

School-Age Care Credential

In September New York State exceeded 100 graduates in its School-Age Care Credential Program. The School-Age Credential is one component of a comprehensive school-age child care training initiatives in New York State designed to enhance quality which includes the SAC Credential, program accreditation, quality advisors, training and technical assistance.

In 2000, the first class of 14 candidates was awarded the School-Age Credential: 36 candidates in 2001 and 54 candidates in 2002. The total graduates are currently at 104. This program year, the NYS School Age Care Credential preparation courses are being offered around the state in 11 different locations with total enrollment of 165 Credential candidates.

The NYS School-Age Care Credential was developed to promote quality services to children and families by providing specific standards, training, and evaluation of school-age staff members and providers. It is an opportunity for adults working with school-age children to gain professional recognition for demonstrating competence in their on-the-job skills. The SAC Credential consists of seven competency areas in fourteen functional areas: Professionalism, Child Development, Safety, Health, Out of School Environments, Physical, Cognitive, Communication, Creative, Self, Social, Guidance, Families and Program Management.

Important elements of the model are:

- A strong partnership between the New York State School Age Care Coalition (NYSSACC), the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS), and Cornell University.
- Funding provided by OCFS to support the development of the credential.
- Monthly SAC Credential Team meetings, with representation from partners identified above, as well as Bureau of Early Childhood Services Regional Managers from OCFS and many of the statewide network of CCR&R's whom are offering a credential preparation effort for school age care professionals in their region.
- Close alignment of the Credential requirements in the various functional areas to the NSACA Standards for Quality School Age Care.
- Tuition support through the Educational Incentive Program.
- Additional stipends through the Salary Retention Program upon completion of the Credential.
- Revised NYS School Age Care Regulations (effective Dec. 2000) raised the bar for the educational qualifications for Directors/Site Directors of school age care programs. The regulations also included the SAC Credential as an acceptable vehicle for meeting the educational requirements.
- Established procedures to ensure consistency throughout the state.
- Created a database to track the status of Candidates.

NYS School-Age Care Credential

Introduction and Eligibility

Contents

Preface	3
The NYS School-Age Care Credential Program	
The NYS School-Age Care Credential Process	4
Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities for Local Assessment Team Members	
Candidate	9
Advisor	10
Parent/Community Representative	11
SAC Credential Endorser	12
Credentialing Agency Responsibilities for School-Age Care Credential Review Panel Eligibility Requirements	13 14

Preface

The choice to work with school-age children is one of the most important career decisions that one can make. A school-age staff member or provider is a special person in children's lives as they master skills, develop friendships, grow in independence, and move to new levels of thinking and understanding about themselves and the world. It is an exciting and challenging responsibility to set up a supportive learning environment for a group of school-agers, develop a relationship with each one, and meet their needs as individuals and as a group. Children's learning experiences during this period in their lives can increase their self-confidence and success in elementary school.

The number of children in school-age group programs has multiplied in recent years. Families place great trust in the staff of these programs, for it is the daily performance of the staff member or provider that determines the quality of the children's before and after school experience. The NYS School-Age Care Credential Competency Standards support quality programs for school-age children by providing standards for training, evaluation, and recognition of staff members and providers based on their ability to meet the unique needs of this age group.

Applying for the NYS School-Age Care Credential is a big commitment. However, working towards the Credential can be a rewarding experience. It offers staff members or providers an opportunity to:

- Evaluate their own work in relation to NYS School-Age Care Competency Standards;
- Get feedback and support from people who have experience working with school-age children and knowledge about school-age services;
- Improve their skills in ways that are satisfying for themselves and beneficial for children; and
- Earn a professional Credential that is recognized throughout New York State.

The NYS School-Age Care Credential has been developed to promote quality services to children and families by providing specific standards, training, and evaluation of school-age staff members and providers. It is an opportunity for adults working with school-age children to gain professional recognition for demonstrating competence in their on-the-job skills.

This section presents an overview of the NYS School-Age Care Credential Process and the eligibility requirements and responsibilities of the four members of the Local Assessment Team (LAT) that conduct the evaluation of the Candidate for the NYS School-Age Care Credential.

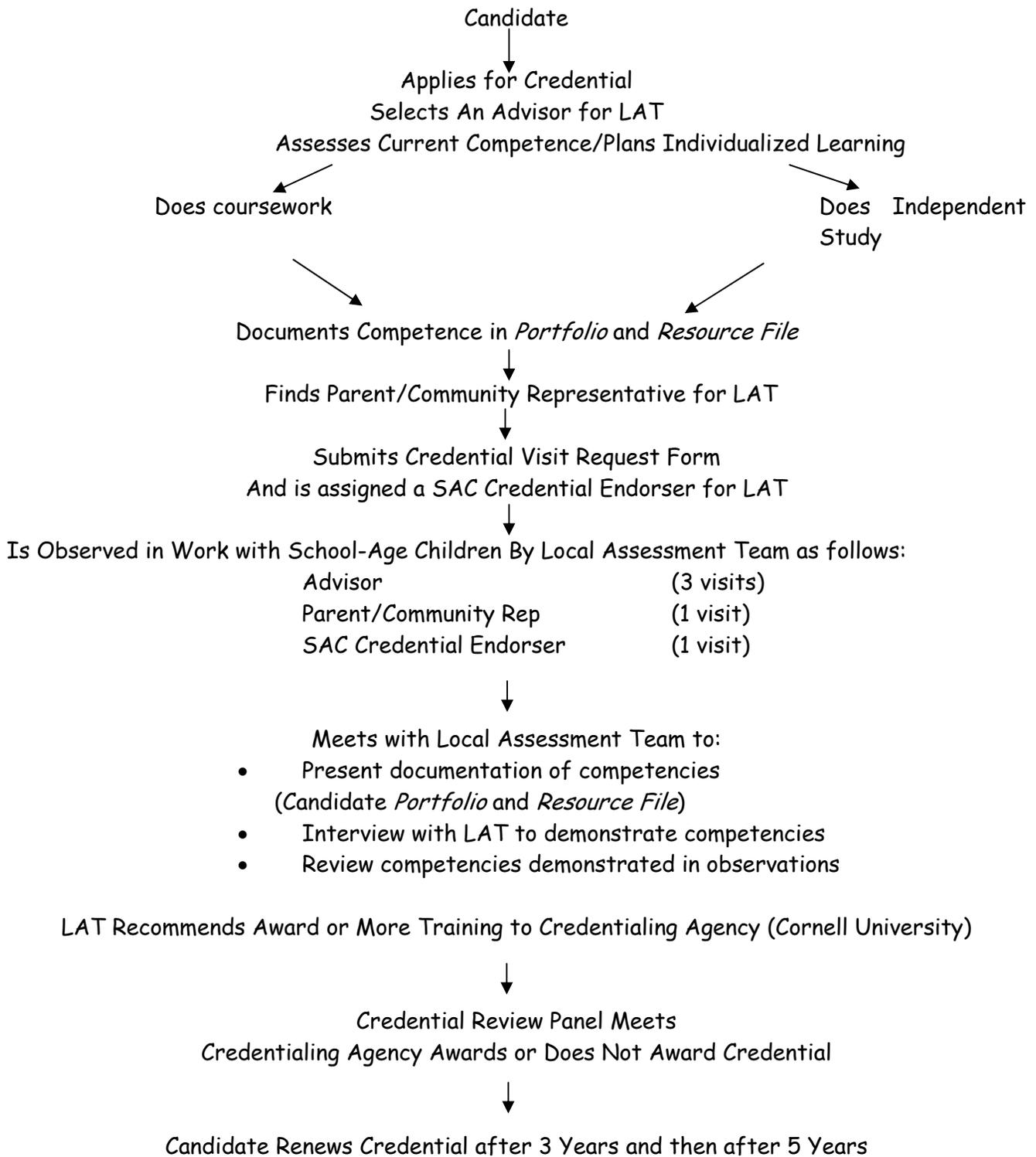
The NYS School-Age Care Credential Process

A school-age care provider and/or staff member uses the NYS School-Age Care Credential Process to improve his/her professional knowledge, skills, and standing in the profession. S/he usually attends training sessions, documents his/her competence, and then assembles a Local Assessment Team (Advisor, Parent/Community Representative, and an assigned School-Age Care Credential Endorser). The LAT members observe him/her, meet and review his/her documentation, and recommend that the Candidate be awarded the NYS School-Age Care Credential to the Credentialing Agency (Cornell Cooperative Extension), or recommend that the Candidate needs additional training and should reapply at such time when s/he has received that training.

The diagram on page 5 describes the NYS School-Age Care process. Each step is described in greater detail beginning on page 6.

For more information: Contact Kimberlee Dunlavey at 607 255-8291 or klp15@cornell.edu.

The NYS School-Age Care Credential Process



The NYS School-Age Care Credential Process Further Defined

Candidate applies for Credential

Interested Candidates who meet the eligibility requirements (see page 9) for the School-Age Care Credential must first complete a standard Credential Application Form (see page 15) and submit it to:

- An approved agency offering NYS School-Age Care Credential Training and Support Services (host agency), OR
- Cornell Cooperative Extension who acts as New York State's Credentialing Agency, and who will forward the application on to the host agency closest to the Candidate.

Candidate finds an Advisor to serve on his/her LAT

Host agencies keep a list of qualified Advisors who can guide a Candidate through the School-Age Care Credential Process, and who participates as a member of the Local Assessment Team.

The Advisor works closely with the Candidate to assess current competence, identify needed training, and suggest continued professional growth. See page 10 for Advisor Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities.

Candidate assesses his/her current competence and plans individualized learning.

The Advisor observes the Candidate working with children and helps him/her understand his/her current level of competence in comparison to various professional standards (including the NYS School-Age Care Credential Standards, NSACA Program Accreditation Standards, and NYS regulations.) Based on the Candidate's competence, s/he and the Advisor devise a plan that will help the Candidate grow and document his/her competence.

Candidate Does Coursework in School-Age Care and/or Does Independent Study

Because the School-Age Care Credential is based on competence that is observed and documented, there is flexibility in terms of how one develops the necessary competence. Candidates may choose to join an organized School-Age Care Training Program (sponsored by approved host agencies), apply college coursework, do independent study, or a combination of all three.

Candidate documents his/her competence in the *Portfolio* and *Resource File*

Candidates are required to prepare detailed documentation in two different formats. The *Portfolio* documents personal and professional information about the Candidate as well as documents learning and application according to the NYS School-Age Care Credential Competency Standards. The *Resource File* provides documentation of twenty-eight requirements that demonstrate the Candidate's proficiency, practice, and relevant certification.

Candidate Finds Parent/Community Representative for his/her LAT

Because parent and community input is necessary for quality school-age care, a Parent/Community Representative is an important member of a Candidate's Local Assessment Team. Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities for the Parent/Community Representative are listed on page 11.

Candidate submits *Credential Visit Request Form* and is assigned a SAC Credential Endorser for his/her LAT

When a Candidate has completed his/her documentation, s/he may request a Credential Visit by using Form # . At that time, the Credentialing Agency (Cornell Cooperative Extension) will assign a qualified School-Age Care (SAC) Endorser who will join the LAT members (Advisor and Parent/Community Representative) that the Candidate has already assembled. SAC Endorser Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities can be found on page 12.

Candidate is observed in work with School-Age Children by the LAT as follows:

The Advisor must observe a minimum of three times.

The Parent/Community Representative must observe a minimum of one time.

The SAC Endorser must observe one time.

Observations are made during normal days when the Candidate fulfills a leadership role in working with children, and demonstrate competence as indicated in the *NYS School-Age Care Competency Standards*.

Candidate meets with Local Assessment Team

During the LAT meeting, all members (the Candidate is an equal member of the LAT) review information and observations they have made on the Candidate's competence and performance. LAT meetings are conducted according to a standard format, providing opportunities for the Candidate to present his/her learning, articulate about the documentation contained in the *Portfolio* and *Resource File*, for LAT members to ask questions about their observations, and review the ways in which the Candidate demonstrates competence.

LAT recommends that the Candidate receive the Credential or that s/he get more training

At the conclusion of the LAT, all members reach a unanimous decision that the Candidate demonstrates the competence required of a School-Age Care professional and recommend that the Credentialing Agency award the Credential. Or, if any one of the LAT does not vote to recommend the credential be awarded, the LAT recommends that the Candidate receive additional training in specific areas and reapply for the Credential at a later date.

Credential Review Panel Meets and the Credentialing Agency Awards or Does Not Award the Credential

The Credential Review Panel checks to make sure that the LAT meeting was conducted according to standard procedures and if documentation shows that it was, accepts the recommendation of the LAT.

Candidate renews the Credential after 3 years and thereafter every 5 years.

A School-Age Care Credential is valid for 3 years from award, after which it may be renewed for 5 year periods.

The renewal process involves five steps.

1. The Credentialing Agency will automatically send an expiration letter to the school-age credentialed staff member three months prior to the expiration of the credential at which time s/he may request a renewal package.
2. The Candidate prepares a written "self-appraisal" that includes an updated autobiographical statement and a description of the renewal Candidate's professional development in each of the 14 Functional Areas according to the recommendations from the Profile completed at the LAT meeting identifying the Candidate's Three-Year Professional Development Plan.
3. The Candidate develops a Five-Year Professional Development Plan.
4. The Candidate mails a copy of the self-appraisal document and Five-Year Professional Development Plan to the Credentialing Agency with the renewal fee.
5. The Credential Review Panel reviews documentation and awards the renewal, seeks further information, or denies renewal.

Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities for Members of the Local Assessment Team (LAT) for the NYS School-Age Care Credential

Each member of the LAT (Candidate, Advisor, Parent/Community Representative, and Endorser) must meet qualifications so that they will be able to fulfill their role of assessing the Candidate's competence. Each member has more specific instructions to help them understand the responsibilities of their role therefore the following provides only a general description of those responsibilities.

Candidate Eligibility

The applicant must meet the following eligibility requirements:

A. Current Work

Candidate must provide care to school-age children. Staff who work in center-based, school-based, or family or group family day care settings that care for school-age children are eligible.

Candidate must regularly work directly with school-age children so that LAT members will be able to observe his or her interactions with children in a leadership role.

B. Education

Candidate must have a high school diploma or GED equivalent. Transcripts of relevant coursework should accompany a Candidate's Application for a Credential Program in order that his/her Advisor can assist him/her in developing an individualized learning plan.

Advisor Eligibility Requirements

A. Personal

- Be familiar with the school-age program and the needs of children and families where the Candidate will be observed.
- Be knowledgeable about NYS School-Age Care regulations, NSACA standards and policies for school-age services.

B. Education

B.A., B.S., or advanced degree in child development, youth agency administration, recreation, home economics, physical education, elementary education, special education or other related field from an accredited college.

OR A.A.S. in a related field

OR Successful completion of the NYS School-Age Care Credential

AND Credential Advisor training.

C. Experience/Position

Two years of experience in a school-age setting including:

- **One year** working directly with children in the same age range as the children in the Candidate's program as a school-age staff, teacher, family child care provider, social worker or similar role; and
- **One year** of responsibility for the professional growth of another adult.

D. Without Conflict of Interest

- Must not be the relative of a child in the Candidate's care at any time during the credential process.
- Must not be related by blood or marriage or other legal relationship to the Candidate.
- Must not be working with the Candidate in a co-teaching situation (with the same children in the same room).

Advisor Responsibilities

- Work with Candidate over a period of at least 12 weeks
- Observe the Candidate at least three times, recording observations and giving the Candidate recommendations for growth and determining their competency in each functional area.
- Advise the Candidate about preparation of the *Portfolio* and *Resource File*
- Review *Portfolio* and *Resource File* and verify the contents.

Parent/Community Representative Eligibility Requirements

A. Personal

- Be able to read, speak, and write well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a Parent/Community Representative.
- Be able to observe the Candidate in order to prepare a written report of the observation, collect information from the parents of the children in the Candidate's care, and participate in the *Local Assessment Team* meeting.
- Be willing to serve as a spokesperson for the parents and community.

B. Involvement with Program

- Have been involved as a volunteer or parent with children in the Candidate's school-age program.

C. Free from Conflict of Interest

- Must not be presently employed by the school-age program.
- Must not be related by blood or marriage or other legal relationship to the Candidate.
- Must not serve as a Parent/Community Representative for a Candidate who served on the Parent/Community Representative's own Local Assessment Team. (*No two people can serve on each other's Local Assessment Team.*)

Parent/Community Representative Responsibilities

- Serve as the spokesperson for the parents and community during the Candidate's LAT meeting
- Collect, tally, and bring Family Questionnaires to the LAT meeting.
- Observe the Candidate at work and record observation for use at the LAT meeting.

School-Age Care (SAC) Credential Endorser Eligibility Requirements

- Education related to child development: Bachelor's degree or Associates degree with experience or successful completion of the NYS School-Age Care Credential.
- Experience working with school-age children; in a school-age care program preferred
- Experience supervising staff working with school-age children: recent experience preferred'
- Experience working with diverse populations
- Strong written, oral, and interpersonal skills
- Membership in a professional organization
- Knowledge of School-Age Care Credential Competency Standards, credentialing process, NYS OFCS School-Age Child Care Regulations, NSACA Standards (knowledge prior to training desirable)
- Successful completion of NYS School-Age Care Credential Endorser Training
- Excellent professional references

Free from Conflict of Interest

To promote objectivity and credibility, an individual serving as SAC Endorser:

- Must not be the relative of a child in the Candidate's care at any time during the assessment process
- Must not be related by blood or marriage or other legal relationship to the Candidate.
- Must not be employed at the Candidate's Program.

School-Age Care Credential Endorser Responsibilities

- Serve as the representative of the Credentialing Agency
- Observe the Candidate for a minimum of three hours
- Interview the Candidate following the Observation to learn more about competencies that may not have been demonstrated on a given day
- Monitor the procedures of the LAT meeting to ensure that the meeting is conducted fairly and according to standard statewide procedures.
- Verify that all procedures have been followed and submit completed documentation to the Credentialing Agency.

NYS School-Age Care Credentialing Agency

Credentialing Agency Responsibilities

- Coordinate the entire credentialing process.
- Maintain updated School-Age Care Credential materials.
- Recruit, train, monitor, schedule, supply and reimburse qualified Endorsers.
- Recruit and orient agencies wishing to offer training and advisement to help meet the needs of Credential candidates.
- Develop a data base to track candidates throughout the credentialing process.
- Convene qualified Credentialing Agency Panel to review and monitor materials and procedures submitted by Local assessment Teams and officially award the credential or recommend additional training.
- Supply official notification of credential awards to successful candidates.
- Automatically sends a renewal announcement to the school-age care credentialed staff member three months prior to the expiration of the credential.
- Convenes Credential Review Panel to award/deny renewal.
- Distribute credentialing materials to qualified and interested candidates.

Credentialing Agency Panel Responsibilities

- Appointed jointly by Cornell Cooperative Extension and NYSSACC (up to 2 representatives from each)
- Meets quarterly and/or subject to need.
- Reviews materials submitted by LAT team
- Evaluates materials using checklist
- Determines if materials are complete and standard procedures were followed during the process.
- Justifies that documentation exists to honor the LAT decision to award or not to award the Credential.
- Officially awards Credential or renewal to successful candidates.
- Notifies candidate in writing if initial credential or renewal materials are incomplete and if additional information or documentation is required.
- Manage appeal process with unsuccessful candidates who choose to appeal the LAT or credentialing panel recommendation.

Credentialing Panel Qualifications

Education

- Bachelors or Masters degree in child development or other fields related to school-age care;
OR
- A combination of experience and education in fields related to school-age care.

Experience

- Experience working with school-age children in a structured setting;
- Recognized leadership in providing educational and/or professional growth opportunities to school-age care providers.
- Knowledge of NYS School-Age Care regulations, NSACA standards and policies regarding school-age care.

NYS School-Age Care Credential

Competency Standards

Contents

Introduction	4
Competency Goal I: Professionalism	
Functional Area 1: Professionalism	6
Competency Goal II: Child Development	
Functional Area 2: Child Development	7
Competency Goal III: Out of School Environments	
Functional Area 3: Safety	9
Functional Area 4: Health	12
Functional Area 5: Out of School Environments	15
Competency Goal IV: Physical and Intellectual Competence	
Functional Area 6: Physical	18
Functional Area 7: Cognitive	20
Functional Area 8: Communication	23
Functional Area 9: Creative	26
Competency Goal V: Social/Emotional Development / Guidance	
Functional Area 10: Self	29
Functional Area 11: Social	31
Functional Area 12: Guidance	33

Competency Goal VI: Families

Functional Area 13: Families 36

Competency Goal VII: Responsive Program

Functional Area 14: Operational Program Management 39

The New York State School-Age Care Credential *Competency Standards* are used to evaluate a Candidate's performance with children and families during the School-Age Care Credentialing Process.

The *Competency Standards* are divided into *seven Competency Goals*, which are statements of a general purpose or goal for behavior. The *seven* goals are defined in more detail in *14 Functional Areas*, which describe the major tasks or functions that a Candidate must complete in order to carry out the Competency Goals.

Each Functional Area is explained by a **developmental context**, which generally includes a brief overview of child development and provides a rationale for the Functional Area definition.

Each Functional Area is further explained by a list of numbered *competencies that are followed by bulleted behavioral indicators*.

Competency Goal:
there are 7 total

Competency Goal I Professionalism

Overall Description of
Competency Goal

To Maintain a Commitment to Professionalism

Functional Area:
there are 14 total

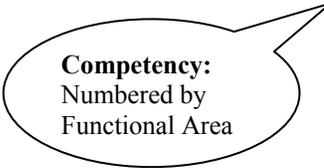
1. Functional Area: Professionalism

Developmental Context: a general
description of the Functional Area

Developmental Context:

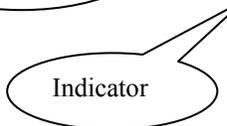
Professionals working with school-age children and their families make decisions based on knowledge of school-age development, appropriate school-age activities, and family life, and demonstrate a commitment towards quality programs for school-age children. The professional school-age staff member continues to set new goals and take advantage of training or educational experiences that will help her/him to grow more competent. Recognizing that the way they relate to one another directly affects the quality of school-age programs and sets an example for children, adults in school-age settings work to resolve issues and problems among themselves cooperatively and respectfully. They also work together to educate the community at large about the needs of school-age children. The staff member should develop relationships with other school-age professionals and establish a network for information and support.

Competencies and Indicators



Competency:
Numbered by
Functional Area

1-1 Demonstrates knowledge of regulations that apply to school-age care by:



Indicator

- *Speaking convincingly about the purposes of regulations for safe and high quality care*

These *competencies and indicators* describe behavior that demonstrates a Candidate is acting in a competent way or exhibiting a skill in a particular Functional Area. During the assessment process, most Candidates will exhibit other competent behaviors, and a competent Candidate might not demonstrate all the examples listed under a Functional Area.

The *competencies and indicators* included in the standards should serve as a basis for recognizing other, more specific behaviors that are important to the individual Candidate. Candidates, other members of the Local Assessment Team, and individuals conducting or participating in New York State's training will be able to think of additional ways to demonstrate skill in the *seven Competency Goals and 14 Functional Areas*.

The NYS School-Age Care Credentialing Process ensures that, before a candidate is awarded the Credential, all

- *Competencies have been observed,*
- *Competencies have been documented, or*
- *Competencies have been indicated in a personal interview with the Candidate.*

Competent school-age personnel integrate their work and constantly adapt their skills—always thinking of the development of the whole child. In all Functional Areas, it is important for competent school-age staff to:

- individualize their work with each child while meeting the needs of the group
- promote multiculturalism
- support families with different languages
- meet the needs of children with special needs

And, while demonstrating skills and knowledge, competent school-age staff must also demonstrate personal qualities, such as integrity, flexibility and a positive style of communicating with school-age children and their families.

Competency Goal I

Professionalism

To Maintain a Commitment to Professionalism

1. Functional Area: Professionalism

Developmental Context:

Professionals working with school-age children and their families make decisions based on knowledge of school-age development, appropriate school-age activities, and family life, and demonstrate a commitment towards quality programs for school-age children. The professional school-age staff member continues to set new goals and take advantage of training or educational experiences that will help her/him to grow more competent. Recognizing that the way they relate to one another directly affects the quality of school-age programs and sets an example for children, adults in school-age settings work to resolve issues and problems among themselves cooperatively and respectfully. They also work together to educate the community at large about the needs of school-age children. The staff member should develop relationships with other school-age professionals and establish a network for information and support.

Competencies and Indicators

- 1-1 Demonstrates knowledge of regulations that apply to school-age care by:
- Speaking convincingly about the purposes of regulations for safe and high quality care
- 1-2 Views self as professional in current work with children
- 1-3 Has and is continually developing competencies in child development, programming, communication skills, and other topics related to children by:
- Regularly attending conferences, workshops, and other professional development opportunities, and has an ongoing training plan.
 - Belonging to a professional organization related to school-age children.
 - Reading professional journals, magazines, newsletters, and the like to increase knowledge of current findings, best practices, and other information related to providing high quality care for school-age children.

Competency Goal II

Understanding Child Development

To provide care that contributes to children's growth and development.

2. Functional Area: Child Development Knowledge

Candidate demonstrates an understanding of child development ages, stages, and the range of development that may occur within a given age or stage, as well as an ability to apply this understanding in developing program, environment, and activities that meet children's needs.

Developmental Context:

School-Age Care contributes to children's development in ways uniquely different from children's experiences in school or at home. If professional caregivers are to take advantage of developmental opportunities, and provide safe and appropriate care they must understand what children of various ages and developmental stages are like, what they can reasonably be expected to do, and what they need from adult caregivers. Competent child care providers provide inclusive programming for children of all abilities, including those with special needs. Child Development competency is required throughout the school-age care credentialing process. It is intended that a candidate demonstrate proficiency with the body of knowledge related to child development in addition to demonstrating its application throughout other functional areas.

Competencies and Indicators

- 2-1 Uses systematic, objective observations to anticipate individual children's needs as well as the needs their developmental stage might predict:
- Recording what children do and say
 - Observing children in different settings and at different times of day
 - Sharing observation info with child and families when appropriate
 - Conducting observations for different reasons
 - Recording many instances of a child's actions before drawing conclusions
 - Using all opportunities to gather information about children.
 - Working with colleagues to develop a schedule for conducting regular observations of children.

- 2-2 Demonstrates reasonable expectations regarding what children of various developmental stages are able to do physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, and creatively by:
- Responding to children's developmental stages as well as to individual children's development.
 - Describing how s/he accommodates the needs of younger children to feel safe and secure
 - Describing how s/he helps older children develop their own sense of identity through greater independence and choice, planning activities for themselves, and the like.
- 2-3 Plans, organizes, and provides programming that meets the developmental needs of children by:
- Planning and adapting a wide range of activities (sports, games, art activities, etc.) which children of various ages can enjoy and find challenging but not frustrating.
 - Organizing a program environment that meets the developmental needs of children.
 - Providing sufficient program materials and equipment that are appropriate for the developmental stages of children using them.
- 2-4 Includes children of all ability levels, including those with special needs by:
- Providing activities and experiences that include children of all abilities
 - Providing opportunities for children with disabilities to interact with their peers as well as differently abled children
 - Challenging children with exceptional abilities
 - Using the expertise of parents as a resource for working with children with special needs.
 - Using the expertise of teachers, community-based organizations, psychologists that may include members of the Committee for Special Education at children's schools as a resource for working with children with special needs.

Competency Goal III

Out of School Environments

To Establish and Maintain a Safe, Healthy, Learning Environment

3. Functional Area: Safety

Candidate provides a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries.

Developmental Context:

One of the most essential services for school-age children is to ensure their safety and well-being. Indoor and outdoor areas should be free of dangerous conditions and materials. Adults should teach children about safety and comfort children when hurt. Adults should be attentive and have the skills and knowledge to prevent injuries and to handle emergencies, accidents, and injuries appropriately when they occur. In a safe environment, children will learn gradually to protect themselves and look out for others.

Competencies and Indicators

- 3-1 Follows NYS safety regulations as well as program policies and procedures designed to keep children safe.
- 3-2 Actively works to prevent injuries and harm to children by:
- Conducting safety checks (daily and monthly, indoor and outdoor);
 - Removing or repairing unsafe items;
 - Arranging the program space so there are clear traffic paths and exits
 - Designating separate areas for quiet and active play to avoid congestion and collisions
 - Supervises and interacts with children
 - Arranging the environment so that children are visible to staff
 - Using well-conceived sign-in and sign-out attendance procedures to ensure that children are supervised by staff or authorized family members.
 - Making developmentally appropriate supplies and equipment available to children, creating boundaries to protect children who may not yet have the skills and judgment to use certain materials or equipment safely.

- Following a daily schedule that provides time for active and quiet play so that children do not get overtired and have accidents
 - Maintaining appropriate child-adult ratios and group sizes, intervening immediately when children are involved in unsafe play, and involving children in making the program's safety rules
 - Explaining rules and procedures for sports and games before play begins
 - Modeling and reinforcing safety rules with children
- 3-3 Prepares to act quickly if an accident or injury should occur by
- Making sure there is an accessible telephone in working order.
 - Keeping safety equipment in good condition
 - Maintaining first-aid and safety supplies
 - Maintaining up-to-date emergency telephone numbers for all parents
 - Posting emergency phone numbers for children's parents, police, fire, ambulance, and poison control next to the telephone
 - Conducting fire drills frequently (minimum 1 per month) to prepare children and staff
 - Protecting and reassuring children while conducting an emergency drill according to established procedures
- 3-4 Responds quickly and calmly in event of an emergency, including:
- Explaining and following specific procedures when there is an accident or emergency
 - Responding quickly and calmly to children in distress
 - Recording injuries, accidents, and illnesses on a form to share with families and program supervisor.
- 3-5 Prevents, prepares, and is ready to intervene for children's safety while on field trips away from the program site by:
- Making sure there is an appropriate adult/child ratio
 - Actively supervising and interacting with children while on the field trip

NYS School-Age Care Credential

- Teaching children to observe safety rules when away from the program site
- Taking a well stocked first aid kit
- Taking emergency phone numbers for each child's parents, police, fire, ambulance, and poison control for the area being visited

4. Functional Area: Health

Candidate promotes good health and nutrition and provides an environment that contributes to the prevention of illness.

Developmental Context:

Good health involves sound medical and dental practices and good nutrition as well as positive prevention practices. Adults should model and encourage good health and nutrition habits with school-age children. Food should be nutritious, prepared carefully and served in a relaxed atmosphere. Prompt care should be given to school-age children who are or become ill or hurt. School-age children need a clean environment that is properly lighted, and heated or cooled. Indoor and outdoor areas should be free of materials or conditions that endanger children's health. Care of the child's physical needs communicates positive feelings about his/her value and influences the child's developing identity and feelings of self-worth. Parents and providers should exchange information about children's physical health frequently.

Competencies and Indicators

- 4-1 Follows NYS Child Care regulations that address health, sanitation, and food handling practices.
- 4-2 Models and teaches habits that promote good health and nutrition by:
- Actively avoiding use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, soft drinks, or excessive candy while with children.
 - Maintaining a positive, relaxed atmosphere to reduce tension and stress.
 - Washing hands often and always before or after food preparation or eating, after messy or outdoor activities, and after toileting and/or blowing nose.
 - Helping children learn ways to recognize, reduce, and cope with stress.
- 4-3 Maintains and makes accessible supplies that help children practice healthy habits:
- Placing tissues, paper towels, and soap within children's reach.
 - Keeping a supply of sanitary pads and tampons in the girls' bathroom and makes sure girls know where they are.
 - Encouraging children to drink lots of water, especially when active or weather is hot.

- 4-4 Acts to detect and prevent child maltreatment by:
- Describing the signs of possible child maltreatment
 - Demonstrating understanding of the applicable laws and regulations related to reporting child abuse and maltreatment
 - Being alert to changes in children's behavior that may signal abuse or maltreatment.
- 4-5 Maintains a high standard of cleanliness and sanitation practices by:
- Checking the facility daily for adequate ventilation and lighting, comfortable room temperature, and good sanitation.
 - Directs children to wash their hands using techniques recommended by the Centers for Disease Control before or after food preparation or eating, after messy or outdoor activities, and after toileting and/or blowing nose (or finding alternative methods for children to clean hands if running water is not immediately available.)
 - Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces before using for food preparation.
- 4-6 Is prepared to deal with medical emergencies or illness by:
- Having medical records accessible for children in case of medical emergencies.
 - Having emergency medical plans, permission to treat children,
 - Using universal precautions to prevent infections, especially regarding bodily fluids.
 - Regularly observing children for signs of illness.
- 4-7 Provides healthful, nutritious and pleasant snack and food experiences for children by:
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces before using for food preparation or eating area.
 - Providing opportunities for children to plan, prepare, and serve meals and snacks.
 - Offering self-service snacks so children can determine when, what, and how much to eat.

- Serving relaxed “family-style” meals and encouraging children to try new foods.
 - Using a flexible schedule so children can rest, relax, be active, and eat as needed.
- 4-8 Opens windows daily to let in fresh air, (if applicable).
- 4-9 Provides resources on health and hygiene; such as magazines, books, pamphlets, and visiting health professionals.

5. Functional Area: Out-of-School Environments

Candidate uses space, relationships, materials, and routines as resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration, and learning.

Developmental Context:

Children of all ages learn from their own experience and by imitation. Adults can guide and encourage children's learning by ensuring that the environment is emotionally supportive; invites active exploration, play and movement by children; and supports a broad array of experiences. A reliable routine together with a stimulating choice of materials, activities, and relationships enhances children's learning and development.

Competencies and Indicators

5-1 Separates interest areas so that simultaneous activities of different natures can take place by:

- Creating a variety of well-equipped, inviting, and responsive interest areas.
- Rotating interest areas to reflect changing skills and interests.
- Using furniture, tape, or floor covering to define interest area boundaries.
- Locating interest areas so that quiet and noisy activities are separate and children do not get in one another's way.
- Locating interest areas near resources (such as light and water) used in the area.
- Supporting older children as they create spaces designated for their use only.
- Seeking children's ideas and suggestions for arranging the environment.
- Setting up a self-serve snack area.
- Working with children to develop rules and limits related to using the environment.

- 5-2 Provides space in which children can enjoy quiet and privacy by:
- Offering a balance of simultaneous activity choices (active and quiet; indoor and outdoor; individual, small group, and large group).
 - Providing a quiet area with adequate lighting where children can do homework.
 - Providing appropriate materials (dictionaries, writing supplies, pencil sharpener, etc.) for homework assistance.
 - Providing comfortable indoor and outdoor areas where children can enjoy alone time
 - Providing areas that are soft and comfortable for children to sit or lie down.
- 5-3 Provides space for children to engage in active play by:
- Arranging for regular use of indoor and outdoor areas for large muscle play.
 - Adapting the environment, if necessary, to make it appropriate for children with special needs.
- 5-4 Provides materials which engage children's interests by:
- Providing materials that reflect diversity and show no bias.
 - Offering a variety of open-ended materials children can use in different ways.
 - Providing materials that allow children to be successful and provide appropriate challenges to encourage continued growth.
 - Offering a variety of materials and equipment to meet a wide range of skills.
 - Providing materials that build on interests children develop outside the program.
- 5-5 Establishes schedules and routines that give children freedom within structure by:
- Providing sufficient time in the schedule for children to carry out their plans and do long-term projects.

- Playing different roles; for example, leader, observer, listener, facilitator, adult friend, and participant.
- Managing transitions so children do not have to wait with nothing to do.
- Observing, talking with, listening to, and surveying children to determine their interests.
- Following a schedule that allows children opportunities to choose what they want to do.
- Allowing children to meet their personal needs on individual schedules.

5-6 Has a systematic storage plan and area by:

- Storing materials that are used together, near each other.
- Displaying materials on labeled shelves so children can choose what they want to do and return items when finished using them.
- Including sufficient time for clean up at end of morning, afternoon, and full-day sessions to return materials to their storage area.
- Using portable items such as baskets and carts to arrange materials in shared space.
- Involving children in setting up and dismantling the environment in shared space.
- Providing sufficient space for children to safely store their belongings and long-term projects or works in progress.

5-7 Demonstrates an ability to articulate and advocate for positive spaces for children in school-age care by:

- Coordinating with other programs that share space (school, child care center, etc.)
- Negotiating for adequate storage and access to space for active play, quiet and comfortable time, food preparation, etc.

Competency Goal IV: To Advance Physical and Intellectual Competence

6. Functional Area: Physical

Candidate provides a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote the physical development of school-age children.

Developmental Context:

Physical development is an essential part of the total development of school-age children. Developing physically includes using large and small muscles, coordinating movements, and using the senses. Large-motor development includes strengthening and coordinating the muscles and nervous system controlling large motions using the arms, legs, torso, and or whole body. Small-motor development involves the ability to control and coordinate small, specialized motions using the eyes, mouth, hands, and feet. Adults should provide material, equipment, and opportunities for indoor and outdoor activities that encourage this development and recognize and respect the wide differences in **developmental stages** in addition to **individual** rates of physical development.

Competencies and Indicators

- 6-1 Provides a variety of materials, equipment, and activities that:
- Challenge a wide range of physical capabilities
 - Accommodate different fine and gross motor skills
 - Children can explore on their own with follow-up from staff
 - Allow all children to develop and maintain physical fitness
 - Allow children to engage in relaxing activities (artwork, puzzles, legos or blocks)
- 6-2 Provides space and time for children to engage in active play every day.
- 6-3 Provides leadership and enthusiasm that encourages children's physical activity by:
- Observing and recording information about each child's physical strengths, interests, and needs.
 - Introducing children to games and activities that encourage physical development and cooperation.

- Encouraging children to keep track of their own progress rather than comparing themselves to others.
- Encouraging children when they are learning new skills and provides assistance upon request.
- Suggesting ways children can coordinate movement of their large and small muscles.
- Helping children develop an awareness of rhythm so they can coordinate their movements.
- Encouraging children to make up and organize their own games.
- Encouraging children to use their large muscles in daily routines.
- Introducing new games and activities regularly so children learn different ways to use their muscles.

6-4 Provides developmentally appropriate activities by:

- Planning and implements increasingly difficult activities in which small and large muscles are used.
- Offering children opportunities to learn real skills as well as to explore materials on their own.
- Providing alternatives so that children of different ages, sizes, and skills, can all find ways to engage safely in active play and in activities that promote fine development.
- Planning and implementing increasingly difficult activities in which large muscles are used and that promote development of physical skills used in sports and games.6-5 Makes sure that children take breaks from vigorous activity and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

7. Functional Area: Cognitive

Candidate provides hands-on activities, experiences, and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of school-age children.

Developmental Context:

Exploring and trying to understand the world is natural and necessary for school-age children's cognitive or intellectual development. As school-age children learn and grow, their thinking capacities expand and become more flexible. Fun activities - some that engage children in a process and others that encourage them to produce a product - help build children's thinking capacity. Adults should support and guide this process by responding to children's questions with information and enthusiasm and by using family routines and experiences as learning opportunities, and providing exposure to play, reading, writing, riddles and jokes, dance, drama, music, art, and science. Cognitive growth also requires healthy development in other areas: consistent physical growth, secure emotional behavior, and positive social interaction.

Competencies and Indicators

7-1 Creates an environment where learning means fun by:

- Organizing fun activities - some that engage children in a process and others that encourage them to develop a product - in a wide variety of topical areas including reading, writing, the arts, and science.
- Offering children opportunities to experience, do, and explore.
- Encouraging children's emerging sense of humor by suggesting they write and share riddles, jokes and limericks.

7-2 Encourages children to be in charge of their own learning by:

- Offering children space and time to develop and carry out their plans.
- Providing open-ended materials which children can explore and use in many different ways.
- Soliciting, accepting, and respecting children's ideas, suggestions, and solutions.
- Following a schedule that allows children to choose what they want to do and provides enough time for long-term projects [especially older children.]

7-3 Encourages children to develop their inter- and intra-personal intelligences (knowing themselves and others) by:

- Encouraging children to make decisions and solve problems on their own, without adult assistance [gradually giving children more freedom to do this as they demonstrate their decision-making and problem solving skills]
- Involving children [especially older children or those who have long-term experience in the program] in planning and evaluating the program's routines and activities.
- Involving children in setting rules and establishing procedures for the program's operations.
- Allowing children plenty of time to talk to each other and to the staff.
- Providing opportunities for children to demonstrate their growing cognitive skills and apply them to new situations.

7-4 Taps into children's desire to explore adult skills to make and produce things by:

- Supplying materials that allow children to pursue and develop new skills and special talents.
- Providing opportunities for children to have hands-on experiences, to learn by doing. For example, sculpture, photography, dance, drama, etc.
- Providing opportunities for children [especially children aged 8-11] to participate in and learn about their community.

7-5 Helps children develop their language skills by:

- Offering a wide range of books and magazines that reflect children's diverse interests [and meets children's diverse reading abilities].
- Asks questions to stimulate children's thinking (recall, problem solving with one right answer, and problem solving with many right answers.)
- Asking "what if" questions to help children predict consequences and understand cause and effect.
- Asking questions to help children learn to make judgments (favorites, highlights, etc.)

- Talking to and questioning children about what they are observing and learning [regardless of their developmental stages but tailoring their questions to be neither too challenging or too easy for children's cognitive development.]
- 7-6 Balances children's academic needs with their needs to relax, have snacks, learn new skills, get exercise, and develop social skills by:
- Offering a balance of homework assistance with appropriate fun learning activities to develop and strengthen skills
 - Encouraging learning and academic self-discipline as part of - but not the only element of the daily routine.
 - Designating a homework area and responding to children's requests for assistance.
- 7-7 Helps children develop curiosity about science and the natural world by:
- Creating discovery boxes on topics such as magnetism, static electricity, solar energy, and weather.
 - Providing materials that help children learn to classify, sequence, and understand cause and effect.
 - Planning activities that allow children to explore natural science and the outdoor environment.
 - Introducing children to the steps in the scientific method.
- 7-8 Exposes children to experiences involving new information, ideas, and concepts [appropriate to their stage of development.] by:
- Using own special skills and talents to share with children.
 - Reaching out to community resources to expose children to meaningful new experiences.

8. Functional Area: Communication

Candidate actively communicates with school-age children and provides opportunities and support for school-age children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.

Developmental Context:

Communication between people can take many forms, including spoken words or sounds, gestures, eye and body movements, and touch. Children need to understand verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Adults can help school-age children develop their communication skills by encouraging communication and providing ample opportunity for children to listen, interact, and express themselves freely with other children and adults.

Competencies and Indicators

- 8-1 Models positive communication skills in interactions with other staff members and parents as well as with children
- Listening attentively to what children have to say and shows respect for their ideas.
 - Accepting children's use of slang and popular expressions while serving as a model for standard use of language.
 - Using the different languages spoken by children and their families as a sign of respect and to enrich the program's language environment.
 - Determining the needs and opinions of children, program staff, families, and school staff in deciding whether homework help will be provided and, if so, the type of homework help that can be offered.
- 8-2 Provides materials that encourage language development activities by:
- Providing props, costumes, and other materials that encourage dramatic play, making up skits, and puppetry.
 - Providing (or arranges for use of) audio and videotape equipment children can use to record their storytelling, plays, skits, music and other creations.
 - Stocking an area with materials that encourage writing such as pens, pencils, paper, bookbinding materials, and a computer, if available.

- Offering materials and activities that respond to children's individual and developmental skills and interests. Providing materials, time, and space for children to make up their own games and activities.
- Including reading and writing materials in all interest areas (for example, pencils and paper in the science and nature area so children can record the results of their experiments.)
- Including books, magazines, and reference materials in the quiet area in response to children's interests [and reading abilities that] and exposes them to new ideas and topics.
- Encouraging children to read and write for pleasure, not because they must complete assigned work
- Encouraging children to share folklore, oral traditions, stories, songs, and books that reflect their family backgrounds.

8-3 Builds opportunities for children to develop and use communication skills into all program activities, not just those specifically related to reading, writing, and speaking by:

- Using knowledge of developmental stages to promote communication; using printing or cursive writing on signs, bulletin boards, and other written materials based on the age of the children who use the area.
- Keeping in touch with the elementary school attended by children in the school-age program to find out what materials and activities the program could offer to build on or enrich the experiences offered in school.
- Using group meetings as opportunities for children to share their ideas, raise concerns, and discuss solutions.
- Planning trips and special activities to expand children's language skills and interests.
- Teaching children communication skills they can use throughout their lives.
- Arranging the environment so there are places where children can work, play, and talk in small groups.
- Helping children plan and implement special interest clubs that use or explore communication skills, for example, publishing a newspaper, planting a garden, discussing favorite books, or learning about television production.
- Helping children find the words to express their ideas and feelings.

- 8-4 Asks open-ended questions to encourage children to think and express their ideas by:
- 8-5 Observing children's nonverbal cues (for example, body language, dramatic play, drawings, stories) and uses the cues to ask questions about their ideas and feelings.
- 8-6 Introduces more complex communication skills such as assertiveness, conflict resolution, and refusal skills as children develop and demonstrate a grasp of more basic skills.
- Helping children express their feelings and discuss problems verbally rather than use aggression to solve a problem.
 - Reminding children to review the rules before beginning a game or sport so all players can agree on how to play the game and keep score.
 - Introducing children to brainstorming so they can use it as a problem-solving tool.

9. Functional Area: Creative

Candidate provides opportunities that stimulate school-age children to play with sound, rhythm, languages, materials, space, and ideas in individual ways and to express their creative abilities.

Developmental Context:

All school-age children are imaginative and have creative potential. They need opportunities to develop and express these capacities. Creative play serves many purposes for children in their cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development. Adults should support the development of children's creative impulses by respecting creative play and by providing a wide variety of activities and materials that encourage spontaneous expression and expand children's imagination.

Competencies and Indicators

9-1 Models and offers enthusiastic leadership for creative thinking and projects by:

- Sharing his or her interests, taking risks, and solving problems
- Involving community resources and volunteers to expose children to a variety of creative processes
- Demonstrating what it looks like to take risks, learn from mistakes, and try again.
- Encouraging children to take risks, learn from their mistakes, and try again.
- Valuing the characteristics that make each child a unique individual.
- Accepting and valuing each child's unique creative expression and encouraging children to express their ideas and feelings.
- Helping children try out many new experiences in a spirit of discovery and curiosity.

9-2 Creates an environment that encourages children's creativity by:

- Arranging the environment so children can spread out, explore, and be messy.
- Surrounding children with examples of creative work.
- Providing a variety of open-ended materials with which children [of various developmental stages] can do many things.

- Offering materials that allow children to explore subjects and interests introduced at school or through experiences such as field trips.
 - Storing materials and equipment where children can easily select, replace, and care for them without adult assistance.
 - Providing sufficient storage space for projects and creations which cannot be completed in one day [or negotiates for such space if program area is in a school or otherwise shared with another agency.]
 - Allowing creations to stay in place for several days so children can continue using them and possibly expand them.
- 9-3 Provides sufficient time in the daily schedule for children to make plans and carry them out.
- Following a daily schedule that includes blocks of time when children are free to organize their own games and activities without adult involvement.
- 9-4 Introduces new, creative processes, ideas, and activities to children by:
- Providing sensory experiences.
 - Extending children's dramatic play, introducing prop boxes.
 - Planning a variety of cultural activities that introduce children to the arts, such as drama, dance, music, literature, film, painting, drawing, and sculpture.
 - Selecting activities that encourage more creativity than coloring books, prepackaged craft projects, and dittos.
 - Allowing children to develop and carry out their own plans.
- 9-5 Encourages children to develop their creative abilities by:
- Helping children learn to use both convergent [to reach a single correct solution] and divergent processes [to reach as many different solutions as possible to stimulate] creative thinking.
 - Asking a variety of [developmentally appropriate] questions that encourage children to think about things in new ways.
 - Helping children understand that it takes hard work and practice to develop their talents.

- Helping children develop specific skills they can use in their creative work.
- Responding to children's ideas for projects and activities.

***Competency Goal V:
To Support Social and Emotional Development and
Provide Positive Guidance***

10. Functional Area: Self

Candidate provides physical and emotional security for each school-age child and helps each school-age child to know, accept, take pride in himself or herself and develop a sense of independence.

Developmental Context:

All children need a physically and emotionally secure environment that supports their developing self-knowledge, self-control, and self-esteem, and at the same time encourages respect for the feelings and rights of others. Knowing one's self includes knowing about one's body, feelings, and abilities. It also means identifying one's self as a girl or boy and a member of a family and a larger cultural community. Accepting and taking pride in one's self comes from experiencing success and being accepted by others as a unique individual. Self-esteem develops as children master new abilities, experience success as well as failure, and realize their effectiveness in handling increasingly challenging demands in their own ways.

Competencies and Indicators

10-1 Respects the individuality of children by:

- Showing them in many ways that they are appreciated, valued, and enjoyed.
- Observes children to identify what makes them unique and lets them know their individuality is valued.
- Working with colleagues to make sure each child receives the individual attention he or she needs
- Allowing children to choose what they want to do and to choose not to participate in an activity.

10-2 Helps children identify, plan, and pursue their own interests and talents by:

- Identifying children's interests through observation, surveys, and conversation
- Using the information to plan activities and provide materials.
- Offering a wide variety of activities that do not limit children's options because of individual differences

- Providing children with time and resources needed to pursue their interests or master a skill.
- 10-3 Helps children learn about and appreciate a variety of cultures and ethnic groups, including their own by:
- Making no biased remarks
- 10-4 Provides opportunities for children to experience success and then encourages them to see and acknowledge their own progress and successes.
- Using genuine praise and recognition to acknowledge children's efforts and accomplishments.
 - Helping children gain the skills they need to complete a task and repeatedly experience success so they can overcome fear of failure.
 - Letting children know they are cared for by offering a gentle, physical or nonverbal contact—a hug, a touch, a smile.
 - Modeling recognition of personal efforts and accomplishments through self-praise.
- 10-5 Encourages children to solve their own problems, intervening only when it seems they can't find a solution or when someone might get hurt by:
- Helping children deal with setbacks by accepting their feelings and failures and responding respectfully.
 - Listening carefully to children and takes their concerns seriously without interrupting, judging, or giving unasked-for advice.
- 10-6 Involves children in activities that help children learn positive social values by:
- Involving children in the program's daily operations and weekly chores (responsibility).
 - Allowing children to use their growing independence in safe and age-appropriate ways.
 - Offering competitive sports and games [as well as cooperative games] that help children learn to value fairness, cooperation, and personal growth.
 - Providing opportunities for children to develop citizenship and leadership skills.

11. Functional Area: Social

Candidate helps each school-age child feel accepted in the group, helps children learn to communicate and get along with others, and encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among school-age children and adults.

Developmental Context:

Children need to develop social skills that help them work and play cooperatively and productively with other children and adults. To do this, children need to feel secure themselves, value other people, and enjoy positive social interaction. Valuing diversity is a social skill that staff must model for children as well as seek out opportunities to help children increase their own sense of belonging and better understand the diversity in the world around them.

Competencies and Indicators

11-1 Models positive ways to interact with other people of all ages by:

- Identifying their own feelings, when appropriate, to model acceptable ways to express feelings.

11-2 Employs observation skills to understand the social needs of each child by:

- Observing and listening to learn how each child relates to others in the program.
- Observing and assisting children who have difficulty being accepted by their peers.

11-3 Helps children develop and practice the skills to get along with others by:

- Accepting children's feelings while helping them learn to control their actions.
- Encouraging children to value what makes each person a unique individual.
- Setting up an area that encourages children to socialize (soft furniture, music, magazines, and books).
- Providing enough time in the schedule for self-selected activities so children can socialize.
- Providing books [appropriate for a variety of reading abilities and levels] that help children deal with their feelings about friendship, conflicts, ethnic diversity, and similar topics.

- Providing a variety of props and prop boxes that encourage children to explore their social world through dramatic play.

11-4 Helps children develop conflict management skills by:

- Teaching children how to use conflict resolution techniques to resolve their differences.
- Using group meetings to solve problems that involve all the children.

11-5 Builds a sense of community among children and staff by:

- Planning multi-age activities that encourage cooperation and allow older children to play the role of leader and mentor.
- Encouraging children to help each other.
- Accepting children's need to establish their own identities as they use slang and create a culture separate from adults.
- Involving children in establishing rules that encourage use of social skills.
- Providing opportunities for children to belong to groups.

11-6 Helps children feel part of the larger community by:

- Offering opportunities for children to be involved in the community.
- Inviting community members to share their special knowledge and skills with the children.

12. Functional Area: Guidance

Candidate provides a supportive environment in which children can learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group.

Developmental Context:

Knowing what behavior is appropriate or acceptable in a situation is an important skill. Children develop this understanding when consistent limits and realistic expectations of their behavior are clearly and positively defined. Understanding and following simple rules can help children develop self-control. Children feel more secure when they know what is expected of them and when staff and parents' expectations realistically take into account each child's development and needs.

Competencies and Indicators

12-1 Creates an environment of respect where it is not acceptable to hurt anyone by:

- Establishing ground rules with the children.
- Involving children in setting limits and making rules.

12-2 Guides children's behavior in positive manner by:

- Relying on cooperative and respectful guidance and discipline methods rather than coercive and authoritarian methods.
- Speaking to children with the same tone and respect used with adults.
- Redirecting children from inappropriate to appropriate behavior (for example, from play wrestling in the quiet area to playing a game in the gym).
- Having reasonable expectations of behavior based on ages and abilities of the children.
- Considering the possible reasons for the child's behavior.
- Discussing children's misbehavior in private conversations.
- Offering assistance to children who are out of control.
- Providing creative outlets for expressing strong feelings.
- Stating directions and reminding children of rules in positive terms.

- Using genuine, positive praise when children use appropriate behavior

12-3 Uses positive problem solving and problem prevention methods by:

- Allowing children to experience the natural and logical consequences of their behavior. [when safe and appropriate to do so.]
- Listening to and accepting children's angry feelings while helping them understand the consequences of expressing those feelings inappropriately.
- Modeling appropriate ways to express negative feelings.
- Working with parents to help a child with a problem express his or her feelings in acceptable ways.
- Talking to children about their day at school, their friends, their concerns, and their feelings.
- Arranging the environment to encourage appropriate behavior (for example, creating clear traffic patterns so children don't get in each other's way) and eliminating safety hazards.

12-4 Follows a daily schedule that allows children freedom within structure by:

- Allowing children to choose their own activities
- Involving children in planning activities and selecting materials and equipment.
- Planning some games and activities that encourage cooperation rather than competition.

12-5 Helps children develop and practice positive conflict management skills by:

- Teaching children how to use conflict resolution techniques to resolve their differences.
- Giving children opportunities to handle their disagreements without adult assistance.
- Holding group meetings during which children can raise concerns and grievances and work together to solve problems.

12-6 Communicates discipline policies clearly by:

- Knowing and following NYS regulations regarding discipline policies.
- Explaining written discipline policies that are shared with parents.

Competency Goal VI: To Establish Positive and Productive Relationships with Families

13. Functional Area: Families

Candidate maintains an open, friendly and cooperative relationship with each school-age child's family, encourages their involvement in the program, and supports the school-age child's relationships with his or her family.

Developmental Context:

Today's families take many different forms. Each family has primary responsibility for its own children, and parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or others may take on the primary care-giving role. For that reason, the terms family and parents are used interchangeably to refer to the caregiver(s) of the family's choice. The family and the school-age staff member become partners who communicate respectfully and openly for the mutual benefit of the children, the family, and the staff member. Staff members also recognize that parenthood and care giving is a developmental process, and can support family members in this role.

Competencies and Indicators

13-1 Demonstrates understanding that it is important to establish a relationship with children's parents/families as they are the primary caretaker of their child and the most important individual in a child's life by:

- Demonstrating respect for families and their input.
- Encouraging families to visit the program at any time.
- Showing respect for diversity in family make-up and culture.
- Maintaining confidentiality about all children and families.
- Learning the names of family members and something about them to build trust.

13-2 Develops a system of regular communication with parents and families by:

- Holding parent-staff conferences to share information about each child's progress and to make plans for the future.
- Using a variety of communication strategies to inform parents and families about the program.

- Recognizing that parental/family involvement is not restricted to formal meetings, but happens at every point of interaction.
 - Sharing interesting, positive information about each child's day.
 - Asking families to share information about their child's interests (at intake and periodically updating) and using this information to individualize the program.
 - Giving families information about their child's routines; for example, that the child didn't eat a snack.
 - Holding regularly scheduled parent meetings and informal family events at times that are convenient for most family members.
- 13-3 Providing information on the program and program activities as they relate to the developmental stages of children by:
- Providing an orientation for new parents/families so they can get to know staff and learn what children do each day.
 - Sharing information about herself/himself with families to help them feel comfortable with the person who is caring for their child and professional background.
- 13-4 Encourages parent/family involvement in working with children in the program by:
- Offering a variety of ways to participate in the program to accommodate parents' and families' varied schedules, skills, and interests
 - Letting families know their contributions are appreciated.
 - Involving families often in making decisions about their child's activities at the program.
 - Suggesting ways to coordinate the child's program and home experiences.
- 13-5 Works constructively with parents to resolve behavior issues by:
- Meeting with parents privately when there is an issue or problem with a child's behavior, avoiding sharing negative information in front of other staff, parents, or children
 - Responding to families' questions, and waiting to be asked before offering advice.

- Helping parents and families develop their own strategies for handling difficult behavior.
- Working with parents and families to develop a team approach and strategies to work effectively with the child.

13-6 Serves as a resource to families by:

- Surveying families' needs and interests and provides appropriate workshops and resources.
- Recognizing when parents and families are under stress and offers additional support.
- Introducing families to others who live in the same neighborhood or have children of similar ages.
- Notifying a supervisor when it seems that families need professional help.

***Competency Goal VII:
To Ensure a Well-Run Purposeful Program Responsive
to Participant Needs***

14. Functional Area: Operational Program Management

Candidate is a manager who uses all available resources to ensure an effective operation. The Candidate is a competent organizer, planner, record-keeper, communicator, and a cooperative co-worker.

Developmental Context:

Running an effective program requires a systematic and responsive approach. A systematic approach means that the Candidate can determine the needs of the program, families and children; can make plans based on those needs; and can keep accurate records of needs, plans, and practices. Such an approach should be applied to keeping records of attendance, health status, and required forms. It should include specific plans for meeting the needs of children and coordinating communication among involved adults through written information, meetings with parents and resource persons, and frequent informal discussions.

Competencies and Indicators

14-1 Engages parents and families in developing program for children by:

- Asking parents and families for information about their children's interests and activities.
- Sharing observation information with families and encourages them to help their children grow and develop.
- Using parent/family surveys and open-ended questionnaires to collect information about children and to evaluate the program.

14-2 Works with staff to ensure program excellence by:

- Participating in regular staff meetings to plan and evaluate the program.
- Conducting periodic joint observations to ensure accuracy.
- Discussing observation records with colleagues when planning for individuals and for the group.
- Appreciating and using the strengths of other team members.
- Meeting and talking with colleagues and the supervisor to provide input on program issues
- Providing substitute staff with adequate information about the program.

14-3 Develops a responsive high quality program by:

- Involving children in planning and evaluating the program.
- Changing aspects of the program to address individual cultures, interests, needs, and abilities.
- Coordinating with appropriate resources [within the program as well as in the community.]
- Conducting periodic surveys to identify children's interests and to encourage them to evaluate the program.
- Identifying shared interests and helping children form clubs to explore them.
- Using creative thinking skills in planning and problem-solving skills.

14-4 Demonstrates understanding of program policies by:

- Stating program policies and procedures and/or knowing where to find them.
- Following the program's system for accurate and timely record keeping.
- Answering parents' and families' questions about program policies and procedures; refers to the supervisor when appropriate
- Reviewing program policies before starting a new task.

14-5 Manages business operations by:

- Completing management tasks according to a schedule.
- Developing a contract with parents/families so that responsibility of the program and of the parents/families is clearly defined.
- Administering program, budget, and personnel appropriate to staff position.