learning activities • Attend to individual differences • Evaluate effects and impact of training Analyze course materials/learner information • Assure preparation of instructional site • Establish/maintain instructor credibility • Manage the learning environment • Possess content knowledge/skill taught 	<p>developing and conducting good training.</p>		<p>literature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivating learners • Retention • Transference • Create a learning community • Problem solving techniques • Promoting reflection

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate effective communication skills • Demonstrate effective presentation skills • Respond to learner needs/feedback • Use media effectively • Evaluate learner performance • Evaluate delivery of instruction • Report evaluation information • Understand program development • Understand training and development • Apply research skills • Build relationships 			
Ghosh, P., Satyawadi, R., Prasad Joshi, J., Ranjan, R., & Singh, P. (2012) Towards more effective training programmes: a study of trainer		Findings p. 194: “trainer's comfort level with the subject matter <i>and</i> trainer's rapport with trainees, <i>were found to be the significant predictors of</i>		A study of employees' response to lecture-delivered content in the workplace, rating impact of trainer

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
attributes. <i>Industrial and Commercial Training</i> , 44 (4), pp.194 – 202. Emerald Group Publishing.		<i>trainee satisfaction</i> "		competencies (from Gauld & Miller, 2004) linked to trainee satisfaction. Focused on one mode of delivery (lecture) in an Indian workplace setting.
Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC). (2015). <i>Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation</i> . Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.	p. 9 report recommendations include: "Recommendation 6: Support the consistent quality and coherence of professional learning supports during ongoing practice for professionals working with children from birth through age 8. p. 11 "Recommendation 8: Ensure that policies and standards that shape the professional learning of care and education leaders		p. 357: Identifies the need for all early childhood practitioners to develop core competencies p. 393: Defines "professional development" or "in-service training." Describes the complexities in the field related to the overlap between preparation/pre-service education and training and ongoing preparation/in-service, especially prevalent in early childhood where	

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
	<p>encompass the foundational knowledge and competencies needed to support high quality practices for child development and early learning in their organizations.”</p> <p>p. 331: Identifies the need for practitioner competencies and knowledge in “working effectively and equitably with children from diverse backgrounds—cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic—and of different ability levels”</p> <p>p. 375-77 Issues related to higher education faculty include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -not enough faculty in smaller institutions (resulting in lack of breadth and depth in ece preparation programs) 		<p>many receive foundational training/education after they begin work in the field (along with the need for continuous education). Two foundational purposes of professional learning are: improving practice and improving child outcomes.</p> <p>p. 398-99</p> <p>Key features of effective professional learning suggested by research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep conceptual knowledge of content and related processes to be taught • Linked to the related teaching practices that promote that content knowledge “including all three aspects of learning trajectories: the goal, the developmental progression of levels of 	

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	<p>-Use of part time faculty may lead to inconsistency, poor/ inequitable working conditions for faculty and unavailability of faculty for students in need</p> <p>-Job requirements do not ensure “expertise in specific content areas, including early childhood education (Bornfreund, 2011)” or prior experience working directly with children in ece settings</p> <p>p. 373 “Efforts of preparation programs to train educators to teach culturally, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse students also are limited, and many teachers do not learn to set aside their own biases in practice (Whitebook et al., 2009).”</p> <p>p. 408: “Reflective practice is</p>		<p>thinking, and the instructional activities corresponding to each level”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to assessment/progress monitoring of child knowledge and skill during active learning and which includes using work samples and small groups • Linked to daily practice (practice embedded) • Grounded in curriculum materials • Includes in-classroom coaching. • “Employs peer study groups or networks for collective participation by educators who work together” • Is ongoing and intensive • Ensures consistency/alignment in professional learning (eg: 	

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	considered a key tool for professional learning”		between training, standards, curriculum, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based in the science of adult learning. • “Addresses equity and diversity concerns in access to and participation in professional learning. • Addresses economic, institutional, and regulatory barriers to implementing professional learning.” 	
Karoly, L. (2012.) <i>A golden opportunity: Advancing California’s early care and education workforce professional development system</i> . Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.		p. 31 “approval of trainers and training programs is often based on meeting specific requirements in terms of the trainer’s background or training program content and does not necessarily provide a measure of trainer or training program quality.”	p. xxii As of 2012: What is often measured in relation to professional development is participation, rather than impact. Early childhood workforce preparation activities lack rigor: “many of which do not necessarily draw on proven models or are rigorously evaluated as new models. These issues also apply to the local	

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
			informal training opportunities where there are no standards for program content and the competencies of the trainers”	
<p>Kipnis, F., M. Whitebook, L. Austin, and L. Sakai. 2013. Assessing the quality of New Jersey’s professional preparation and professional development system for the early learning workforce. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment.</p> <p>A report to the New Jersey Council for Young Children on the Quality Assessment Phase of a project collecting and analyzing information</p>	<p>Regarding New Jersey’s voluntary early childhood trainer approval system: “These standards are based on career lattice levels, educational attainment, professional experience in working with young children, and professional experience in training adults...There are four instructor levels: mentor, associate instructor, instructor, and master instructor.” p. 10</p>	<p>One question addressed in this study: “4. How is a trainer’s quality assessed and maintained over time?” (p. 10)</p> <p>Examples of some form of trainer assessment or quality control in state PD systems include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Requiring novice trainers to co-train with an experienced trainer -“A few states have developed extensive quality assurance monitoring procedures whereby trainers are observed on a regular basis to ensure fidelity to 	<p>p. 13: “States vary widely in the minimal qualifications necessary for becoming an approved trainer, but most require a combination of formal education in early childhood education, training or coursework in adult learning, and experience in the ECE field, including classroom teaching and adult training experience.”</p> <p>Most states have tiered levels of trainer roles tied to levels of education and experience, sometimes linked to content and/or training audience as well.</p>	<p>p. 82: Recommendation 3: Need more resources (read funds) available to recruit and retain qualified trainers available to practitioners across geographies and incomes.</p> <p>p.83: Recommendation 7: States need to expand the pool of leaders and faculty, and recruit and invest</p>

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
about the state's early learning professional preparation and development system.		curricula or to assess the quality of training content and delivery. In these states, trainers also complete a self-assessment, and meet with observers to review assessments and to set quality improvement goals." (p.17)	"as trainers' qualifications increase, they are permitted to deliver more intensive and complex training to an increasingly sophisticated audience."	in new young leaders, to reflect the diversity of children and families served. This refers to PD content directed to program leadership as well as developing & using recruitment strategies.
National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2015). <i>What do we mean when we talk about PD? Using the NAEYC Early Childhood Education Professional Development Glossary</i> . NAEYC Early Childhood Workforce Systems Initiative. Washington, DC: National Association	"In future work, NAEYC, NACCRRA, and the Alliance of Early Childhood Teacher Educators will explore the core knowledge and capabilities of those who provide professional development and what national resources may be helpful to support related state efforts."		Contains useful definitions.	

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
for the Education of Young Children.				
National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives. (2013). Quick Look: State Technical Assistance Professional Specialized Knowledge and Competencies. Washington, D.C.: Administration for Children and Families' Office of Child Care and the Office of Head Start. https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/201306_pdwcenter_quicklook_tacompetencies_finalr.pdf	A chart overview of several states' specialized knowledge and competencies for technical assistance (TA) professionals. The chart includes information on the intended use of the competencies, the domain/category/criteria areas, websites for additional information, and notes. States included: Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina.			
National Registry Alliance. (2013). <i>2012 The State of the Nation's Training and</i>	p. 20-23: Lists requirements for trainer approval in states where			

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<p><i>Trainer Registries and Approval Systems.</i> Washington, DC: National Registry Alliance.</p>	<p>trainers are approved p. 33: 15 states “Include an assessment of participant acquisition of content knowledge and meaningful connections to daily work” as part of training approval</p>			
<p>Partnerships for Education, Articulation and Coordination through Higher Education (PEACH). (2014). <i>Preparing the foundation: Strengthening the ECE workforce through the professional development system and early childhood educator competencies.</i> (PEACH Paper 6). Los Angeles: Los Angeles Universal Preschool. This is the last in a series</p>	<p>The Working Group identified trainer qualification categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal education (ECE coursework completion and degrees providing a “solid body of knowledge to draw from in order to present high quality trainings and serve as a model for professional development pathways and higher education attainment. Furthermore, achieving 	<p>Recommendations include: 5. b. “Trainer Evaluation: That every ECE trainer be evaluated and continued employment be contingent upon the results of this evaluation conducted by both agency staff as well as training participants.” p. 34</p>		

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
<p>of six papers by PEACH, which is the higher education component of the Los Angeles County Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. The series was developed by PEACH partners and colleagues to describe the current status of professional development programs in IHEs in Los Angeles County as well as other elements of the professional preparation of the current and future ECE workforce.</p>	<p>some level of higher education completion establishes credibility in both the trainer and the training system” p. 25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of adult learning principles and dynamics • Reflective practice skills (“the ability to engage in and sustain reflective practice and supervision with trainees was a required skill for the ECE trainer.” P. 25) • “a minimum two years or more of direct formal experience working with young children and their families.” p. 25 • Demonstrated experience successfully training adults 			

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	Trainer tiers based on levels of formal education and experience (p. 26)			
Whitebook, M., 2014. Building a skilled teacher workforce: Shared and divergent challenges in early care and education and in grades K-12. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, Institute for Reseach on Labor and Employment.	p. 8 Notes the need for change in ece teacher preparation and professional development to build the workforce knowledge and skill base in meeting needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse population of children in the U.S. p. 11 "In ECE, the primary questions include... What are strategies for establishing standards for training and trainers? What metrics are appropriate to assess the impact of professional development at the program level?" p. 14 Notes the troubling "lack of training standards	p. 11 "In ECE, the primary questions include: How can resources be secured for professional development, and specifically, how can induction and ongoing mentoring and coaching be organized and funded for all ECE teachers? Can more in-depth and relevant professional development offerings be designed to respond to the needs of teachers with varied education and experience backgrounds?"	p. 9 "Consequently, many states have no well-defined, comprehensive system to ensure ongoing professional development, or agreed-upon standards or approval systems for the training of trainers."	p. 21 Notes the challenges of linking teacher performance with child outcomes given the complexities of assessing young children, "the collaborative nature of early childhood teaching", recruitment and turnover issues.

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	and trainer approval systems in many states” especially given the reality that many practitioners are educated after they begin working in the field, or in some cases not at all.			
Whitebook M, & Ryan S. (2011.) <i>Degrees in context: Asking the right questions about preparing skilled and effective teachers of young children</i> . New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University. Retrieved from http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/23.pdf .	p. 1 “There is an overall lack of capacity in teacher education, both in number of skilled teacher educators with experience related to children younger than 5 and ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity among them.”		p. 5 “Because early care and education teacher preparation, to a far greater extent than K–12, serves both a traditional and a nontraditional student clientele, experts have questioned whether there are sufficient skilled teacher educators and trainers with current knowledge in ECE, recent teaching experience in ECE classrooms, and experience with teaching diverse adult learners to meet current workforce need.”	Focused primarily on preparation in higher education.

Article: Reference citation Type (study, report, etc.)	Qualities/ competencies of trainers	Trainer assessment/impact	Definitions and context	Other
<p>Zaslow, M., Tout, K., Halle, T., Whittaker, J. V., & Lavelle, B. (2010b). <i>Toward the identification of features of effective professional development for early childhood educators: Literature review</i>. Washington DC: U. S. Department of Education.</p>	<p>p. 37 Points to value of addressing context in designing and delivering professional development to early childhood practitioners. Trainers need “to be able to gauge both the complexity of what teachers are being instructed to implement, and the newness of the content in terms of previous knowledge and practice of the teachers.”</p>		<p>“Training refers to professional development that does not result in credits toward a higher education degree. Training may be provided through workshops or professional meetings. Ongoing training may be an in-service requirement in different types of early care and education. There may also be initial or preservice training requirements for licensing in child care.”</p>	

Themes and Key Elements

What early childhood trainer competencies have been identified?

Which organizations or entities have developed early childhood trainers competencies? This review located eleven states with developed competencies for professionals who deliver training to early childhood educators (see Table 2). Those states are Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Iowa, Georgia, Maine, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington. Texas has a draft set of trainer competencies currently under review by committee (Jones, T., personal communication on January 13, 2016). Connecticut has a list of competency domains used in trainer observation but a detailed document with competency domains and indicators was not located. Kipnis, et al. (2013) identified Alaska, Delaware and Nebraska as additional states with trainer competencies but those documents have not been located at the time of this review.

Table 2. States with Trainer Competencies and/or assessment

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
Alaska		Kipnis et al (2012) identifies Alaska as a state with Trainer competencies but documentation has not been located at the time of this report.	Plan objectives include: “Create a self-evaluation for trainers to respond to determine the success of adult learning course on trainer’s ongoing practice (Objective 1)” (p. 38, ALASKA’S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN For the Early Care and Education Workforce June, 2008) http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/documents/dpa/programs/ccare/files/prodevplan.pdf
Arkansas	AK trainer competencies at http://professionalregistry.astate.edu/chsdownloads/Trainer%20Competencies.pdf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates and maintains mastery of appropriate training content • Demonstrates the ability to design training formats that are relevant and meaningful • Demonstrates skills necessary for presenting effective training experiences • Demonstrates the ability to manage a well-run, purposeful training event 	
Colorado	CO trainer competencies at http://ecpd.costartstrong.org/ets/companies/08c38354-7b3d-4abd-b1ca-8309d9c5b000/UserFiles/CoComptTrainers8.11.2015final1.1.pdf Plan to have a Trainer Credential available in 2016 based on these competencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Training Facilitation Skills • Content Knowledge • Training Design • Assessment and Evaluation <p>Competencies are described at 3 levels (level I, Level II and Level III)</p>	

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
Connecticut	Competency domains are used in trainer observations.	Trainer observations assess trainers in the following competency areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction • Management of the classroom environment • Understanding the adult learner • Assessment of participant understanding 	“Connecticut has designed a training and trainer quality assurance process that is intended both to ensure high standards in training and to provide trainers with ongoing support for improvement. Evaluators observe all approved trainers annually, first during an announced observation, and subsequently during unannounced observations. A standardized observational instrument is used which assesses four training competency areas: instruction, management of the classroom environment, understanding the adult learner, and assessment of participant understanding. Evaluators then meet with trainers for a feedback session, and develop specific professional development goals that the trainer is required to meet within a defined timeline.” (Kipnis, et al., 2013, p.16)
Delaware	PD is delivered by University of Delaware’s Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood. They hire “instructors” https://dieecp		“Instructors are supported by a mentoring relationship with another PD team member, are encouraged to participate in ongoing reflective practices and participate in an ongoing observation and evaluation process to ensure best practices and policies are followed.”

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
d.org/instructor-info#qualifications			
Florida	FL trainer competencies at http://www.pbcregistry.org/assets/doc/TrainerCompTrainingStandards.pdf Matrix aligns Trainer Competencies and Training Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Learning environment • Presentation • Instruction • Assessment 	
Georgia	GA Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies https://www.training.decal.ga.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/docs/professional-development-competencies.pdf Also includes competencies for Technical Assistance (TA) providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism and Ethics • Instructional Design and Development • Knowledge of Content • Presentation Skills • Quality Assurance 	
Illinois The Early Childhood Center for Professional Development serves certain early childhood programs			“EC staff members observe and evaluate the overall quality of a training session in order to determine the trainer’s knowledge of the topic, performance style, and his or her interaction with the audience”

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
<p>affiliated with the state Dept. of Education and their trainers (called “instructors’ or “trainers”) receive mentoring and observation. http://ec.thecenterweb.org/about-us</p>			
Iowa	<p>IA Adult Educator Competencies http://www.earlychildhoodiowa.org/files/state_system/professional_development/iowaAdultEducatorCompetenciesFINAL_08-2013.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism and Ethics • Organizing and Delivering Instruction • Assessment of Learning 	<p>While they do not have a trainer assessment process in place, the Adult Educator Competencies document includes Appendix on assessment (of PD experiences)</p>
Kentucky	<p>Overview of Kentucky’s Early Childhood Professional Development Framework includes overview of trainer approval and competencies (also includes TA Competencies) http://kidsnow.ky.gov/Improving-Early-Care/Documents/Revised%20PD%20Framework%202011.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhering to training standards; • Demonstrating a thorough understanding of the principles of training adult learners as well as a knowledge of core content in early care, intervention and education; • Designing an effective environment for adult learning; • Demonstrating the ability to provide a variety of appropriate learning opportunities; 	<p>Requires Level 1 Trainer to co-train on a single topic with credentialed trainer at a higher training level. Requires Level 2 trainer to co-train higher (60-120 hours) CDA level with a level 4 & 5 Trainer through a approved training organizations, co-train 12 hours with a Level 4 or Level 5 trainer before training solo</p>

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing training needs of participants; • Demonstrating the ability to plan and develop an appropriate training outline, as well as the ability to develop sequential training plans; • Demonstrating the ability to implement training techniques and strategies; • Selecting and incorporating appropriate reinforcement techniques for practical application; and • Designing evaluation strategies that are appropriate to the training delivered. 	
Maine		<p>Maine trainer competencies are contained in the Quality Assurance Observation Form and include the following domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer preparation • Professional bearing • Curriculum • Presentation style • Knowledge of material • Manages learning environment 	<p>The system requires a Quality Assurance Specialist to conduct observations of Trainers using the Maine Roads Trainer Quality Assurance Observation Form. There is a specific protocol followed for observations and the follow up debrief with the trainer.</p> <p>http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/pdfs/MaineRoadsTrainerManual_Final.pdf</p>
Massachusetts			<p>Has guide for TA (coaches, mentors TA consultants) that lists competencies along with a self-assessment (basically a checklist of the competencies)</p> <p>http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/workforce-and-professional-development/</p>

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
<p>Nevada Registry plans for further development of Trainer Approval process http://www.nevadaregistry.org/for-trainers/trainer-criteria.html</p>			<p>“The Registry plans to have a strong evaluation process and quality assurance system in place in the future. This process could include such components as participant evaluations, periodic observations of and follow-up with trainers, online surveys of training participants, and more.”</p>
<p>New Jersey NJ Trainer approval https://www.pinjregistry.org/pdf/instructor_module_instructions.pdf PINJ Sponsoring Agency and Instructor Approval Instructions</p>			<p>Requires trainers to complete “quizzes” as part of Trainer Approval process. Quizzes are focused on the NJ Professional Development System. (Manning-Falzarano, M., personal communication on January 5, 2016)</p>
<p>New York</p>			<p>Portfolios of applicants for the Trainer Credential are scored using a rubric at http://nysaeyc.org/wp-</p>

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
			content/uploads/NYSELTC-Portfolio-Scoring-Tool.pdf
North Carolina	NC has developed TA competencies: http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/PDF_forms/TACompetenciesApril232013.pdf		Certified Trainers must have 2 “PDE reference Forms” completed: a (simple) observation checklist form completed by 2 people who have observed them training (also required for renewal) at: http://ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/endorsements/
North Dakota			Requires registered trainers to complete annual self-assessment http://www.ndgrowingfutures.org/files/pdf/growingfutures-trainerlevels.pdf
Pennsylvania	PA Instructor competencies http://www.pakeys.org/uploadedContent/Docs/PD/PQAS/Instructor%20competencies.pdf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content expertise • Professionalism • Principles of Adult Learning • Building relationships • Evaluation, assessment and planning • Communication • Change process 	Self assessment of Instructor Core Competencies http://www.pakeys.org/uploadedContent/Docs/PD/PQAS/Instructor%20competencies.pdf Instructors are expected to use annually to develop their own PD Plan
Rhode Island	RI early learning workforce knowledge and competencies for professional development providers and higher education faculty/staff http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/Early-Childhood/Workforce/EXCEED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Building Relationships • Knowledge of Content • Supporting Adult Learners • Evaluating Outcomes <p>Includes higher education faculty/staff</p>	

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
Texas	<p>WKC PD IHE 060315.pdf</p> <p>Draft Trainer Competencies are currently under review. Timeline for completion to be determined Feb. 2016. Domains have been determined. (Jones, T., personal communication on January 13, 2016). https://tecpds.org/CoreCompetencies.aspx</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Learning Theory • Training Delivery and Methodologies • Transfer of Learning • Training Content Development • Monitoring and Evaluating Training Effectiveness • Characteristics of Effective Trainers 	
Vermont	<p>http://northernlightscdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Instruct_KandCompetencies_self-assessment-only.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism and ethics • Standards, systems and resources • Planning and design • Instruction • Assessment and evaluation 	<p>Optional Instructor Observation/Planning Tool includes only observable items in the Instructor Competencies http://northernlightscdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Instructor_ObservationPlanningTool-_-FILLABLE.pdf Affiliate I Affiliate II and Specialist I trainers Works with the support of a Master or Certified Instructor and this form must be completed for trainer renewal. The support process is outlined here: http://northernlightscdc.org/your-role/adult-instructors/instructor-support/</p>
Washington	<p>Trainer Competencies in Washington State http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/PD/docs/5.%20WA%20Trainer%20Competencies.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Facilitation: Adult Learning Practices • Instructional Design • Evaluation and assessment (pre & post) 	<p>A trainer observation rubric was developed in 2011, based on the competencies from Florida (see Florida link in this table), and used as a “spot check”. That process is no longer used and revisions have been made to shift from a fully online trainer approval process that</p>

State	Trainer competencies	Trainer Core Competency Domains	Trainer Assessment
			<p>emphasized “training design” to one they feel will attract a more diverse trainer pool, and revised the trainer observation to better assess “how they would facilitate the group learning process or demonstrate cultural sensitivity.”</p> <p>The new observation rubric will be part of the process for initial trainer approval. (The current plan is to use it for follow up observations as well). See document #5 at http://www.del.wa.gov/Professional/approval.aspx</p> <p>“We are using it as an instructional tool for new trainers as well. We are encouraging mentorship (Organization Sponsored Mentors) who model training, to work with the applicants and observe them as many times as needed before they recommend them for approval.” (Garrison, S. personal communications January 25 & 26, 2016)</p>

Technical Assistance competencies. Competencies developed for early childhood Technical Assistance (TA) providers are pertinent due to the overlap of qualifications and responsibilities with early childhood trainers (PEACH, 2014, p.19). A 2013 report from the National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives outlines competency domains identified in ten states (Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina). Links to this report are noted in Table 1. This review located an eleventh state with TA competencies (Massachusetts), as noted in Table 2.

What trainer competencies have been identified?

Common domains in state's trainer competencies. For purposes of this report, domain descriptions were used to note frequency. In some cases there is likely to be considerable overlap in the underlying dimensions for certain domains that are listed separately here (for example: "Training/Instructional design" and "Effective training characteristics/experiences"). Arkansas and Kentucky used more lengthy descriptors so key terms in those descriptions were used to categorize them, resulting in one domain occasionally falling in more than one category. Listed in order of frequency:

- Professionalism/Professionalism and ethics: Ten of the eleven states (all but Arkansas) with Trainer Competencies list either professionalism or professionalism and ethics as a trainer competency domain. Indicators in this domain vary among the nine states. Arkansas includes some overlapping indicators with other state's professionalism indicators in their trainer competence domains titled "Demonstrates skills necessary for presenting effective training experiences" and "Demonstrates the ability to manage a well-run, purposeful training event".
- Training/Instructional design (7)
- Assessment and/or evaluation (8)
- Training content knowledge (6)
- Presentation skills (6)
- Adult learning principles/Adult learning theory (5)
- Preparation/planning (3)
- Manage learning environment (3)
- Effective training characteristics/experiences (3)
- Building relationships (2)
- Facilitation skills (2)
- Change process/transfer of learning (2)
- Well run/organized (2)
- Standards/systems/resources (2)
- Reinforcing learning (2)
- Quality assurance (1)

- Communication (1)
- Analyzing training needs of participants (1)
- Instruction (1)

Note: for an in-depth understanding of potential overlap across the various competency models, an analysis would need to be performed at the dimension level.

Which organizations or entities have developed trainer competencies for practitioners in related fields? Based on the limited work on trainer competencies and assessment in the early childhood field and the relevance of training to so many other fields, it made sense to examine other relevant fields for their trainer competencies and strategies for assessing them. This review located trainer competencies for the following related fields: after school trainers, adult education instructors, human services instructors/trainers, and workplace/human resources trainers. See Table 3 for the list of organizations and trainer competency domains.

Table 3. Trainer/Instructor competencies from related fields

Organization/auspice	Competency Domains
<p>National Afterschool Association: Core Competencies for After School Trainers http://naaweb.org/images/NAA%20Trainer%20Comp%20Document.pdf</p> <p>The competencies are part of NAA’s Trainer Quality System which is outlined on their website at http://naaweb.org/resources/item/33-trainer-quality</p> <p>The six step process includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer Self-Assessment Tool (linked to competency domains) • Trainer Observation Form(linked to competency domains): may be used in observation by “qualified Trainer Assessor” as part of the portfolio to submit for training approval in state PD systems <p>Target audience: After School Trainers</p>	<p>Trainer competency domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism and ethics • Training design • Facilitation skills • Delivery methods • Presentation skills • Transfer of training • Learning environment • Equity and diversity • Evaluation
<p>Sherman, R.; Tibbetts, J.; Woodruff, D.; Weidler, D. (1999). <i>Instructor Competencies and Performance Indicators for the</i></p>	<p>Instructor Competency domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains Knowledge and Pursues Professional Development

Organization/auspice	Competency Domains
<p><i>Improvement of Adult Education Programs: A Publication of Building Professional Development Partnerships for Adult Educators Project February 1999</i></p> <p>Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education Division of Adult Education and Literacy</p> <p>http://www.calpro-online.org/pubs/Instructor%20competencies%20and%20indicators%20(C.pdf</p> <p>Target audience: Adult Educators</p> <p>Includes an assessment tool (rubric with competencies and examples) and rating system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes and Delivers Instruction • Manages Instructional Resources • Continually Assesses and Monitors Learning • Manages Program Responsibilities and Enhances Program Organization • Provides Learner Guidance and Referral <p>“The competencies were developed through a field-based process utilizing the input and support of over 300 adult education instructors and program administrators from across the country. In addition, a literature review of instructional practices was undertaken, and the competencies were developed and refined over several stages with the help of the PRO-NET Study Team and Working Group. Performance indicators also were developed through a multi-stage process with adult educators in Washington, DC, and through focus groups held across the country with adult learners, administrators, and instructors. Performance indicators, in the context of the competencies, are defined as instructor skills, behaviors, or practices that demonstrate the existence of the competency. Input from the field was gathered to insure that multiple perspectives were represented on competencies and indicators were developed.” P.3</p>
<p>Bernhardsson, N., & Lattke, S. (2011). <i>Core competencies of adult learning facilitators in Europe. Findings from a transnational Delphi survey conducted by the project “Qualified to Teach”.</i></p> <p>Target audience: European Adult & Continuing Education (ACE) Learning Facilitators</p> <p>“The term ACE Learning Facilitators refers to a variety of professional roles such as teachers, trainers, coaches, guidance and counselling staff and others. What these roles have in common is that a major part of the professional activity takes place in direct contact with the adult learner(s) and consists in initiating, supporting and monitoring the learning processes of these adults...Adult Learning Facilitators are mainly working in various contexts covering the entire field of Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) consisting of</p>	<p>Competency domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Management and Communication • Subject Competence • Supporting Learning • Efficient Teaching • Personal Professional Development • Stimulating learning • Learning Process Analysis • Self-competence • Assistance of learners

Organization/auspice	Competency Domains
<p>a) formal adult education institutions offering basic, general and vocational education and training, b) non-formal education institutions offering popular education, and c) work-related <i>training and development</i> mainly of non-formal character.” (p. 6)</p>	
<p>The National Staff Development and Training Association (an affiliate of the American Public Human Services Association) has developed competencies for the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor/Trainer: “Facilitating individual performance improvement, including delivering training, directing structured learning, and facilitating groups.” (p. 3) • Administrative Support • Coach • Communications Specialist • Evaluator/Researcher • Instructional Media Specialist • Manager • Organizational Development Specialist • Training Program and Curriculum Designer • Workforce Planner <p>http://www.aphsa.org/content/dam/NSDTA/PDF/Resources/NSDTACompetencies11.5.14.pdf</p>	<p>Instructor/Trainer competency domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration • Communication • Conceptual Knowledge/Skills • Design • Interpersonal Dynamics and Process • Information Management • Instructional Management • Learning Theory • Logistics • Self-Management
<p>Association for Talent Development (Formerly American Society for Training & Development) https://www.td.org/Certification/Competency-Model</p> <p>Target audience: Workplace trainers and “talent developers”, HR professionals</p>	<p>Foundational Competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal skills • Business skills • Global mindset • Personal skills • Industry knowledge • Technology literacy <p>TD Areas of expertise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change management • Knowledge management • Performance improvement • Instructional design • Training delivery • Learning technologies • Coaching

Organization/auspice	Competency Domains
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated talent management • Managing learning programs • Evaluating learning impact

Distinctive competency domains or threads. Some distinctive themes or specific skills appeared during review of the literature related to trainer competency domains that would benefit from further exploration and attention.

Field specific knowledge. Related terms might be “contextual knowledge”, “industry knowledge” or “systems knowledge”. This is the idea that a trainer is familiar with the work context of practitioners, for example the trainer is knowledgeable in licensing differences between family and center based child care, or familiar with the state based QRIS rating systems impact on training requirements. Zaslow, et al. (2010) raise the concept of contextual knowledge as a foundation for professional development:

“First, it establishes a respectful and reciprocal tone to the trainer-trainee relationship, which aids transmission of information and strategies later in the professional development program...In addition, sometimes researchers found that the approach to professional development or even the classroom strategies themselves had to be tailored to the context of the teachers (p. 37).”

“This conclusion is in keeping with the perspective presented by Joyce and Showers (2002) based on their work in providing training and structuring peer coaching for teachers of K–12 classrooms. They conclude that trainers need to be able to gauge both the complexity of what teachers are being instructed to implement, and the newness of the content in terms of previous knowledge and practice of the teachers. ‘Trainers need to be able to gauge the difficulty level to help plan the intensity and duration of training and select the components they will use accordingly’ (Joyce and Showers 2002, p. 2).” (Zaslow, et al. 2010)

Cultural competence. Diversity, equity and/or cultural competence were included as indicators, and listed as a domain in the After School Trainer competencies (NAA, n.d.). This is another area worthy of further exploration and consideration as a domain unto itself, given the growing need for practitioners to develop such skills themselves (IOM & NRC, 2015; Whitebook, 2014) and the dearth of teacher educators representing the diversity of the workforce as well as children and families served (Whitebook and Ryan, 2011). This area of trainer competence would complement state expectations in Minnesota that trainers apply the Universal Multicultural Instructional Design framework in designing professional development.

Change management or promotion/transfer of learning. In an often-cited work, Perkins and Salomon (1992) describe transfer of learning occurring “when learning in one context enhances (positive transfer) or undermines (negative transfer) a related performance in another context (p. 2).” *Transfer of learning* is a common theme in the adult learning and education literature, yet this concept listed only once as a domain in Table 2. (Texas lists “transfer of learning” and Pennsylvania lists the related concept of “change process” as a trainer competency domain.) Other states’ trainer competencies documents note the importance of content and activities that are transferable to daily practice (for example, Florida, Iowa and Washington). Further exploration on specific adult education practices which promote transfer in the workplace, and in particular in early childhood education settings, would provide useful information related to both competencies and assessment of trainer impact.

Promoting reflection/reflective practice. The literature review of trainer competencies conducted by Gauld and Miller (2004) noted the importance of skills in promoting learner reflection. Promotion of reflection and reflective practice skills were also noted as needs in workforce reports from PEACH (2014) and IOS & NRC (2015). Further study of what this would look like in terms of trainer competence and assessment would inform development of competencies and assessment.

Technology. Another area worthy of further study is in the interplay between technology and trainer delivery, as well as content. In terms of trainer delivery, there is an available literature on the unique aspects of design and delivery of training through technology. One question related to trainer competence would be: are there distinct competencies for those delivering training online? A second aspect of technology related to training and trainers is in the area of content and competencies for practitioners: what technological skills and knowledge should be developed to meet the needs of children in today’s early childhood settings? What are the related implications for training design and content?

To what extent have those competencies been assessed, and in what ways?

Kipnis, et al. (2013) note that for the states that implement some measure of trainer assessment, that comes in a variety of forms, including trainers completing self-assessments, trainer observations and/or ongoing monitoring, and requiring novice trainers to co-train with a more experienced trainer.

“Several states have built in support for trainer development by requiring novice trainers to co-train with a master trainer for a designated period of time before they are eligible to offer trainings independently. In addition, a few states have developed extensive quality assurance monitoring procedures whereby trainers are observed on a regular basis to ensure fidelity to curricula or to assess the quality of training content and delivery. In these states, trainers also complete a self-assessment, and meet with observers to review assessments and to set quality improvement goals (p.17).”

The figure below outlines the findings from page 15 of the Kipnis, et al. (2013) report:

Table 4. Quality Assurances for Training and Trainer Approval Systems

Approved training linked to:	State Examples
System-developed adult learning course	CT, IL, KY, MT, NJ, OK, PA, SC, VT, WA, WI
Trainer renewal process	AK, CO, DE, GA, IL, KY, LA, MD, MN, NC, ND, NJ, NM, NY, OK, OR, PA, TX, VT, WA, WI, WV, WY
Novice co-training with master trainer	CT, IL, KY, NM, PA, VT
Evaluations by training participants	AK, DE, GA, ID, LA, MD, MN, NM, NC, ND, OR, PA, TX, WV
Regular monitoring of training	CT, FL, DE, GA, NM

Assessing the Quality of New Jersey's Professional Preparation & Professional Development System for the Early Learning Workforce
Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California at Berkeley

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Trainer approval systems. Trainer approval systems were developed to provide a measure of quality assurance by screening potential candidates based on certain criteria.

“Training and trainer approval (T/TA) systems are one method that states use to promote high-quality professional development for early childhood practitioners. Training approval systems set standards for training content and instructional methods. Trainer approval systems ensure that professional development providers have the necessary skills, qualifications and backgrounds to deliver effective trainings. In almost all states with such systems, the focus is on non-credit-based trainers and trainings, although some T/TA systems have components relevant to higher education faculty. In addition to setting quality standards, T/TA systems can serve as information hubs for practitioners and as sources of data for local and statewide professional planning and development.” (Kipnis, F., M. Whitebook, L. Austin, and L. Sakai, 2013)

There is no nation-wide trainer approval process. According to the National Registry Alliance (2013) there are 25 state or local registries that include trainer approval. Common criteria in state based trainer approval systems are based on the applicant’s experience training adults and their educational background and experience in the field of early childhood. An applicant’s educational background in the field is sometimes linked to the individual’s standing in the statewide practitioner registry. Most systems also require trainers to complete a course on adult education teaching methods (Kipnis, et al., 2013; National Registry Alliance, 2013). Many systems approve trainers at different levels, or tiers, which align qualifications with ranges of content trainers are then approved to cover. Many systems identify an exception category termed “content experts” who may provide training on a particular area outside, yet pertinent, to the field (for example “blood borne pathogens”) and who must instead document their expertise and education in the particular content area.

Mentoring novice trainers. Another potential means to assess trainer quality is through a mentoring relationship, with opportunities for modeling, observation and feedback.

“Several states have built in support for trainer development by requiring novice trainers to co-train with a master trainer for a designated period of time before they are eligible to offer trainings independently. In addition, a few states have developed extensive quality assurance monitoring procedures whereby trainers are observed on a regular basis to ensure fidelity to curricula or to assess the quality of training content and delivery. In these states, trainers also complete a self-assessment, and meet with observers to review assessments and to set quality improvement goals.” (Kipnis, et al, 2013, p.17)

States noted as requiring new trainers to co-train are: Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Vermont (Kipnis, et al., p.15). Expectations for co-training noted in this review range from co-training at least once for Level 1 trainers (Kentucky) to a prescribed process of work over a year with a more experienced trainer (Vermont). See Table 2 for more detail, including links to a description of Vermont’s mentoring process for novice trainers.

Observation and monitoring. Some states include observation as either a component of trainer approval (Washington and North Carolina) or ongoing monitoring (Vermont, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine). This requirement may only apply to trainers in particular tiers or levels. The observation tools that were available all included parts or all of the trainer competencies for that state, in the form of a rated checklist. Some states include goal setting and other supports linked to the observations (for example, Maine, Connecticut, Vermont). Washington recently revised the trainer observation rubric used as part of trainer approval and ongoing monitoring in order to place a greater emphasis on trainer skills in facilitation and cultural sensitivity (Garrison, S. personal conversations January 25 & 26, 2016.) See Table 2, page 34-35.

Other forms of assessment. Pennsylvania requires trainers to complete a self-assessment checklist, which are the trainer competencies in the form of a rating tool, followed by setting a professional development plan based on the ratings. New Jersey requires trainer applicants to complete quizzes on the New Jersey Professional Development (NJPD) system prior to approval.

See Table 2 for state links and details.

Conclusions

This review of the trainer competency literature found little research evidence to validate specific trainer competencies or link them to high-quality training, practitioner or child outcomes. However, it is clear that states are moving forward in beginning to define training

competencies. Findings from this review suggest that there is ample need for further development of trainer competencies and for trainer assessment, as well as a need for further research on the competencies themselves and strategies for assessing trainer competence. Additional future conversations with other states, such as Washington and Vermont, regarding the development and revision of trainer approval and observation processes offer the opportunity to learn more from the experiences of other states. This report gathers the initial information to inform further work on early childhood trainer competencies and assessment in Minnesota.

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