



Maine Director 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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Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network
PO Box 9300 | Portland, ME 04104-9300
1-888-900-0055 | <https://mrtq.org>

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Section 1: Purpose and History

The Maine Director Credential has been developed with the understanding that a Director's ability to work effectively with teaching staff and families, to use evaluative tools to support continuous quality improvement, and to effectively manage all aspects of program operations are fundamentally linked to education, experience, and skills related to professionalism. The Maine Director Credential has been designed to promote and incorporate all of these integral factors. Critical to the design of the credential is the identification of competency areas that assure a Director's ability to guide the instructional practices of teachers, while creating systems that assure smooth program functioning and strong family and community partnerships.

The Maine Director Credential incorporates the Core Knowledge Areas and Competency Areas that define what it is the teachers of young children need to know and understand about working with children and their families, as well as how to demonstrate competency and skill in such areas. The Competency Areas for the Maine Director Credential expand upon those required in all Maine Credentials (see Section 2) to include additional Leadership Competencies specific to the skills and abilities required of leaders in the field of early childhood and out-of-school time programming. The Maine Director Credential is designed to bring recognition for effective leadership and management and is awarded to individuals who are able to document the specific training, knowledge, experience, and professionalism required by the Credential.

Section 2: Overview of the Credential Process

The Maine Director Credential is appropriate for experienced directors, administrators, or lead staff in licensed or regulated child care facilities who are responsible for the day-to-day operation, supervision, and administration of the program. The term "Director" represents a variety of professional role titles that may include: Program Director, Supervisor, Owner/Director, Administrator, or Education Supervisor. For the purpose of this document, the term "Director" will be used throughout.

This section provides an overview of the components of the Maine Director Credential, including the requirements, application process, and available supports.

1. All Maine Credentials are based upon competencies derived from the following Core Knowledge Areas:

- a. Child development
- b. Healthy and safe environments
- c. Relationships with families
- d. Guidance
- e. Observation and assessment
- f. Developmentally appropriate practice
- g. Individual and cultural diversity
- h. Business and professional development

2. The Maine Director Credential includes Leadership Competencies designed to reflect the skills and abilities specific to those in leadership roles in the field of early childhood or out-of-school time programming. These additional competencies are incorporated into the Maine Director Credential requirements. The Leadership Competencies are:

- a. Leadership
 - i. Leadership skills: ethical conduct, mission and vision, communication skills, personal and professional awareness, adult development and learning, mentoring and coaching
 - ii. Program evaluation: stakeholder engagement, quality improvement, strategic planning
- b. Management
 - i. Human resources: employment policies, orientation/supervision/evaluation, staff development
 - ii. Center operations: facility management, fiscal management, information technology, marketing and public relations, compliance and legal issues, ADA and IDEA
 - iii. Health, nutrition, and safety: implementing policies and procedures, pediatric first aid, abuse and neglect training, maintaining a safe environment
- c. Children and programming
 - i. Developmentally appropriate practice: curriculum, assessment, partnering with families, children with special needs, classroom management

- d. Families and community
 - i. Diverse family systems and cultural competence: recruitment/orientation/retention, community resources
- e. Standards of quality
 - i. Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network: Registry, training
 - ii. NAEYC accreditation for center-based care, NAFCC for family child care, COA for out-of-school time programs
 - iii. *Quality for ME*: Maine's quality rating and improvement system
 - iv. Maine Child Care Licensing
 - v. Early learning and development standards: Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards (MELDS), *Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development* and/or Infant Toddler MELDS
 - vi. Advocacy

3. To earn the Maine Director Credential, Applicants must:

- a. Meet the formal education, experience, and training requirements.
- b. Be a member of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.
- c. Submit a completed application and payment of \$25 to MRTQ PDN.
- d. Submit a Portfolio that demonstrates the required competencies, three letters of recommendation attesting to the Applicant's leadership skills and ability to work with staff and families, and staff surveys completed by all supervisees (see Appendix F). *Note: for Applicants who do not supervise staff, please contact MRTQ PDN for a waiver on this requirement.*
- e. Demonstrate completion of ten hours of Professional Growth Activities, as defined by Step 3 with *Quality for ME*.
- f. Participate in an interview with a Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network staff member or designee.

4. Evaluation and credential decisions are based upon:

- a. The Applicant meeting all education, experience, and training requirements.
- b. Successful completion of the Portfolio.
- c. Successful documentation of ten hours of Professional Growth Activities.
- d. Satisfactory completion of interview.

5. Decisions on awarding the Maine Director 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 on a quarterly basis to review applications. The schedule for review is:

Application received by:	Reviewed during:	Applicant notified of CRT's decision:
January 1 st	January	January 31 st
April 1 st	April	April 30 th
July 1 st	July	July 31 st

Application received by:	Reviewed during:	Applicant notified of CRT's decision:
October 1 st	October	October 31 st

- b. Applicants with completed and approved materials will be contacted regarding an on-site interview and distribution of staff surveys (if applicable).
- c. Applicants are given 60 days to revise any Portfolio entry that does not demonstrate competency or to submit missing materials.
- d. Credential decisions may be appealed. If awarding of a Maine Director Credential is denied, Applicants may submit an appeal in writing to MRTQ PDN.

6. The Maine Director Credential must be renewed by documenting:

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

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

- a. 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 interview.
- b. On-site consultation is also available to practitioners pursuing the Maine Director 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 Director Credential, all Applicants must provide evidence of completion of educational, training, and work/volunteer experience requirements.

Registry Membership

All Applicants for the Maine Director Credential must be 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:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Have at least a high school diploma/GED/HiSet

Training Requirements

Within **five** years of the date of application, Applicants must have completed the following MRTQ PDN Core Knowledge trainings:

- *Maine Child Care Leadership Institute I: Building the Foundation for Quality* (30 hours)
- *Maine Child Care Leadership Institute II: Leadership in Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time Programs Today* (30 hours)
- *Maine Child Care Leadership Institute III: Transforming Leaders and Programs* (30 hours)
- *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)
- **CHOOSE ONE:** *Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards* (30 hours), *Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development* (30 hours), *Infant Toddler MELDS* (30 hours), or *Links to Learning* (45 hours)
- **CHOOSE ONE:** *Inclusive Child Care* (30 hours), *Curriculum and Development for Preschool Children* (30 hours), *Caring for Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families* (30 hours), *Working with School Age Children and Youth* (30 hours), *Creating Inclusive Youth Development Settings* (30 hours), OR (take both to total 30 hours) *Social and Emotional Learning Birth to 5* (18 hours) and *Collaborating with Others to Support Inclusion* (12 hours)

Complete training descriptions are listed in Section 4 of this packet. Alternative options for meeting the training/educational requirements are listed in Appendix D.

Work/Volunteer Experience Requirements

Applicants must:

- Document at least three years of experience working in a regulated early childhood or out-of-school time setting. "Regulated" programs are either licensed or operating under a public agency, such as a public school.

Alternative pathways for meeting eligibility requirements are considered by MRTQ PDN on an individual basis. Please see the Appendix D for a complete description.

To help you organize and track your progress, you can use the following checklist that lists all of the eligibility requirements for the Maine Director Credential. *This checklist is for your use and does not need to be included in your Portfolio.*

Maine Director Credential Eligibility Requirements Checklist	
Requirement	Date Completed
Maine Roads to Quality Registry membership	
Minimum requirements: <input type="checkbox"/> High school diploma/GED/HiSet <input type="checkbox"/> At least 21 years of age	
Training requirements (see Appendix D for alternative options): <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Maine Child Care Leadership Institute I: Building the Foundation for Quality</i> (30 hours) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Maine Child Care Leadership Institute II: Leadership in Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time Programs Today</i> (30 hours) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Maine Child Care Leadership Institute III: Transforming Leaders and Programs</i> (30 hours) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Your Professional Development Portfolio</i> (9 hours) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> CHOOSE ONE: <i>Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards</i> (30 hours), <i>Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development</i> (30 hours), <i>Infant Toddler MELDS</i> (30 hours), or <i>Links to Learning</i> (45 hours) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> CHOOSE ONE: <i>Inclusive Child Care</i> (30 hours), <i>Curriculum and Development for Preschool Children</i> (30 hours), <i>Caring for Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families</i> (30 hours), <i>Working with School Age Children and Youth</i> (30 hours), <i>Creating Inclusive Youth Development Settings</i> (30 hours) OR (take both to total 30 hours) <i>Social and Emotional Learning Birth to 5</i> (18 hours) and <i>Collaborating with Others to Support Inclusion</i> (12 hours) _____	
Document three years of experience in a regulated child care or out-of-school time setting.	
Notes/Questions/Reminders:	

Section 4: Training Descriptions

The Maine Director Credential requires a minimum of 159 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Core Knowledge Training. *Alternative options are listed in Appendix D.*

Leadership Trainings

Child Care Leadership Institute I: Building the Foundation for Quality (30 hours)

This training covers theory and legality as related to operating a center-based or out-of-school time program, the essential skills of staff hiring and supervision, family communication, professionalism, and self-survival within the art of program administration. Employing real-life case studies and scenarios, the training moves participants through the process of directing a center with increasingly difficult crisis resolution presented in each session. As the curriculum builds in complexity, lecture and resources will be provided to guide participants through the work.

Child Care Leadership Institute II: Leadership in Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time Programs Today (30 hours)

This training builds upon topics introduced in Child Care Leadership Institute I and is specifically oriented toward practitioners who are interested in expanding their leadership skills while working through the intricacies of directing a center-based or out-of-school time program. Concentrates on the issues of leadership, supervision, communication, and organizational climate. Designed to guide an established director in assessment and refinement of leadership style, facilitative work with staff teams, and continued growth in leadership abilities.

Child Care Leadership Institute III: Transforming Leaders and Programs (30 hours)

This training builds upon topics introduced in Child Care Leadership Institutes I and II and is specifically oriented toward practitioners who are interested in expanding their leadership skills and becoming advocates for young children and their families.

Additional Required Training

Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)

This training gives an introduction to creating a professional portfolio for the individual – the what, why, and how. Participants will gain an understanding of how and why a portfolio promotes professionalism, learn the components of a professional portfolio, and begin to develop their own professional portfolio, including a philosophy statement, résumé, and evidence that supports their competence as a professional.

Options for Additional Core Knowledge Training

CHOOSE ONE FROM THIS SECTION:

Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development (30 hours)

This training is designed to guide practitioners through the use of the document Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers in their program.

Infant Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards (MELDS) (30 hours)

This training is designed to guide practitioners through the use of the document Infant Toddler MELDS in their program.

Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards (30 hours)

This training is designed to guide practitioners through the use of the document Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards in their program.

Links to Learning (45 hours)

This training provides tools for creating afterschool programs that effectively connect home, school, afterschool, peers and the community. The content builds on the latest research on topics such as resiliency, homework support, and youth engagement.

CHOOSE FROM THIS SECTION (one 30 hour training OR the 30 hour combination):

Inclusive Child Care (30 hours)

This training covers a wide range of topics to help practitioners understand and promote inclusion in early childhood programs.

Curriculum and Development for Preschool Children (30 hours)

This training covers planning and implementing curriculum for all preschool children, regardless of their abilities.

Caring for Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families (30 hours)

This training covers the unique aspects of caring for infants and toddlers, including establishing relationships with families, understanding temperament, developing curriculum for infants and toddlers, and creating welcoming environments.

Working with School Age Children and Youth (30 hours)

This training covers the aspects of caring for school age children in out-of-school time settings. Topics covered include developing positive relationships, planning curriculum, health and safety, and adolescent development.

Creating Inclusive Youth Development Settings (30 hours)

This curriculum is designed to introduce the participant to planning, developing, and implementing curriculum to meet the unique needs of all school-age children and youth. Topics to be covered in this course include: an introduction to inclusion, legal requirements for including all children, family supports, universal design, curriculum design, specific disabilities, collaboration among partners, challenging behaviors, and specific helpful resources.

Combination Option to Equal 30 Hours:

Social and Emotional Learning Birth to 5 (18 hours)

This training covers some of the fundamental aspects of social and emotional development and learning, focusing on children birth through age 5. It will cover information about developmental milestones, attachment, self-regulation, temperament, executive function and the importance of relationships and play for healthy social and emotional development.

Social and emotional development is a lifelong process. In this training we embrace the infant mental health perspective of promoting, sustaining and restoring social and emotional health for children through our relationships.

Collaborating with Others to Support Inclusion (12 hours)

Have you ever been confused by the alphabet soup of all the team members working with families: CDS, IEP, IFSP, CBHS, CSHN, Section 28, etc.? Working as a team to support children with disabilities can sometimes be a challenge and we might sometimes wonder about the right things to say and do. In this 12-hour training we will discuss strategies for collaborating with both families and other professionals when it comes to caring for children with disabilities, team building strategies, communication styles, and conflict resolution skills.

Training information, including the schedule and registration, can be found on MRTQ PDN's Statewide Online Training Calendar: <https://ececaldarmaine.org>.

Section 5: The Portfolio

Applicants for the Maine Director 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 will be 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 trainings, nothing is saved by the instructor or by MRTQ PDN – it is the Applicant's responsibility to keep and organize all work. It is recommended that Applicants save electronic versions of their work to facilitate updating of materials before adding them to the final Portfolio.
- All training and application materials for the Maine Director Credential should utilize respectful "person-first" language. (See the following resource for additional information about using "person-first" language: https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/pdf/disabilityposter_photos.pdf)
- 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. 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.
- 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 use 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:

- The Applicant's Personal Philosophy Statement describing their approach to leadership in early childhood and/or out-of-school time settings (maximum of one page)
- The Applicant's résumé (maximum of two pages)
- The Applicant's MRTQ PDN Professional Development Profile

Section 2: Competency Areas

In this section the Applicant will present evidence of competency in each of the competency areas. The outline below should guide the writing and presentation of this section.

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
<p>1. Leadership</p> <p><i>Leadership skills and knowledge relate to the broad plan of helping an organization clarify and affirm values, set goals, articulate a vision, and chart a course of action to achieve that vision.</i></p>	<p>A. Leadership Skills</p> <p>1.A.1. Ethical conduct: adheres to and integrates ethical conduct as outlined in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct</p> <p>1.A.2. Mission and vision: the ability to identify, articulate, and carry out an early childhood or out-of-school time program's mission and vision.</p> <p>1.A.3. Communication skills: knowledge of the mechanics of writing, the ability to use written language to effectively communicate, and knowledge of oral communication techniques.</p>	<p>1.A Show that knowledge of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is an expectation for all program staff. Your evidence might be a pre-service agenda, staff meeting or workshop agenda, or an orientation checklist.</p> <p>Write a brief statement describing how the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct has guided your role as a leader.</p> <p>1.B Part 1: Describe how program evaluation happens at your program. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible, • What is the timeline, • What tools are used,

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
	<p>1.A.4. Personal and professional awareness: has knowledge of one's own beliefs and values, development of a personal philosophy of leadership, demonstrates ongoing professional development.</p> <p>1.A.5. Adult development and learning: knowledge of adult learning styles and development, ability to provide staff with resources, support, and guidance in professional development.</p> <p>1.A.6. Mentoring and coaching: the ability to be a reflective leader and utilize a variety of techniques to mentor and coach staff with the goal of developing professional commitment in teachers, thereby improving the quality of care for children and families.</p> <p>B. Program Evaluation</p> <p>1.B.1. Stakeholder engagement: the knowledge and ability to develop positive relationships with funders, community members, staff, and families.</p> <p>1.B.2. Quality improvement and strategic planning: the ability to evaluate program effectiveness through annual program evaluation in collaboration with all stakeholders and develop a strategic plan that provides resources to sustain the program's mission and strengthens the program over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who participates (e.g. families, staff, community members, Board of Directors, owners), • What aspects of the program are evaluated, • How the information (data) is used for program improvement, • How the improvement plan is shared with staff and families. <p>1.B Part 2: Submit a written improvement plan based on the findings of an annual program evaluation.</p> <p>1.B Part 3: Additional evidence – Examples of evaluation tools (surveys, rating scales, checklists, photos, etc.).</p>
2. Management	A. Human Resources	2.1 Submit a detailed plan for new employees; include any

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
<p><i>Directors need to have the knowledge and ability to develop systems and procedures to carry out the organization's mission and to operate and maintain a high-quality early childhood or out-of-school time program.</i></p>	<p>2.A.1. Employment policies: implements policies and procedures to hire and terminate employees following state and national laws, codes, and regulations, including non-discriminatory practices.</p> <p>2.A.2. Orientation, supervision, and evaluation: knowledge and ability to develop policies and procedures to orient new staff and volunteers to the fundamental aspects of program operation, to motivate and supervise program staff, and to develop effective methods of evaluating teaching staff in order to promote growth and development.</p> <p>2.A.3. Staff development: ability to implement program-wide training policies, ability to assist teaching staff in creating individual professional development plans to improve staff credentials and competencies.</p> <p>B. Center Operations</p> <p>2.B.1. Facility management: knowledge, ability, and resources to maintain and furnish an early childhood or out-of-school time facility, including supplies, materials, and equipment.</p> <p>2.B.2. Fiscal management: ability to develop policies and procedures for creating budgets, bookkeeping, maintaining cash flow, grant writing, and fundraising.</p>	<p>resources or forms you share with new hires.</p> <p>2.2 Write a competency statement describing the current system you use to support the career development of staff. Your statement should address each of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you ensure required trainings are completed (licensing and/or related to other relevant regulatory or accrediting organizations). • The effectiveness of your orientation procedures, • Methods of informing staff of educational opportunities, • How you create individualized staff training plans to improve staff credentials and competencies, • How you incorporate professional development into the staff and program evaluation processes. <p>Describe what is currently working and what areas you feel could be enhanced.</p> <p>(Minimum 500 words)</p> <p>2.3 Submit tools, forms, resources, or any additional pieces of evidence that you feel would further illustrate the strengths of your program's professional development for</p>

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
	<p>2.B.3. Information technology: elementary knowledge of technology systems, basic computer hardware and software, use of technology as a tool for program administration.</p> <p>2.B.4. Marketing and public relations: knowledge of the fundamentals of effective outreach in order to promote a positive program image through a variety of media resources.</p> <p>2.B.5. Compliance and legal issues: knowledge of the codes, regulations, and laws that regulate businesses in the State of Maine – early childhood and out-of-school time programs in particular – that would include child custody, child abuse and neglect, special education, confidentiality, anti-discrimination, insurance liability, and contract and labor laws.</p> <p>2.B.6. ADA and IDEA: knowledge to create policy and procedures and implement facility improvements in order to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.</p> <p>C. Health, Nutrition, and Safety</p> <p>2.C.1. Implementing policies and procedures: knowledge and ability to create policies and procedures to insure the health and well-being of program participants (staff and children), including nutrition, dental health, physical health, mental health, safety, emergency</p>	<p>both individual staff and program-wide.</p> <p>2.4 Describe your role and responsibilities for the program's fiscal management. Include any policies or written procedures for ensuring the fiscal health of the program. Provide details of the systems used to keep you up to date on the program's financial activities.</p> <p>2.5 Submit two pieces of documentation that show your competency in the areas of health, nutrition, and safety (e.g. evidence that your program participates in Let's Go! 5210, a health and safety policy, an abuse and neglect policy, a safety or hazard checklist, etc.).</p>

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
	<p>preparedness, and modeling a healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>2.C.2. Certification in first aid and CPR, as well as the ability to locate local resources for staff training in first aid and CPR.</p> <p>2.C.3. Abuse and neglect training: the knowledge and ability to create policies and procedures to protect children and staff from abuse and neglect.</p> <p>2.C.4. Maintain a safe environment: knowledge and ability to create policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of children and adults through proper maintenance of the program facility and equipment, including air quality, environmental hazards, sanitation, disease control, proper storage of medications and toxic substances, and national safety standards.</p>	
<p>3. Children and Programming</p> <p><i>Directors of early childhood and out-of-school time programs must have a comprehensive knowledge of the fundamentals of child development, developmentally appropriate practice, including assessment of child growth and learning and curriculum planning.</i></p>	<p>3.1. Curriculum: the ability to supervise a coherent and comprehensive curriculum that is age-appropriate, based on best practice, and implemented by all teaching staff.</p> <p>3.2. Assessment: knowledge and ability to implement developmentally appropriate assessment of child progress methods, including the use of different assessment tools and techniques, and the ability to apply assessment data to curriculum planning for both</p>	<p>3.1 Create an Assessment of Child Growth and Development Plan detailing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A purpose statement, • A procedure statement outlining who is primarily responsible for assessing children's growth and development, what is the process and frequency, and how information is documented, • Description of how assessment information will be communicated to families,

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
	<p>individual and groups of children.</p> <p>3.3. Partnering with families: the ability to implement policies and procedures that welcome and value the participation of families in the educational process.</p> <p>3.4. Special needs: knowledge of typical and atypical development, giftedness, and special education resources and services.</p> <p>3.5. Classroom management: knowledge and ability to guide teaching staff in effective and appropriate strategies to promote positive and supportive relationships with children and among children.</p> <p>3.6. Learning environments: knowledge and ability to support and guide teachers in creating appropriate and desirable learning environments, including the selection and organization of materials, furnishings, and the daily schedule.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A confidentiality statement, • Description of how assessment will be used for referral for further evaluation, if indicated, • Description of how assessment will be used to plan curriculum and adapt teaching strategies, • Include examples of any forms, checklists, or other tools used at any time during the year for assessment purposes. <p>(Minimum 500 words)</p> <p>3.2 Submit a copy of your program's guidance/behavior policy. The policy should include what role social and emotional learning plays in guiding children's behavior. In addition, the policy should describe the family's role in addressing persistent challenging behavior.</p>
<p>4. Families and Community</p> <p><i>Early childhood and out-of-school time program directors need to establish and maintain positive and reciprocal relationships with families and the community within which the program resides.</i></p>	<p>4.1. Diversity and cultural competence: knowledge about unique family structures and lifestyles, including the influence of socioeconomic, education, race, religion, culture, language, gender, and physical abilities in order to implement policies, procedures, and practices that include treating families with respect and tolerance.</p>	<p>4.1 Provide three examples describing how your program welcomes all families with respect for diversity and uniqueness.</p> <p>4.2 Provide a copy of a written communication to staff or families that is an example of your ability to build positive relationships and community within your program. Your evidence might be in the form of an email, newsletter, text</p>

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
	<p>4.2. Recruitment, orientation, and retention: the knowledge and ability to implement policies and procedures to recruit families, orient them to the program, and retain them over time.</p> <p>4.3. Community resources: awareness of the resources, assistance, and support available within the community for families and program staff. Develop partnerships and relationships with agencies, consultants, and organizations in the community to meet the needs and interests of children and families and to promote community support of the program.</p> <p>4.4. Understands and maintains confidentiality regarding observation of children and youth.</p>	<p>from a website, social media posting, or welcome letter to new families.</p> <p>4.3 Choose ONE of the following options:</p> <p>a. Develop a plan to create a family advisory/family involvement group. Include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A written philosophy statement describing the family-program relationship b. The areas in which you will seek family input/involvement c. Tasks associated with those areas d. The methods for accomplishing those tasks (delivery of information/formal protocols) <p>b. If you currently have a family advisory/family involvement group, write a reflection statement that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current levels of functioning (what is working/what is not) • Strategies for engagement and strengthening family partnerships • Lessons learned • Next steps <p>(Minimum 500 words)</p> <p>4.4 Share a list of community and statewide resources that support the needs and interests of children and families.</p>

Competency Area	Indicator of Best Practice	Evidence for Portfolio
<p>5. Standards of Quality</p>	<p>5.1. Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network: familiarity with the functions of MRTQ PDN, including the Registry, training opportunities, technical assistance, and the career lattices.</p> <p>5.2. NAEYC/NAFCC/COA accreditation: familiarity with the process, standards, and maintenance of accreditation systems specific to the program type.</p> <p>5.3. <i>Quality for ME</i>: can articulate the function of <i>Quality for ME</i>. If applicable, the program is enrolled with <i>Quality for ME</i>.</p> <p>5.4. Licensing: is familiar with and abides by the Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services rules and regulations.</p> <p>5.5. Early learning and development standards: utilizes knowledge of <i>Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards</i>, <i>Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development</i>, <i>Infant Toddler MELDS</i>, and the K-12 Learning Results.</p> <p>5.6. Advocacy: knowledgeable of and participates in activities that improve the lives of children and families and the early childhood and out-of-school time fields in general.</p>	<p>5.1 Describe the system that ensures that all your program staff are MRTQ Registry members and their training and professional development are kept current in the Registry.</p> <p>5.2 Choose ONE of the following options:</p> <p>a. For those not yet at Step 4 with <i>Quality for ME</i>, create a plan for moving your program to the next Step. Describe what you will need to do, strategies to accomplish those tasks, and the proposed timeline. Include reflections on both the barriers and how you will overcome them, as well as both short-term and long-term planning efforts.</p> <p>b. For those at Step 4, describe what your next steps are in the pursuit of seeking quality programming. Describe long-term and short-term goals for accomplishing those tasks. You may reflect upon barriers to maintaining a Step 4, as well as how to move beyond those barriers.</p> <p>(Minimum 500 words)</p> <p>5.3 Describe one activity that demonstrates how you advocate for children and families.</p>

Maine Director Credential Portfolio Checklist	
Component	Date Completed
Section 1: Introduction	
Personal Philosophy Statement	
Résumé	
Professional Development Profile	
Section 2: Competency Areas and Evidence	
A. Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Expectation related to NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct <input type="checkbox"/> Personal statement on the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct <input type="checkbox"/> Description of program evaluation process <input type="checkbox"/> Written improvement plan, based upon self-assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Examples of evaluation tools 	
B. Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed orientation plan <input type="checkbox"/> Competency statement on supporting staff professional development <input type="checkbox"/> Tools, forms, and resources supporting professional development planning <input type="checkbox"/> Description of responsibilities for fiscal management <input type="checkbox"/> Two pieces of evidence related to health, nutrition, or safety 	
C. Children and Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment of Child Progress Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the program's guidance/behavior policy 	
D. Families and Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Three examples of welcoming families <input type="checkbox"/> Written communication to staff or families <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for family advisory/family involvement group OR reflection statement on family advisory/family involvement activities <input type="checkbox"/> List of community resources 	
E. Standards of Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> System for ensuring MRTQ Registry membership for all staff <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for moving program to Step 4 OR reflection statement on plan for maintaining and exceeding Step 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Description of an advocacy activity 	
Notes/Questions/Reminders:	

Section 6: Letters of Recommendation

The Maine Director Credential application includes the submission of three letters of recommendation. The letters should be completed by individuals who are familiar with the Applicant's character, skills, abilities, and experience as a program administrator. Letters of recommendation are emailed or mailed directly to the Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network at the addresses listed on the form.

Attachment E includes a form for the Applicant to share with those from whom they are requesting a letter of recommendation.

Section 7: The Interview

Upon successful completion of the Portfolio, Applicants will schedule the on-site interview with an MRTQ PDN staff person or designee. Through the interview, Applicants will show how they have integrated the knowledge gained through the Maine Director Credential process into their daily practice. The interview will:

- Provide an opportunity for the applicant to respond to any questions that the review committee may have concerning the candidate's application.
- Provide an opportunity for the applicant to expand on the application submission, including any additional ways that they director can demonstrate the leadership competencies specific to the skills and abilities required of leaders in the field of early childhood and youth development.
- Provide an opportunity for MRTQ PDN staff (or designee) and the Applicant to review the credentialing process and to assure that the credential reflects the defined purpose and scope of the Maine Director Credential.

The interview questions will be specifically tailored to each candidate. The interview will be scheduled for a mutually convenient time and location and will last approximately one hour.

The Applicant will receive a copy of the interview questions at least five days in advance of the interview.

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 practices

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
(<https://nccc.georgetown.edu/curricula/glossary.html>)

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 Best 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

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

[NAEYC Code of Ethics](#) – 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

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

Professional Growth Activities – The ten additional hours of professional growth activities, above and beyond the amount required by licensing based on the Staffing and Professional Development Standard at Steps 3 and 4 within *Quality for ME*

(https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/Professional_Growth_Activites.pdf)

Quality for ME - Maine's four-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

Reflective Practice – The process of thoughtfully considering one's thoughts, feelings, actions, and experiences when applying knowledge to practice

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: Confidentiality Tipsheet

Appendix C: Maine Director Credential Application

Section 1: Contact Information

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Home Email: _____

Section 2: Application Requirements

Please initial:

_____ I am a 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:

Child Care Leadership Institute I: Building the Foundation of Quality (30 hours)

Child Care Leadership Institute II: Leadership in Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time Programs Today (30 hours)

Child Care Leadership Institute III: Transforming Leaders and Programs (30 hours)

Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)

Choice of learning guidelines training: _____

Choice of additional Core Knowledge Training: _____

OR I have completed an alternative education/training requirement, option # _____
(see Appendix D for options)

_____ I have a minimum of three years of experience working in a licensed/regulating early childhood or out-of-school time program.

_____ I have completed ten hours of Professional Growth Activities within the past year.

_____ I am including three sealed letters of reference.

_____ 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 am enclosing a check for \$25 made out to the University of Southern Maine.

Application and check should be mailed to:

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network
University of Southern Maine
PO Box 9300
Portland, ME 04104-9300

Signature

Date

Appendix D: Alternative Options for Training/Education

The Maine Director Credential requires a minimum of 159 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Core Knowledge Training as listed below. Applicants can choose an alternative option listed below. All documentation of training and/or college course work must be submitted to and verified by the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.

Option 1:

A minimum of 159 hours of training comprised of the following:

1. *Child Care Leadership Institutes I, II, and III* (90 hours total)
2. **AND** *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)
3. **AND** choice of **ONE** of the following:
 - a. *Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development* (30 hours)
 - b. *Infant Toddler Maine Early Learning and Development Standards* (30 hours)
 - c. *Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards* (30 hours)
 - d. *Links to Learning* (45 hours)
4. **AND** choice of **ONE** additional MRTQ Core Knowledge Training:
 - a. *Inclusive Child Care* (30 hours)
 - b. *Caring for Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families* (30 hours)
 - c. *Curriculum and Development for Preschool Children* (30 hours)
 - d. *Working with School Age Children and Youth* (30 hours)
 - e. *Creating Inclusive Youth Development Settings* (30 hours)
 - f. (Take both to total 30 hours) *Social and Emotional Learning Birth to 5* (18 hours) and *Collaborating with Others to Support Inclusion* (12 hours)

Option 2:

A combination of training and course work comprised of the following:

1. *Child Care Leadership Institutes I and II* (60 hours)
2. **AND** Three credits (45 hours) of early childhood education or related* course work from an accredited institution
3. **AND** choice of **ONE** additional MRTQ Core Knowledge Training:
 - a. *Inclusive Child Care* (30 hours)
 - b. *Caring for Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families* (30 hours)
 - c. *Curriculum and Development for Preschool Children* (30 hours)
 - d. *Working with School and Children and Youth* (30 hours)
 - e. *Creating Inclusive Youth Development Settings* (30 hours)
 - f. (Take both to total 30 hours) *Social and Emotional Learning Birth to 5* (18 hours) and *Collaborating with Others to Support Inclusion* (12 hours)
4. **AND** *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)

Please note: Requirement option 3 for the Director Credential will no longer be available to new applicants as of 1/1/25

Option 3:

A minimum of nine college credits and required training that must include:

1. Six credits (90 hours) of early childhood education or related* course work from an accredited institution
2. Three credits (45 hours) in leadership, management, or administration from an accredited institution
3. *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)

* Related course work includes: child development, early childhood education, elementary education, early childhood special education, or elementary special education

Appendix E: Request for Letter of Reference



Date: _____

Dear _____,

_____ is working toward his or her Maine Director Credential and is requesting that you write a letter of reference.

The Maine Director Credential has been developed with the understanding that a Director's ability to work effectively with teaching staff and families, use evaluative tools to support continuous quality improvement, and effectively manage all aspects of program operation are fundamentally linked to education, experience, and skills related to professionalism. The Maine Director Credential has been designed to promote and incorporate all of these integral factors. Critical to the design of the Credential is the identification of competency areas that assure a Director's ability to guide the instructional practices of teachers, while creating systems that assure smooth program functioning and strong family and community partnerships.

Common strengths that Directors demonstrate include:

- Strong leadership skills
- Strong management skills
- An understanding of child development and developmentally appropriate practice
- An understanding of the importance of supporting families and connecting with the community.

Please take these skills into consideration as you write your letter of reference.

Please put your letter in a sealed envelope and return it to the Applicant. If you have questions about the Maine Director Credential or writing this reference, feel free to contact me at (207) 626-5031 or jennifer.conley@maine.edu. We appreciate you taking the time to support this candidate for the Maine Director Credential.

Sincerely,

Training and Curriculum Coordinator, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network

Appendix F: Staff Survey



Dear Staff Member,

The Director listed on the attached Staff Survey is working toward his or her Maine Director Credential. The Maine Director Credential has been developed with the understanding that a Director's ability to work effectively with teaching staff and families, use evaluative tools to support continuous quality improvement, and effectively manage all aspects of program operation are fundamentally linked to education, experience, and skills related to professionalism. The Maine Director Credential has been designed to promote and incorporate all of these integral factors.

Common strengths that Directors demonstrate include:

- Strong leadership skills
- Strong management skills
- An understanding of child development and developmentally appropriate practice
- An understanding of the importance of supporting families and connecting with the community.

The attached survey will help to inform us about how you, as a staff member, feel about the Applicant's abilities in this area. Staff 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. If you have questions about this survey, feel free to contact me at (207) 626-5031 or jennifer.conley@maine.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Conley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Training and Curriculum Coordinator, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network



Maine Director Credential Staff Survey

Adapted from "Taking Stock: Evaluation of Director by Staff" from Exchange

Applicant's Name: _____

Date this survey was completed: _____

How long have you know the Applicant? (Check one.)

- Less than 1 year 1 to 3 years 3 to 5 years 5 to 10 years More than 10 years

Directions: Please circle your response to each of the following questions.

1. The Applicant knows what is going on in the program for staff, children, a specific child (when that information is critical), families, other administrators, or stakeholders.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. The Applicant has a sense of mission for the program. S/he leads with a vision for where we are going.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. The Applicant is a good communicator. S/he keeps me well informed about policies and schedules and notifies me well in advance of changes. Expectations are clearly defined.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The Applicant knows the families and encourages them to participate in the program. Families are comfortable sharing issues and concerns with her/him.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. The Applicant encourages my professional growth and provides opportunities for ongoing training and development.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. The Applicant handles the day-to-day routine promptly and skillfully.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. The Applicant is an influence in the community and is an advocate for children and quality care.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. The Applicant knows where to go and what to do to get things done. S/he makes good use of program and community resources.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

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 Director 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 noted in the appropriate section(s). I understand that any misconduct concerning the authenticity of my work may lead to my disqualification as an Applicant for the Maine Director Credential.

Applicant Name (print)

Applicant Signature

Date