



MAINE PRESCHOOL CREDENTIAL INFORMATION PACKET

*This manual was developed as a collaborative effort of
Maine Roads to Quality the Early Childhood Division of
the Department of Health and Human Services.*

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Section 1: Purpose and History

In response to a nationwide movement to support the professional development of preschool teachers and caregivers and teachers, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN) has developed the Maine Preschool Credential. The specialized training and professional activities within this Credential have been designed to support practitioners to deliver high-quality programming to preschoolers, and their families throughout Maine.



Section 2: Overview of the Credential Process

The Maine Preschool Credential promotes early childhood workforce competence and focuses on the additional training and education practitioners need when teaching and caring for preschoolers. This section provides an overview of the components of the Maine Preschool Credential, including the requirements, application process, and available supports.

1. The Maine Preschool Credential is based upon competencies in the following areas:

- a. Preschool growth and development
- b. Health, safety, and nutrition
- c. Relationships with children
- d. Relationships with families
- e. Observation and assessment
- f. Curriculum and approaches to learning
- g. Professionalism

2. To earn the Maine Preschool Credential, Applicants must:

- a. Meet the formal education, experience, and training requirements.
- b. Be an active member of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.
- c. Submit a completed application:
 - i. Apply on-line through the Registry and make a credit/debit card payment of \$25 to MRTQ PDN. (Arrangements can be made to submit a paper application and/or submit a check or money order by contacting mrtq.credentials@maine.edu)
- d. Submit a Portfolio that demonstrates the required competencies specific to working with preschoolers.
 - i. Submit an electronic portfolio to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu
 - ii. Or by contacting mrtq.credentials@maine.edu to submit a paper portfolio.
- e. Distribute an electronic link to the Maine Preschool Credential Family Survey to be completed by all families in your classroom (See Appendix E for a Sample Survey). The electronic link will be sent to the Applicant once the Portfolio and application and fee have been accepted by the Credential Review Team. Arrangements can be made for paper surveys.
- f. Once the electronic Portfolio has been approved by the Credential Review team, the Applicant will be invited to participate in a Maine Preschool Credential On-Site Observation.

3. Evaluation and credential decisions are based upon:

- a. The Applicant meeting all education, experience, and training requirements.



- b. Successful completion of the Portfolio.
- c. Satisfactory completion of the Maine Preschool Credential On-Site Observation.
- d. A return rate of 75%, with an 80% positive rating on the Maine Preschool Credential Family Surveys (see Section 6 and a sample survey in Appendix E).

4. Decisions on awarding the Maine Preschool Credential will be made by the MRTQ PDN Credential Review Team, with initial credentials being awarded for three years.

- a. The Credential Review Team (CRT) meets quarterly to review applications. The schedule for review is:

Application Received by:	Reviewed during:	Applicant Notified of CRT's Decision:
January 15 th	January - February	February 28 th
April 15 th	April - May	May 31 st
July 15 th	July - August	August 31 st
October 15 th	October - November	November 30 th

- b. Applicants with completed and approved materials will be contacted regarding an on-site visit and distribution of family surveys electronically. Applicants will have **10 business days** from the submission of the application to have families complete the surveys.
- c. Applicants are given **30 business days** to revise any Portfolio entry that does not demonstrate competency or to submit missing materials.
- d. If the Credential Review Team finds that the applicant's revisions are not meeting the requirements after a revision has been submitted within the required timeframe, the Credential Review Team will direct the applicant to the next steps.
- e. Credential decisions may be appealed. If awarding of a Maine Preschool Credential is denied, Applicants may submit an appeal in writing to MRTQ PDN.

5. The Maine Preschool Credential must be renewed by documenting:

- a. Completion of a 3.0 credit college course covering a topic related to preschoolers **OR** 45 contact hours of training covering a topic related to any of the above Competencies.
- b. Initial credentials must be renewed after three years; subsequent renewals will be required every five years.
- c. Complete information and the Maine Preschool Credential Renewal Application are available on the MRTQ PDN website.

6. MRTQ PDN has the following supports available for practitioners:

- a. **Credential Cohorts** will be available for practitioners to join to receive support from a facilitator and peers; cohorts generally involve participation in monthly



- meetings (either via conference call, video conference, or face-to-face) and individualized assistance from the facilitator on completing the Portfolio and preparing for the On-Site Observation.
- b. **Individualized support** through consultation is also available to practitioners pursuing the Maine Preschool Credential.

More information about each of these steps is available in the applicable section of this information packet.





Section 3: Eligibility Requirements

Prior to applying for the Maine Preschool Credential, all Applicants must provide evidence of completion of educational, training, and work/volunteer experience requirements.

Registry Membership

All Applicants for the Maine Preschool Credential must be active members of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry. Applications for Registry membership may be completed online at: <https://mrtq-registry.org> or practitioners can call MRTQ PDN at 1-888-900-0055. Review of an Applicant's Portfolio will be deferred until Registry membership can be confirmed.

Educational Requirements

Applicants must have a high school diploma/GED/HiSet

Training Requirements

Complete training descriptions are listed in the Required Training (Section 4) of this manual

Within ten years of the date of application, Applicants must have completed the following MRTQ PDN Core Knowledge trainings:	#Hours
• Designing Early Learning: Curriculum & Assessment in Preschool	30
• Foundations of Health, Wellness, and Safety	18
• Inclusion: Laws & Practices (On-Demand)	6
• MELDS (online facilitated 30hr)	30
- OR -	
• On-Demand Preschool Maine's Early Learning Development Standards (P-MELDS)	8
- AND -	
• Social and Emotional Learning Birth to 5	18
• Early Childhood Education: Theory to Practice	9
• Positive Supports & Challenging Behavior	15
• Partners in Caring: Families and Caregivers	15
• Your Professional Development Portfolio	9

Work/Volunteer Experience Requirements

Applicants must have:

- Documentation of at least 480 hours of experience working/volunteering with preschoolers (ages 3-5) within the past 5 years.





*Alternative pathways for meeting eligibility requirements are
considered by MRTQ PDN on an individual basis*





Section 4: Training Requirements

The Maine Preschool Credential requires a minimum of 120 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network Training.

Alternative options are listed in Appendix D.

For a complete listing of current required training descriptions for the Maine Preschool Credential, please check this link, [Training Catalog](#) or by visiting <https://www.mrtq.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/MRTQ-Training-Catalog-2024.pdf>

Additionally, if you have taken alternative training that you believe is comparable with the required MRTQ PDN training, or took the MRTQ PDN required training more than ten years ago, you are welcome to apply for the training to be waived by using this link [Alternative Pathway for Credentials](#) or by visiting: https://usouthmaine.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1FhWcMvR2QxqOfs

Note: you must make a separate request for each individual training. Typically, waivers are not granted for more than one or two MRTQ PDN trainings per credential.

Training information, including the schedule and registration, can be found in MRTQ PDN's Statewide Online link here: [Training Calendar](#) or by visiting <https://ececaldarmaine.org/public/main.aspx>

NOTE: In 2024, the 30-hour training "Maine Early Learning Developmental Standards" (MELDS) was phased out and replaced with the updated 8 hour on-demand training "Preschool Maine Early Learning Developmental Standards" (P-MELDS). Applicants who have completed the MELDS training within 10 years of the credential application will meet the requirements for the Maine Preschool Credential. Applicants who have taken the P-MELDS will need to take 2 additional trainings: Early Childhood Education: Theory to Practice and Social Emotional Learning, Birth to Age 5.



Section 5: The Portfolio

Applicants for the Maine Preschool Credential will create a Portfolio to demonstrate their competence and reflect on their experiences with completing the training for the credential. This demonstration should be presented electronically. The Applicant may include multi-media components, such as video or audio recordings or photographs. Special permission is required if a paper Portfolio is submitted. *(Note: The creation and requirements for electronic portfolios are covered in the training Your Professional Development Portfolio.)*

Please note:

- It is the **Applicant's** responsibility to SAVE and organize all relevant assignments from the required training! Especially for any online training, nothing is saved by the instructor or by MRTQ PDN – it is the Applicant's responsibility to keep and organize all the work. It is recommended that Applicants save electronic versions of their work to facilitate updating of materials before adding them to the final Portfolio. However, please keep in mind that the evidence required in the Portfolio is often more in-depth than the training activities you may have saved.
- All training and application materials for the Maine Preschool Credential should utilize respectful "person-first" language. Please refer to the CDC's resource for additional information about using "person-first" language. ([information about using "person-first" language](#))
- The Portfolio is a professional document and should be clear, legible, and with correct spelling and grammar. Remember to include citations for all relevant sources.
- Whenever utilizing information from another source, it is important to remember to include citations. Reflections and descriptions written in response to prompts for evidence in different Competency Areas must reflect the Applicant's own work and views. It is fine (and can be helpful in making a point) to include relevant information from reliable sources (websites, journals, books, etc.) but citations giving credit to the author(s) and/or source(s) must be included. Examples of simple citations can be found on this website. For guidance on using citations, refer to the [Online Writing Lab at Purdue University for Research and Citation Resources](#)
- Reflections should demonstrate an individual's perspective and experience and should show the Applicant's understanding of the content being addressed in the Competency Area. It is acceptable to consider the Applicant's program's policies or approaches, but this is typically not the entire reflection. The Applicant should consider sharing stories of experiences they've had with children and families relevant to the Competency Area being addressed.
- All work should demonstrate a culturally sensitive, anti-biased perspective.



- Children and families should remain anonymous to maintain professional confidentiality. **If confidentiality is violated, evidence for that competency area will not be accepted and the Portfolio will be returned to the Applicant for correction.** Some options to maintain confidentiality are:
 - Changing the names of children and families, or simply using only initials
 - Including a written permission form signed by the parents or guardians of any children shown in photographs or video
 - Using photos or videos that do not show a child's face, or using stickers to obscure a child's identity
 - Redacting (blacking out) a child or family's name or identifying information from any scanned text.
 - For more information regarding confidentiality, Applicants can review the Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families, included in Appendix B.

Portfolio Composition

An Applicant's Portfolio should be divided into two sections: Introduction and Competency Areas. The sections are outlined below.

Section 1: The Introduction

All Portfolios must include:

- a. The Applicant's Personal Philosophy Statement describing their approach to developmentally appropriate, safe, and nurturing preschool care in group settings (maximum of one page)
- b. The Applicant's MRTQ PDN Professional Development Profile
- c. Signed Authenticity Statement (Appendix F).

Acknowledgement of learning expression and need for multiple means of representation: As there are many different needs and strengths within each individual participant, we acknowledge that learning and understanding can be expressed through multiple methods. As such we gladly welcome and strongly encourage applicants to utilize their strengths when building their portfolio. Options can include, but are not limited to: video/audio recordings, writing, visuals, graphics, photographs etc. We also welcome a variety of digital formats such as the Google Doc template available in the MRTQ PDN On-Demand training, *Your Professional Development Portfolio*, a slide show, website, blog, etc.



Section 2: Competency Areas

In this section, the Applicant will present evidence of competency in each area. The grid on the following pages should guide the writing and presentation of this section:

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
A. Preschool Growth and Development The first five years of life are full of major milestones in children's growth and development. Children explore and learn about their world through play and within the context of safe, meaningful relationships. Teachers support children's growth and development by cultivating and maintaining a rich understanding of developmental progression across all domains. Through developmentally appropriate practice, positive guidance, and	A.1: Describes the major developmental milestones of the preschool years. A.2: Articulates the basic concepts of brain development and the impact upon behavior of the preschool years A.3: Describes examples of the holistic nature of child development and the interdependence of the domains: social, emotional, cognitive, language, and physical. A.4: Incorporates positive guidance strategies when supporting children's development.	- What is the importance of knowing the developmental milestones? - How can you share this information with families in a constructive way? - What are the benefits of understanding the holistic nature of preschool development?	A.1.: Develop a timeline that includes the major developmental milestones. Include a reflection on why this information is important in the care of preschool aged children. Include why you would share this with families. A.2.: Design an activity that incorporates <i>at least two</i> of the developmental domains. Include a description of the activity, the developmental domains addressed, and how the activity aligns with those domains. A.3.: What tools or resources does your program use as positive guidance strategies to respond to or proactively prevent challenging behaviors. Is there anything you would change or add? A.4 Tell a story of a time when a child demonstrated challenging behavior and what that behavior was communicating. Reflect on how you dealt with the situation and how you might



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
intentionally designed learning environments, teachers support children's engagement in playful learning which is driven by curiosity and exploration. With these supports in place, children expand their knowledge and understanding of the world and become lifelong learners.	A.5: Understands how a child's brain development impacts their ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors and responds with compassion.		change your approach if you had it to do over again. A.5 Pick <u>one</u> of the following options: - Describe developmentally appropriate expectations for your age group and how (or if) these expectations are modified for individual student needs. OR - How might you discuss a child's behavior with families in ways that emphasize that a child is in the process of learning the expected behaviors?
B. Health, Safety and Nutrition A safe and healthy environment includes intentional practices to support physical, mental, and emotional health. Teachers maintain current training in CPR/First Aid,	B.1: Understands and follows licensing regulations regarding health and safety.	- What are the daily steps that you take to keep preschoolers healthy and safe? - What are the unique health and safety needs of this age group? - How do you share this information with families?	B.1: Describe basic health and safety regulations for preschool programs, including how you follow them in your program. Include why this information is important and how you share this information with families. Remember to cite your sources. Choose one of the following: - A typed, 500-word competency statement - Create an outline for an orientation/training plan for new



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
mandated reporting, and health and safety practices. Following licensing requirements will guide teachers towards a safe environment for children. Active supervision practices, hazard identification and prevention, hand washing, and established injury and illness policies help support a safe and ethically responsible program. Healthy eating and regular physical activity are important aspects of the brain development of young children. When adults successfully model and follow health, safety, and nutrition guidelines, they	B.2: Completes a basic daily health and safety check of the environment for potential hazards. B.3: Demonstrates appropriate techniques for performing basic first aid and CPR with preschoolers. B.4: Implements appropriate hand washing (adults and children), sanitation, and disinfecting procedures, including tables, toys, equipment, and materials.		staff. The plan should include topics to cover, resources utilized, and timeline. B.2: Evidence is observed during the on-site observation and gathered from the Family Survey. Example of daily cleaning/room/playground inspection checklist and explain your process in one paragraph. B.3: Document current certification in Infant, Child, and Adult CPR and First Aid. Include a copy of your current certification. B.4: Document how children and adults in your program are visually reminded about hand washing procedures. Include a copy or photo of the visual used and describe why this practice is important in the care of preschoolers. Choose one of the following: • A typed, 500-word reflection • Family Board/Display • Homemade children's book or classroom poster (developmentally appropriate for preschoolers)



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
can significantly impact a young child's life-long habits of maintaining good health.	B.5: Develops a collection of resources on mental health, nutrition, health, and safety that can be shared with families. B.6: Identifies signs that indicate possible abuse and/or neglect in preschoolers. B.7: Understands potential food- and plant-related hazards for preschoolers and implements preventive measures for avoiding dangerous situations. B.8: Understands the relationship between		• Video recording of sharing a favorite hand-washing song with preschoolers B.5: Create or share a family communication containing basic health information regarding a common illness in children. Explain why this information is important, how it was shared with families. Remember to properly cite resources. Choose one of the following: • A typed, 500-word reflection • Family Board/Display • Family Newsletter or Blog post (500 words) B.6: Evidence will be gathered during onsite observation B.7: Present an up-to-date listing of potential food- and plant-related hazards, including how you plan for avoiding dangerous situations. Describe why this information is important and how you would share this with families. Focus on nutrition, allergy awareness, and plant-related hazards and prevention opportunities. Remember to properly cite where you got your information.



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
	nutrition and physical development. B.9: Articulates behaviors or other symptoms that signal a possible nutritional concern. B.10: Uses preventative measures for avoiding dangerous situations: • Children are always attended by an adult • Appliances are kept out of reach • The same sink is not utilized for both food preparation and toileting procedures unless properly sanitized • Fences are in place (if applicable) B.11. Supports children in developing the ability to make safe and healthy choices—both in exploration/play and in peer relationships.		Choose one of the following: • A typed, 500-word reflection • A comprehensive resource file (electronic) • Family Newsletter or Blog post (500 words) • Podcast B.11. Provide examples of how your preschool children demonstrate being independent and make good health and safety choices around play, nutrition and other daily activities. • Verbal prompts • Visual cues



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
			• Rhymes, songs, phrases used in the classroom • Circle time conversations or group discussions • Planned lessons • Role modeling with explicit instruction
C. Relationships with Children Relationships are the foundation from which all learning takes place. Children attain regulation through partnerships with a safe, and supportive person and explore outwards knowing they have this relationship as a secure base to return to as needed. Teachers intentionally build relationships with children by meeting them where they are, practicing serve and return	C.1: Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child. C.2: Utilizes practices that nurture the caregiver-child relationship so that the child feels safe and can predict behaviors and responses from adults.	• How do teachers create caring communities in which each child thrives socially, emotionally, and psychologically? • How do teachers build relationships with each child and among the children? • How do teachers use the classroom environment and materials to build caring communities of learners?	C.1 Explain the importance of building relationships with children and how connection is at the foundation of everything we do with children. a. Explain the importance of relationships in terms of children's development and in fostering secure attachment. b. How does having an established relationship with a child help make working through challenging behavior easier? C.2 Can you think of ways you helped a child in your care feel safe, valued, and encouraged? a. How did the child respond to you? b. Is there anything that gets in the way of you providing this kind of sensitive response? c. What changes can you



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
methods and taking a genuine interest in who the child is and what matters most in their world. Positive Guidance practices are used to sustain positive relationships as children require social and emotional guidance and behavioral support	C.3: Supports and assists children to problem solve and navigate conflict with peers or other environmental factors C.4: Implements practices that address individual development		make to increase your ability to give responsive and respectful care? C. 4 Healthy relationships with children are dependent on positive, supportive, consistent, and responsive caregiving. What are some strategies you use to relate to children and how do those strategies support children's social-emotional development? (e.g. Listening: When teachers actively listen to children, children feel valued. When children know you are truly listening, they are more likely to share their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and stories.) a. Reflect on a time when you used 1 or more strategies to build a positive relationship with a child in your care. b. How did it help you relate to that child's unique needs? C.5 How do you enable children to form and maintain positive relationships with others? Reflect on children's interactions, emerging



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
	C.5: Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with adults and peers		friendships and how they problem-solve and seek adult support. What can you do to encourage their hard work? Or Think of a child in your classroom who seems to have difficulty interacting with peers. - What type of grouping might support this child? - Who might you pair the child with? - What activities might you suggest they play?
D. Relationships with Families Recognizing the diversity of family structures, they are the primary supportive group of adults with whom a child forms strong attachments. The family sustains the child's growth and development, begins the processes of	D.1: Utilizes strategies for eliciting information about family culture, child-rearing practices, and individual child needs, prior to enrollment.	- What is the importance of daily communication with families? - How do families know that they are welcomed and respected in your program? - How do you build reciprocal relationships with families? - How do you effectively communicate with families? - What are the ways that families and non-stereotypical gender roles are diversely represented in your program?	D.1 Include a copy of your child questionnaire that you give to incoming families which helps you gain valuable personal, cultural, and linguistic information on newly enrolled children. Describe (photo collage or video) the materials provided in your classroom environment to address a range of diversity (dolls, play props, books, pictures, posters, play food, clothing items, etc.) Explain how the materials reflect the lives of the children and families in your program as well as the



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
socialization and self-regulation, and provides the first learning environment. Professionals working with young children must acknowledge the important role families play in every child's life and strive to form respectful partnerships to generate trust and open relationships so that children thrive in settings outside of their own homes. Professionals working with young children and their families must recognize and respect their cultures, ethnicities, languages, values, faiths, and belief systems, and thus be able to	D.2: Describes daily communication strategies that develop and maintain trust with families. D.3: Maintains confidentiality as required in all situations with children and families and understands the unique confidentiality issues and responsibilities involved in working with preschool aged children.		diversity found in society, Give examples of materials that could be added. D.2. Select one of the following ethical dilemmas and utilize the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to discuss your response: • Parent who wants their child to be separated from another classmate • Force feeding specific foods or restricting food intake • Utilize home behavioral strategies (i.e. time out) at school. D.3. Include examples of your communication tools - digital, paper, or other methods. • Find out where to obtain resources, materials and translation services for families whose home language is other than English. Create a resource of what you find. Provide the agency's name and contact information. D.4. Include your confidentiality policy and what practices and strategies you



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
effectively support children's development and learning.			use to ensure that the confidentiality of children and families is maintained. Please describe anything you would change or add to improve your policy and/or other strategies you would utilize.
E. Observation and Assessment Teachers have a strong understanding of child growth and development and utilize methods of observation and assessment to inform curriculum design. They understand the value and use of formal and informal observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment approaches and tools and employ developmental screenings and observations to assess for and	E.1: Observes preschoolers' development and individual needs to use in program planning. E.2: Identifies and documents growth in development for individual children based upon observations. E.3: Utilizes at least two preschool assessment tools (can include checklists).	What is the importance of observation and assessment?	E.1: Evidence is observed during the on-site observation and gathered from the Family Survey. E.2: Document a one-hour observation in the area of gross and fine motor skill development and plan for a developmentally appropriate activity based on the observation. Include a copy of the observation and a typed plan for an activity or interaction, describing how the activity aligns with the Physical Development and Health domain. E.3: Documentation of observation tools: 10-minute running record - One anecdotal observation - this can be from memory or done using a photo or video of a child/children engaging in play or activity. - A plan for a developmentally



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
respond to individualized needs and interests. All forms of assessment and screenings must follow ethical guidelines and are founded in practices that are culturally, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate. Observations are completed with the understanding that all children are competent and capable learners who have innate motivation to explore through play.	E.4: Activities provided meet children's developmental needs in a holistic approach to the five domains of the document Preschool MELDS: • Social/Emotional Development • Cognitive Development (Mathematical practices & reasoning, scientific reasoning, social sciences) • Physical Development and Health • Early Language and Literacy • Approaches to Learning and Play		appropriate activity based on one of the completed observations d. Example of a completed assessment tool - formative (information gathered during the learning process) and summative (Quarterly assessments of developmental milestones - i.e. MELDS, ASQ, ASQ-SE) E. 4. Choose one of the following: • A typed, 500-word reflection • Family Newsletter or Blog post (500 words) • Recorded role-play (with a teammate) of a family-teacher conference sharing assessment information

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
	E.5: Applicant describes the system used to individually plan for children: • Input from families • Observation • Assessment tool(s) • Curriculum plan • Review and revision of curriculum plans • Child Interests		
F. Curriculum and Approaches to Learning Developmentally appropriate curriculum is play-based and stems from children's developmental needs and personal interests. Teachers design curriculum that meets individual needs while also responding to the group as a whole. Observations and reflection allow teachers to respond to and encourage	F.1: Follows children's interests and individual needs when planning for activities and interactions.	• What is the curriculum for preschoolers? • How do you respond to preschoolers' needs for individualized curriculum? • What makes a toy, material, or environment engaging for a preschooler? What does not work well for this age group?	F.1: Document showing daily schedule/routine 1. Written for sharing with families 2. Visual schedule for students



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
children to explore curriculum concepts through multiple means and methods. Teachers understand that children approach learning differently and provide many opportunities for children to express their understanding. Children meet learning goals on different timelines and trajectories.	F.2: Demonstrates use of relationships and interactions as a primary learning strategy. F.3: Selects appropriate toys, materials, and environmental arrangements to promote preschool exploration and discovery. F.4: Utilizes a sensory-rich environment as a learning		F.2: Describe the impact of teacher-child relationships on learning and list strategies for using relationships on curriculum and behavior support. F.3: Design a curriculum activity including three or more methods for students to engage and show their understanding. I.e. - story about gardening, planting seeds activity, sensory table with plants/roots and shoots, circle activity/gross motor pretending to grow like plants, dramatic play with gardening equipment, etc. F.4: Using photos, video, capture the sensory aspects of the classroom learning environment and describe



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
	tool and provides daily multi-sensory experiences.		the impact of sensory activities. Examples could include use of visual, texture, sound, and scent.
G. Professionalism As individuals, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide the best possible programs of care and education for children and to conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity. Because of our specialized expertise in early childhood development and education and because the larger society shares responsibility for the welfare and protection of young children, we acknowledge a collective obligation to advocate for the best interests of children within early childhood	G.1: Engages with the profession by participating in local, regional, national group activities and professional organizations. G.2: Practices within ethical and legal policies and procedures. G.3: Adheres to standards of ethical conduct in working with children, families, and professionals, paying particular attention to issues of confidentiality.	- Specifically, what changed in your practice due to the training and reflection you have completed? - How have your interactions with children, co-workers (if applicable), and families been impacted by what you have learned? - How will you continue to reflect on your practice?	G.1: Please submit an artifact (picture, description, sample newsletter article) that exemplifies your efforts to elevate the field of early care and education, which may include participation in local community events. Reflect on why this is important G.2: Describe how your philosophy statement in the Introduction Section of your portfolio expresses your professionalism in the field of early childhood education. G.3: Include a copy of a code of ethical conduct from one of your trainings. G.3.A. Write a reflection on your interactions with a family (or families) and how your thoughts and interactions have changed as a result of what you have learned during the Maine Preschool Credential process. This reflection should be at least one page. Citing the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is suggested.



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
programs and in the larger community and to serve as a voice for young children everywhere. We must maintain confidentiality and respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies, as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest. We are familiar with laws and regulations that	G.4: Follows relevant federal and state laws protecting the rights of young children including children with developmental delays or disabilities, such as the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).		G.4: Pick one of the following options: • Submit a typed, audio or video reflection (500 word minimum) describing the characteristics and/or qualities of what it means to be a professional teacher/caregiver of preschool children. Include how you would describe your role to prospective families or to the general public so that they understand the components of what makes you a professional. Please keep the indicators in mind, although each statement does not need to be answered in your statement. • Please describe ways that you assure the children and family's confidentiality is maintained. This can include policies from a Handbook with an additional reflection as to why you believe this is important and what it looks like in your classroom/program. • Write a reflection or submit a video or audio about your experience with a child or



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
serve to protect the children in our programs and be vigilant in ensuring that these laws and regulations are followed	G.5: Seeks opportunities to reflect on and learn about how their own social and cultural contexts and implicit biases may influence their practice and equity in their classroom settings as they strive to apply new knowledge about strengths based, culturally, and linguistically responsive family engagement. G.6: Takes responsibility for their own well-being and has strategies to manage the physical, emotional, and mental stress inherent in their profession in order to be healthy and to engage effectively and empathetically with children and families.		family (or children or families) where your perspective changed because of what you learned during the Maine Preschool Credential process. Please be as specific as possible. G.5. Submit a copy of your current resume. Maximum of 2 pages.



Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence
	G.7: Uses and continuously updates their knowledge of early childhood assessment practices, curriculum frameworks, developmental, academic content knowledge, and related pedagogy to plan and ensure equitable access to inclusive environments.		G7: Include a Personal Professional Development Plan





Maine Preschool Credential Portfolio Checklist	
Component	Date Completed
Section 1: Introduction	
• Personal Philosophy Statement	
• Professional Development Profile	
• Signed Authenticity Statement (Appendix F)	
Section 2: Competency Areas and Evidence	
A. Preschool Growth and Development	
☐ Timeline of major developmental milestones	
☐ Examples of family communication	
☐ Activity incorporating <i>at least two</i> of the developmental domains	
B. Health, Safety, and Nutrition	
☐ Description of basic health and safety regulations, including how you follow them in your program	
☐ Current certification in Infant, Child, and Adult CPR and First Aid	
☐ Visual reminder of handwashing procedures	
☐ Example of family communication containing basic health information regarding a common illness affecting preschoolers	
☐ Up-to-date listing of potential food- and plant-related hazards, including a plan for avoiding dangerous situations	
C. Relationships with Children	
☐ Explanation of effects regarding responsive relationships	
☐ Description of approach including strategies for transitioning children into the child care setting	
D. Relationships with Families	
☐ Written family questionnaire	
☐ Example of written daily communication and why this is important	
E. Observation and Assessment	
☐ Documentation of a one-hour observation in gross and fine motor skill development and plan for a developmentally appropriate activity	
☐ Example of a completed assessment tool	
F. Curriculum and Approaches to Learning	
☐ Basic daily schedule	
G. Professionalism	
☐ Reflection on your interaction with a family (or families) and how your thoughts and interactions have changed because of what you have learned during the Maine Preschool Credential process	
☐ Copy of current resume, maximum of 2 pages	





Maine Preschool Credential Portfolio Checklist

Notes/Questions/Reminders:





Section 6: Family Survey

The Family Survey is a tool to help the Maine Preschool Credential Review Team determine that the Applicant understands preschool development and offers responsive and appropriate care and education for this age group.

Once the Applicant's Portfolio has been reviewed and determined to be complete, MRTQ PDN's Coordinator of Apprenticeship and Credential Programs will provide the Applicant with an electronic link to give to the families to complete. The Applicant will let the CACP know how many families the survey is being distributed to. The applicant will have **10 business days** for the electronic surveys to be completed. The survey link should be shared with **all families** with infants and/or toddlers in the Applicant's care. Families with more than one child under age three can complete **one** survey. Families with shared custody arrangements should complete a survey for each household. Please be sure that families list the **name of the Credential Applicant** when completing the survey.

The criteria for successful completion of the Family Survey are:

- At least a 75% return rate
- At least an 80% positive response

Completed surveys will automatically be received by MRTQ PDN. If the applicant chooses not to use the preferred electronic link, the applicant can use the paper survey in Appendix E. Surveys should be returned to the Applicant in a sealed envelope; sealed envelopes should be given to the observer during the on-site observation (see Section 7).





Section 7: The On-Site Observation

Upon successful completion of the Portfolio, Applicants will schedule an on-site observation. Through the on-site observation, Applicants will show how they have integrated the knowledge gained through the Maine Preschool Credential process into their daily practice.

The on-site observation will assess the Applicants' practice in each of the seven Competency Areas:

1. Preschool Growth and Development
2. Health, Safety, and Nutrition
3. Relationships with Children
4. Relationships with Families
5. Observation and Assessment
6. Curriculum and Approaches to Learning
7. Professionalism

Scheduling the On-Site Observation

MRTQ PDN assigns observers to conduct on-site observations. The assigned observer will contact the Applicant to arrange a mutually agreed upon date for the observation; the on-site observation must take place within three months of notification of successful Portfolio completion. After the observation, the assigned observer will meet with the Applicant to discuss the observation's results.

*Please see Appendix D to review the entire Maine Preschool
Credential On-Site Observation Guide*



Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; a federal civil rights law designed to provide equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities, including students
Appeal Procedure	The process by which an Applicant can respond to the decision of the Credential Review Team
Applicant	Any person in the process of meeting the requirements for any of the Maine Credentials
Coaching	A relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s); coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal setting for an individual or group (Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce, 2017)
Cohort	Group whose members share a significant experience at a certain period of time or have one or more similar characteristics; in this case, a group of professionals working towards a Maine Credential with guidance from a facilitator
Cohort Application	Application to be a member of a MRTQ PDN Credential Cohort, not to be confused with the application for a Maine Credential
Competency	Measurable skills, knowledge, dispositions, and abilities that practitioners working with children and/or youth need to facilitate learning and development linked to relevant guidelines or standards
Competency Area	Label to organize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions (competencies) that collectively define an essential component of effective, high-quality professional practice
Consultation	One type of technical assistance provided by MRTQ PDN. Consultation is individualized to support practitioners using a partnership approach. Trained consultants offer a fresh perspective and provide opportunities to share ideas, learn more about a topic, and practice new strategies. Consultation can be on-site or virtual.
Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)	A process in which programs use data to identify areas of needed improvement and achieve program goals, participant satisfaction, and positive outcomes
Credential	Documents certifying an individual has met a defined set of requirements established by the grantor of the credential; usually include knowledge and skills and may include demonstrations of competence through a portfolio
Cultural Competency	The ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures; ensures that the needs of all community members are addressed (Cultural Competency Glossary)
Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Learning environment and teaching strategies that are based on current theories and research about how young children learn and develop and promote the optimum growth and development of children
DHHS OCFS	Maine's Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services
Evaluation Tools	Include surveys, questionnaires, focus groups; program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about



	projects, policies and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency
Evidence-Based Practices	Approaches and techniques supported by research findings and/or demonstrated to be effective through examination of and reflection on current and past practices
Family Engagement Activities	Meaningful activities and experiences that demonstrate reciprocal relationships between families and early childhood and/or out-of-school time program staff on behalf of children's learning and development; effective family engagement activities are fully inclusive of all family members and reinforce learning in multiple settings
Family Survey	Tool to gather parent/family input about the Applicant's understanding and demonstration of the Competencies of the applicable Maine Credential
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; an education act to provide federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities
Indicator of Quality Practice	An identified marker or benchmark that outlines methods that are based on theories and current research for effective practices that support optimal learning and development of children and youth
Individualized Support	MRTQ PDN is committed to providing access to all offering participants, including those with disabilities, those who need interpretation or translation, and those who may be experiencing unexpected life events. The creation of equitable opportunities for offering participants requires a coordinated and collaborative effort between the participant and the MRTQ PDN staff
Licensing	Requirements or regulations necessary for a provider to legally operate child care services in a State or locality, including registration requirements established under State, local, or Tribal law
Mentoring	A relationship-based process between colleagues of similar professional roles, with a more-experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skill, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less experienced protégé mentee; intended to increase an individual's personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce, 2017)
MRTQ Core Knowledge Training	Denotes a standardized set of curricula covering the following eight core knowledge areas: 1. Healthy, safe environments 2. Child development 3. Developmentally appropriate practice 4. Observation and assessment 5. Guidance 6. Relationships with families 7. Individual and cultural diversity 8. Business and professional development Delivered by instructors with a master's degree in early childhood education (or a closely related field) who have taken additional training regarding teaching adult learners and offers a consistent body of knowledge regarding best practices in early

	childhood education and out-of-school time for both new and experienced practitioners
MRTQ PDN	Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network provides professional development services for early childhood and out-of-school time professionals throughout Maine
MRTQ Registry	The early childhood and out-of-school time professional recognition system for Maine; tracks work experience, training, and education
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
<u>NAEYC Code of Ethics</u>	A professional Code of Ethics for Early Care and Education Professionals serving children birth to eight NAEYC Code of Ethics and Statement of Commitment
On-site Observer	Trained early childhood and/or out-of-school time professional who visits an Applicant at their place of employment to assess mastery of Competencies written into the applicable Maine Credential
On-site Observation Tool	Instrument designed to assess a professional's progress toward mastering the Competencies of the applicable Maine Credential
Out-of-School Time Settings	Any of an array of programs that provide children and youth with a range of supervised activities designed to encourage learning and development outside of the typical school day
Peer-to-Peer Networks	Foster the development of relationship-based learning and support communities among colleagues, often in like roles. Peer-to-peer TA is based on the premise that a significant expert knowledge base exists in the field and that peers who have solved challenges on the ground have developed tools and strategies that can be shared with their colleagues
Person-First Language	Typically used to depict a clear and positive image when discussing any/all people and represents more respectful and more accurate ways of communicating; people with disabilities are not their diagnoses or disabilities - they are people (e.g., a child with special needs is not a "special-needs child") (Aleman 1991; Snow 2001)
Portfolio	A collection of work assembled in an approved format to demonstrate and document knowledge and skills; it is a vehicle for tracking development, assessing changes in philosophy, and sharing beliefs with others in a clear way
Reflective Practice	The process of thoughtfully considering one's thoughts, feelings, actions, and experiences when applying knowledge to practice
Rising Stars for ME	Maine's five-step quality rating and improvement system, designed to increase awareness of the basic standards of early care and education, to recognize and support providers who are providing care exceeding those standards, and to educate the community of the benefits of higher quality care
Stakeholder	Includes funders, program staff, administrators, program participants, families or clients, community leaders, collaborating agencies, and others with a direct or even indirect interest in program effectiveness



Appendix B: Growing Ideas Tipsheet



Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

ccids.umaine.edu

GROWING IDEAS

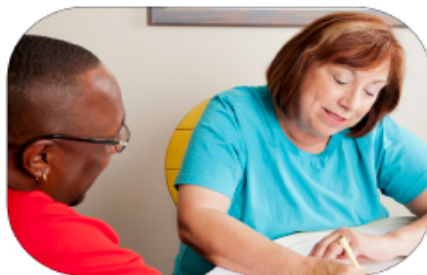
Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families



Care and education professionals routinely receive confidential information about children and families as part of their work. Maintaining confidentiality is important both legally and ethically.

What is confidentiality?

Confidentiality involves the treatment of information that an individual has shared in a relationship of trust. Confidential information might include personal details about the lives of children and families, and/or details such as names, addresses, phone numbers, birth dates, health, Individual Education Plans (IEP) and employment information.



What does it mean to maintain confidentiality?

- Conversations, written documents and information, including photos or media about a child or family should be kept private.
- No information about a child or family should be shared with anyone without the written consent of the child's family or legal guardian.

Please note: exceptions include mandated reporting of child abuse required by law, and health conditions when the public health department must be notified.

Why is maintaining confidentiality important?

- Maintaining confidentiality demonstrates respect, which can support the development of a trusting relationship needed for successful family partnerships.
- Confidentiality is a legal protection and assurance of families' right to privacy.
- Practicing confidentiality assures the safety of children and families. It creates and maintains a reputation of high quality standards for the professional and the child care program.



How can care and education professionals honor their legal and ethical obligation to maintain family privacy?

- Know laws, regulations and guidelines on handling personal information.
- Do not give or receive records or other information about children or families without written permission from the parents or legal guardian.
- Understand that parental permission is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.
- Develop an internal program policy that guides information sharing among program staff, and with outside agencies and consultants.

Discuss confidential information in private locations, not in open or shared spaces (hallways, staff rooms, parking lots) where conversations can be overheard.

- Program policies describe how child records are secured, such as in a locked cabinet, who can access them and under what circumstances they can be shared.

Share policies regarding confidentiality practices.

- Review and distribute policies related to confidentiality during orientation for families and staff. Review with staff yearly, at least.
- If questions about family privacy arise, identify who in the program staff families should consult.

What procedures should be in place?

- Develop a parental consent for release form that gives the provider permission to share specific information about a child, such as an IEP, medical records, and/or observations.
- Informed consent means that when parents/guardians give consent to share information about their child, they understand why they are being asked to release these details, and the conditions that apply. Discuss parental consent for release forms carefully with parents/guardians.

Disclaimer: This information is for broad educational purposes only. It is not and does not take the place of legal advice for any specific situation nor is it offered as such.

Where to learn more:

See "[Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families — Learning Links](http://ccids.umaine.edu/resources/ec-growingideas/confidentill/)" online at <http://ccids.umaine.edu/resources/ec-growingideas/confidentill/>

The University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies gratefully acknowledges Helen M. Bailey, Esq., General Counsel, and Kristin Aiello, Esq., Staff Attorney, from the Disability Rights Center, Maine's federally-mandated protection and advocacy agency for individuals with developmental disabilities, for their technical assistance during the development of this tipsheet.



This update and expansion of the Growing Ideas Resources for Guiding Early Childhood Practices was completed by the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies with funding from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Child and Family Services, Early Childhood Division. © 2011

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Updated: 02/27/14





Appendix C: Maine Preschool Credential Application

Below are instructions for the on-line Credential Application through the MRTQ PDN Registry:

1. Log in to the Registry using your Email and Password
2. Click on the blue "My Education" tab at the top of the page
3. Select the "Maine Credential Application" option
4. Select the Credential that you are interested in from the drop-down menu and then press the green "View Requirements" button
5. Make sure that all the required credential training is checked off with the completion dates
6. If you see the green "Requirements Met" button, you may continue. Please check that all your contact information is correct
7. Type your name in the Signature Box. This serves as an e-signature
8. NOTE: If you want to pay by check or money order, you must submit a paper application and mail it to: MRTQ PDN, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104-9300. You cannot continue with the online application through the Registry
9. Press the green button "Submit Payment" and continue to give your payment information. We accept debit and credit cards.
10. You will receive automatic notification that your credential application has been submitted
11. If you encounter any problems, please contact mrtq.credentials@maine.edu

Please contact mrtq.credentials@maine.edu for directions to submit a paper application.





Paper Application *(Use only if not submitting on-line credential application through the Registry)*

Section 1: Contact Information

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Home Email: _____

Section 2: Application Requirements (please initial)

- I am an active member of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.
- I have met the educational requirement of having at least a high school diploma/GED/HiSet.
- I have completed all of the following trainings:
 - ☐ Designing Early Learning: Curriculum & Assessment in Preschool (30 hours)
 - ☐ Supporting Maine's Preschools: Guidelines for Learning and Development (online 30 hours) – or –
 - ☐ On-Demand Preschool Maine's Early Learning Development Standards (P-MELDS) (8 hours) - AND - Teaching Preschool: Theory & Development (9 hours) - AND - Social and Emotional Learning Birth to Age 5 (18 hours)
 - ☐ Foundations of Health, Wellness, and Safety (18 hours)
 - ☐ Supporting Inclusion: Laws and Practices 1.0 On-demand (6 hours)
 - ☐ Positive Supports and Challenging Behaviors (15 hours)
 - ☐ Partners in Caring: Families and Caregivers (15 hours)
 - ☐ Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)
- I have completed at least 480 hours of work or volunteer experience with young children and/or youth within the past five years.
- I have completed a Portfolio that confirms that I have met the educational requirements and demonstrates competency in each of the Competency Areas. **A link to my electronic Portfolio has been emailed to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu.**
- I have made a \$25 credit/debit card payment through the on-line credential application in the Registry.
- I am choosing to enclose a check for \$25 made out to the University of Southern Maine and mailed to MRTQ PDN at the address below instead of paying through the debit/credit card feature through the on-line application on the Registry.
- There are ____ (number of families) in my classroom who will be given the link to the Maine Preschool Credential Family Survey.





If not paying through the Registry, paper Application and \$25 check should be mailed to:

Maine Roads to Quality
University of Southern Maine
PO Box 9300
34 Bedford Street
Portland, ME 04104-9300

STOP!

Before signing and paying the Credential Application Fee, be sure that you have submitted your electronic portfolio to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu by one of the quarterly deadlines. Your credential application will not be considered complete without submission of the portfolio. For more information, check the Credential Information Packet or contact mrtq.credentials@maine.edu.

Signature (digital)

Signature Date





Appendix D: Maine Preschool Credential On-site Observation Tool

Applicant's Name: _____

Program Name: _____

Observer: _____ Date: _____

Setting: ☐ Child Care Center ☐ Family Child Care ☐ Head Start ☐ License Exempt ☐ Other: _____

Number of children: _____ 3 to 5 years old: _____

Outside the 3 to 5-year-old range: _____

Is the Applicant multi-lingual? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, which languages are spoken in the program?

The ratings are defined as follows:

Observed and Met: The practice item was observed during the on-site visit. The Applicant is currently engaging in this practice and is confident in his or her knowledge and skill.

Not Observed or Not Met: The practice item was not observed during the on-site visit. The Applicant is either working towards making this change in his or her practice or the Applicant is aware that change in practice is needed and in either case is not yet engaging in the practice. Observers may choose to identify resources and supports available that may assist the Applicant in making practice changes.

Met by Interview: This practice item is difficult to observe directly. The Observer rated the practice as met by interviewing the applicant.



Indicators	Ratings			Evidence/Notes
	Observed and Met	Observed or Not Met	Met by Interview	
Health, Wellness, and Safety				
Understands and follows licensing regulations regarding health and safety. - Emergency procedures/numbers posted - Toileting (and diapering if applicable) procedures posted and followed				Complete a visual scan of the room for evidence or ask the Applicant if this item is not obvious. Observe diapering procedures.
Completes basic daily health and safety check of the environment for potential hazards.				Ask for a copy of the checklist. Observe or interview the Applicant regarding the procedures for the daily check (e.g. "When do you complete your daily check?" "How do you fit it into the day?" "What do you do when you find a hazard?")
Resources regarding mental health, nutrition, health, and safety are available for families.				Complete a visual scan of the program for evidence or ask the Applicant if evidence is not obvious.
Indoor and outdoor environments are free of hazards, including: - No dangerous plants - Outlets are covered - No broken equipment, toys, or furnishings - No foods that are hazardous to preschoolers - Smoke free				Observe the program area. Interview the Applicant if the smoke free policy is not posted.
Uses preventative measures for avoiding dangerous situations: - Children are always attended by an adult - Appliances are kept out of reach - The same sink is not utilized for both food preparation and diapering procedures unless properly sanitized				Observe to see that the Applicant attends to all children and is aware of potential hazards. Children are supervised by sight and sound; an adult is nearby in case physical redirection is necessary.



Indicators	Ratings			Evidence/Notes
	Observed and Met	Observed or Not Met	Met by Interview	
Fences are in place (if applicable) Meets Child and Adult Care Food Program nutritional guidelines. ☐ Check here to indicate Not Applicable – families provide all food.				Ask Applicant how they ensure that available snacks and meals are healthy and nutritious.
Implements appropriate hand washing (adults and children), sanitation, and disinfecting procedures, including tables, toys, equipment, and materials.				All adults follow hand-washing procedures. There is a procedure for sanitizing tables and toys (e.g. a basket for mouthed toys, etc.).
Relationships with Children and Families				
Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.				Observe the Applicant's interactions with children.
Utilizes practices that nurture the caregiver-child relationship so that the child feels safe and can predict behaviors and responses from adults.				Observe the Applicant for use of redirection, positive reinforcement, etc.
Positive guidance strategies are used with children and shared with families.				Observe the Applicant for use of redirection, positive reinforcement, etc. Ask the Applicant about how guidance strategies are shared with families (e.g. a guidance policy in the parent handbook).
Supports and assists children as needed to problem solve and navigate conflict with peers or other environmental factors.				Teachers are observed to use proximity, language modeling, and positive guidance when peers are experiencing conflict. Co-regulation strategies are used to help children calm and use problem solving strategies.
Implements practices that address individual development				Children's individual schedules are followed within the broad context of the daily routines and schedule of the program (e.g. although a classroom may



Indicators	Ratings			Evidence/Notes
	Observed and Met	Observed or Not Met	Met by Interview	
				have general times for meals, naps, or diapering, individual needs are still respected and met).
Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with adults and peers.				Teachers support positive peer-to-peer interactions and help children learn how to enter and sustain play.
Daily communication strategies are used to develop and maintain trust with families, including: - Displays pictures of children and their families - Families made to feel welcome (e.g. addressed by name, preferences honored, etc.) - Daily updates on children's care and routines are provided				Complete a visual scan of the program for evidence or ask the Applicant if evidence is not obvious.
The environment reflects value for divergent points of view and cultural preferences, including: - Books - Food - Pictures - Housekeeping props, etc.				Observe the environment and interview the Applicant if this indicator is not obvious (e.g. "Do you have any other materials to rotate into the environment that reflects diversity?").
Maintains confidentiality as required in all situations with children and families and understands the unique confidentiality issues and responsibilities of working with preschool-aged children.				Does the staff pull family members aside or into a private space if a difficult conversation needs to happen at pick-up? Are communication notices held in individual cubbies or bags?
Curriculum and Approaches to Learning / Observation and Assessment				
Identifies and documents growth and development of individual children based on observations.				Ask to see previous documentation and, if not observed, ask about the procedure for documentation within the classroom
Utilizes at least two preschool assessment tools				



Indicators	Ratings			Evidence/Notes
	Observed and Met	Observed or Not Met	Met by Interview	
Follows children's interests and individual needs when planning for activities and interactions.				Interview: How do staff discover the interests and needs of children? Observe children - what areas are they most drawn to?
Demonstrates the use of relationships and interactions as a primary learning strategy.				Observe interactions with children. What questions are asked?
Offers appropriate toys, materials, and environmental arrangements to promote preschooler exploration and discovery.				Observe children in the environment. Confirm through interview that the applicant is the person who sets up the environment. If not, ask what they might do differently
Employs a sensory-rich environment as a learning tool/strategy and provides multi-sensory experiences.				Observe the space design and toys/equipment available to children
Activities provided meet children's developmental needs in a holistic approach to the five domains of the document <i>Preschool MELDS</i> • Social and Emotional Development • Approaches to Learning • Early Language and Literacy • Physical Development and Health • Cognitive Development				Look in the Preschool Maine Early Learning and Development Standards (MELDS) for examples.
Applicant describes system used to individually plan for children: • Input from families • Observation • Assessment tool(s) • Curriculum plan • Review and revision of curriculum plans				Interview the Applicant for some or all the listed items.



Appendix E: Sample Family Survey (use only if you are not utilizing the electronic link)

Once the applicant's Portfolio has been reviewed and determined to be complete, MRTQ PDN's Coordinator of Credential Programs will provide the Applicant with an electronic link to give to the staff to complete. The Applicant will have 10 business days for the electronic surveys to be completed.

The criteria for successful completion of the Family Survey are:

- At least a 75% return rate
- At least an 80% positive response



Dear Family,

The child care professional indicated on the enclosed Family Survey is working toward his or her Maine Preschool Credential. The training requirements for this Credential will help to ensure that he/she has a good understanding of preschool development and can offer care and education that is responsive and appropriate for this age group. It is our goal that all preschoolers in Maine receive high quality care.

The attached survey will help to inform us about how you, as the family of a preschool-aged child in the Applicant's care, feel about how he or she works with your child. Family feedback is an important part of this Credential, so we would love to hear from you.

Please put this survey in a sealed envelope and return it to the designated location provided by the Applicant. The paper survey needs to be completed prior to the Applicant's on-site observation, which is the last phase of the credential process. If you have questions about this survey, feel free to contact me at abigail.r.carter@maine.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abigail R. Carter".

Coordinator of Credential Programs
Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network





Maine Preschool Credential Family Survey

Applicant's Name: _____

Date this survey was completed: _____

How long has your child been in the care of the Applicant? _____

Directions: Please circle Yes or No to respond to the following questions; if the statement does not apply to your family, please circle "NA" for "not applicable."

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

The Applicant...

• Informs me of any accidents and/or first aid provided to my child.	YES	NO	N/A
• Gives medication to my child only with my written permission.	YES	NO	N/A
• Ensures that indoor and outdoor play areas are free of hazards; children can move around safely.	YES	NO	N/A
• Talks with me about my child's nutritional needs.	YES	NO	N/A
• Plans and conducts activities that are of interest to my child.	YES	NO	N/A
• Allows my child to explore activities and materials based upon his/her interests and abilities.	YES	NO	N/A
• Share his/her observations of my child through daily communication and/or parent-teacher conferences.	YES	NO	N/A

Comments:

Relationships with Children and Families

The Applicant:

• Knows my child well and understands his/her individual needs.	YES	NO	N/A
• Responds to my child when he/she is upset.	YES	NO	N/A
• Ensures that my child feels safe.	YES	NO	N/A
• Talks with and asks me what I think is important for my child.	YES	NO	N/A
• Listens and responds to my concerns.	YES	NO	N/A
• Makes my child and family feel welcome.	YES	NO	N/A
• Is willing to meet with me individually and at my convenience.	YES	NO	N/A

Comments:

Professionalism

The Applicant...

• Maintains confidentiality in all matters concerning my child and family.	YES	NO	N/A
• Encourages me to visit the program.	YES	NO	N/A

Comments:

Thank you for completing this survey! If you have any concerns about the care that your child is receiving, please contact Child Care Licensing at (207) 287-9300.





Appendix F: Authenticity Statement

The Applicant should review and sign the following statement and include a signed copy with the Portfolio:

I hereby certify that the material in this Maine Preschool Credential Portfolio represents solely my own work, that no one has written it for me, that I have not copied another individual's work, and that all sources that I have used have been properly cited and clearly documented. Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, may be used to inform assignments. However, directly quoting or minimally revising responses generated by AI is also considered plagiarism. I understand that any investigation of misconduct concerning any aspect of my work may lead to my disqualification as an Applicant for the Maine Preschool Credential.

Applicant Name (print)

Applicant Signature

Date

