Examples of Evidence for Early Learning Schools
Introduction

This Examples of Evidence resource is designed to provide a starting point for school personnel as they consider the evidence that demonstrates the school’s adherence to the AdvancED Standards for Quality Early Learning Schools. This document provides examples of evidences (practices and artifacts) that the school might consider using to support the self-ratings of the AdvancED Standards and Indicators as submitted in the Self Assessment document.

The examples of evidence in this resource help the early learning school personnel and stakeholders engage in a discussion about how they know the school is adhering to the Standards. The examples should not be used as a checklist or perceived as a requirement, nor should they be interpreted as a data collection exercise. This document is a tool to help the school personnel and stakeholders engage in thoughtful dialogue about how they can demonstrate that quality practices, condition, and results are occurring in the school.

The examples in the document aid the school in asking and answering the following questions: “What practices/processes are being implemented, and are they effective?” or said another way, “How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?”

AdvancED External Review teams are more interested in evidence of the school’s demonstration – active living of – the Standards, rather than a collection of static documents. When thinking about evidence, schools should consider how the Standards are demonstrated in the daily operation/functions. The examples within are intended to begin, but should not limit discussion, as there is a rich array of evidence beyond the examples provided in this document that early learning schools can use to demonstrate how they meet the Standards.

Early learning schools should make use of existing data, and not spend time preparing special folders or notebooks of evidence for the team. Evidence in support of the Standards should be accessible should the team request specific evidence (for example, easily downloaded off the school’s website or pulled from school files), but does not need to be compiled separately for the purpose of the review. The aim is to reduce unnecessary time spent in data collection and increase time for meaningful discussion, observation and interaction around the school’s demonstration of the Standards in practice.
Standard 1: Vision and Purpose
Examples of Evidence

Practices
- Indication that the vision, purpose and goals match the needs of the parents, staff and students.
- Indication by parents, staff and students that they are familiar with the vision, purpose and goals.
- Leadership actions that develop commitment to the vision, and indications that stakeholders enthusiastically embrace the vision.
- Current and trend data relating to student achievement and engagement, student characteristics and relevant community information are available to stakeholders.
- Faculty familiarity with appropriate data regarding student achievement and engagement, student characteristics and relevant community information.
- Stakeholder reports of how the allocation of resources within the school or center reflect the stated vision, purpose and goals.
- Knowledge by stakeholders of discussion regarding vision, purpose and goals.

Artifacts
- Documentation of corporate-level expectations for school's purpose and direction aligned to corporate-wide purpose and direction.
- Documentation of staff training on research-based developmentally appropriate practices for the care, development and growth of young children supporting the school purpose and direction.
- Reports of quality control visits conducted by corporate-level staff.
- Purpose statements - past and present.
- Minutes from meetings related to development of the school’s purpose.
- Documentation or description of the process for creating the school’s purpose including the role of stakeholders.
- Communication plan to stakeholders regarding the school’s purpose.
- Examples of communications to stakeholders about the school's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook, enrollment information).
- Documentation of research on developmentally appropriate practices for the care, development and growth of young children supporting the school purpose and direction.
- Reports or findings of quality control visits conducted by corporate-level staff.
- The school's statement of purpose.
- Agendas and/or minutes that reference a commitment to the components of the school’s statement of purpose.
- Survey results.
- Agendas, minutes from continuous improvement planning meetings.
- Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders.
- The school data profile.
- The school continuous improvement plan.
- Survey results.
Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

Examples of Evidence

Practices
- Understanding among stakeholders of the specific and general policies and procedures established within the school or center
- Indications of compliance with local, state and federal laws
- A variety of ways of reporting on student achievement
- An evaluation of instructional and organizational effectiveness
- Evidence of successful student transitions
- Affirmation from stakeholders that leadership support for innovation and equity is taking place
- Professional development activities that reflect support for innovation and equity
- Student placement that provides for appropriate inclusion of students with special needs
- The degree of engagement by stakeholders in providing for student learning activities (e.g. helping to develop schedules, team work, placement decisions and course development)
- Access to learning opportunities that is equitable for all students
- Child study or advocacy team activities and the Individualized Education Plans (IEP) process
- Teacher involvement in mentoring of new staff
- Understanding among the stakeholders of the decision-making procedures within the school or center
- Leadership opportunities provided by parent and community groups to school or center operations
- Decision-making process regarding student participation and equity in school or center activities as well as level of participation and assigned leadership roles
- Avenues for two-way communication for stakeholders
- Connection between the evaluation system and professional growth of staff

Artifacts
- State License from appropriate governmental agency that regulates preschools or childcare centers
- Corporation operations manuals
- Written policies, procedures and practices
- Franchise agreements
- Copies of assurances or guarantees to customers for educational services
- Reports or findings of quality assurance visits conducted by corporate-level staff
- Professional development offerings and plans
- School handbooks
- Staff handbooks
- Student handbooks
- Communications to stakeholder about policy revisions
- Governing authority policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest
- Franchise agreements
- Governing code of ethics
- Communication plan to inform all staff on code of ethics, responsibilities, conflict of interest
- Governing authority minutes relating to training
- Governing authority training plan
- Assurances, certifications
- Proof of legal counsel
• List of assigned staff for compliance
• Historical compliance data
• Communications about program regulations
• Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations and policies
• Copies of assurances or guarantees to customers for educational services
• School improvement plan developed by the school
• Agendas and minutes of meetings
• Roles and responsibilities of school leadership
• Maintenance of consistent academic oversight, planning and resource allocation
• Survey results regarding functions of the governing authority
• Social media
• Communications regarding official actions of governing authority
• Examples of collaboration and shared leadership
• Examples of decisions aligned with the school’s statement of purpose
• Examples of decisions aligned with the corporation’s purpose and direction
• Examples of improvements and innovations in the educational programs for young children developed by the school or required by the corporation
• Examples of decisions in support of the school’s continuous improvement plan
• Survey results
• Copies of surveys or screen shots from online surveys
• Involvement of stakeholders in a school improvement plan
• Examples of stakeholder group feedback resulting in school action
• Corporation quality assurance documents with criteria and procedures
• Job specific criteria, job descriptions
• Supervision and evaluation documents with criteria for improving professional practices for young children
• Representative supervision and evaluation reports
• Governing authority policy on supervision and evaluation
• Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation

Standard 3:  Teaching and Learning
Examples of Evidence

Practices
• Experiences are provided that meet children’s needs and stimulates learning in all developmental areas – physical, social, emotional and intellectual.
• Each child is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth and development.
• The curriculum and interaction of adults reflect individual differences in ability and interests.
• Different levels of ability, development and learning styles are expected, accepted and used to design appropriate activities.
• Interactions and activities are designed to develop children’s self-esteem and positive feelings toward learning.
• Observations of children on an on-going basis

Artifacts
• Daily schedule
• Readiness assessments
• Research-based teaching/learning practices for young children
• Descriptions of instructional techniques
• Program descriptions
• Program schedules
• Graduate follow-up surveys (i.e. Kindergarten or Grade 1)
• Examples of inquiry tools
• Learning expectations for different learning domains
• Children's work across learning domains and learning expectations
• Posted learning objectives
• Materials and equipment inventory
• School's or corporation’s proprietary instructional design
• Survey results
• Organization-wide curriculum development process
• Curriculum writing process
• Curriculum – referenced assessments
• Screening assessments
• Play-based assessments
• Products—scope and sequence, learning maps
• Common assessments
• Photo/video recordings
• A description of the systematic review process for curriculum, instruction and assessment
• Curriculum guides
• Lesson plans aligned to the curriculum
• Comprehensive developmental and academic assessments
• Standards-based report narratives/logs
• Teacher evaluation criteria
• Findings from supervisor formal and informal observations
• Anecdotal records
• Individual Learning Plans (ILP)
• Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP)
• Child work demonstrating the application of knowledge
• Examples of teacher use of technology as an instructional resource
• Examples of child use of technology as a learning tool
• Aggregated data on child outcomes
• Family outcome data
• Interdisciplinary projects
• Authentic assessments
• Professional development
• Agenda items addressing
• Supervision and evaluation procedures
• Curriculum maps
• Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions
• Recognition of teachers with regard to these practices
• Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs
• Examples of improvements to instructional practices resulting from the evaluation process
• Documentation of collection of lesson plans and reporting (grade) books
• Agendas and minutes of collaborative learning committees
• Calendar/schedule of learning community meetings
• Common language, protocols and reporting tools
• Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from collaboration
• Evidence of informal conversations that reflect collaboration about student learning
• Developmental screenings and referrals
• Responses to Interventions
• Student portfolios
• Examples of cross curricular projects, interdisciplinary instruction and classroom action research project
• Professional development funding to promote professional learning communities
• Peer coaching guidelines and procedures
• Standards-based curriculum guides
• Scope and sequence and pacing guides
• Agendas and minutes of faculty/staff meetings
• Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from assessment
• Evidence of informal conversations that reflect collaboration about student learning
• Developmental screenings and referrals
• Responses to instructional interventions
• Professional development funding to support instructional process
• Descriptions and schedules of mentoring, coaching and induction programs with references to school beliefs and values about young children and their learning, growth and development
• Formal and informal mentoring/coaching examples
• Mentor assignments
• Teacher support and assessment programs
• Mentor/teacher follow-up surveys
• Evidence of collaborative planning time
• Teacher effectiveness in terms of student learning and achievement
• Retention/turn over rates
• Evidence of e-mentor groups
• Parent-child interaction records
• Family and community profiles
• Home visits: family culture and diversity
• Narrative observational summaries
• Anecdotal records over time
• Parents rating of child performance
• Parents interview records
• Communications to parents
• Volunteer program with various options for participation
• Parental/family/caregiver involvement plan including activities, timeframes and evaluation process
• Calendar outlining when and how families are provided information on child’s progress
• Anecdotal notes and observation record keeping
• Structured observation schedules and rating formats
• Daily/weekly observation sheets
• Daily health checks
• Teacher observation checklist
• Classroom observation evaluations
• Frequent counts and time samples
• Assessment schedules
• Literacy interviews
• Examples use of recording techniques and tools
• Examples of modified activities
• Rubrics
• Reporting documents to parents
• Professional development data
• Correlation between professional learning opportunities and the school purpose and direction
• Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs
• Evaluation tools for professional learning
• Results of evaluation of professional learning program
• Faculty/Staff professional needs/interests assessment
• Personal reflections
• Feedback from learners
• Lists of learning support services and children served by such services
• Data used to identify unique learning, growth and development needs of students
• Referral forms to support services
• Assessment intervention plans
• Parent-teacher conferences
• Training and professional learning related to research on learning, growth and development of young children
• Inter-agency coordination to access state/local services
• Early Learning Guidelines
• Readiness assessment tools

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems
Examples of Evidence

Practices
• The facility is cleaned regularly (e.g., daily; bathroom fixtures disinfected, trash removed, mouth toys washed; minimum twice a week: infants’ equipment washed and disinfected; soiled diapers are disposed of or held for laundry in closed containers inaccessible to children; and changing table cover is disinfected or disposed of after each change of a soiled diaper
• Individual bedding is washed once a week and used by only one child between washings. Individual cribs, cots or mats are washed if soiled
• Sides of infants’ cribs are in a locked position when occupied
• Toilets, drinking water and hand washing facilities are easily accessible to children.
• Soap and disposable towels are provided
• Children wash hands after toileting and before and after meals
• Children are educated by staff members concerning hand-washing procedures, use of running water,
• Soap, rubbing and single use of disposable towels
• Hot water temperature does not exceed 110 degrees at outlets used by children
• Stairways are well lighted and equipped with handrails
• Electrical outlets are covered with protective caps
• Floor coverings are attached to the floor or backed with non-slip materials
• Nontoxic building materials are used (or lead abatement procedures are in place for older facilities)
• All pieces of playground equipment are surrounded by a resilient surface of an acceptable depth or by rubber mats manufactured for such use, consistent with the guidelines of the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials, extending beyond the external limits of the piece of equipment for at least four feet beyond the fall zone
• All play equipment is constructed and installed in such a manner as to be safe for use by children
• There are no pinch, crush or shear points on or under the equipment
• Climbing equipment, swings and large pieces of furniture are securely anchored
• All chemicals and potentially dangerous products such as medicines or cleaning supplies are stored in original, labeled containers inaccessible to children. Medication is administered to children only when a parent has submitted a written order, and a designated staff member consistently administers the medication
• All staff and volunteers are familiar with primary and secondary evacuation routes and practice evacuation procedures monthly with children
• Written emergency evacuation procedures are posted in conspicuous places
• Staff and volunteers are familiar with emergency procedures and procedures for severe storm warnings
• Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are provided and periodically checked
• Emergency telephone numbers are posted by telephones
• Trends in staff recruitment and resignation
• Level of staff preparation in specific content area of assignment
• Staff that are certified or licensed by the state
• Level of pedagogical preparation for assigned responsibilities
• Engagement of new and veteran staff in mentoring programs
• Experiential background of staff relative to assigned responsibilities
• Evaluation of staff that includes focus on best practice
• The extent to which staff are involved in personal plans of professional development
• The engagement of all center employees in appropriate professional growth
• A variety of ways in which staff are evaluated in their areas of responsibility
• Indication that class size is conducive to student learning
• Alignment of resource allocation to educational programs and center improvement plan requirements
• Degree of satisfaction among stakeholders regarding resource allocation for educational programs and center improvement
• Indication that staff are knowledgeable that policies and procedures (audits) are in place to safeguard financial transactions from fraudulent practices
• Indications in perception data of concern for a safe and orderly environment
• Indication that facilities are regularly inspected and maintained
• Plans for continual updating of facilities
• Nature of discipline infractions
• Budget allocation for maintenance and facility development
• Regular updates to evacuation and crisis management plans
• Depth of assignment of counselors within the building
• Perception data regarding student feeling of acceptance within the center and readiness for success at the next level
• Student planning for transition to the next level
• Degree of consultative assistance available to teachers
• Planning and implementation of inclusion plans for students with special needs
• Perception data from stakeholders regarding their feeling of affiliation with the school or center and being well-informed regarding school or center issues and events
• A variety of methods in which the school or center communicates with stakeholders
• A formal process for stakeholders to present a grievance
• Degree of parent access to school or center website and e-mail system
• The inclusion of dialog with stakeholders in the communications process
• Evidence that the school or center responds to stakeholder input
• Awareness among stakeholders of the opportunities for engagement in the work of the school or center
• A wide variety of forums at which expectations for students and for school or center improvement are presented
• Parent and student knowledge of expectations regarding student behavior and learning and of school or center improvement initiatives
• A variety of avenues to connect with parents
• Degree to which parents feel well informed regarding student achievement and school or center effectiveness
• Examples of “two-way” communication between stakeholders and the school or center

Artifacts
• State License from appropriate governmental agency that regulates preschools or childcare centers
• Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support staff
• School budgets for the last three years
• Assessments of staff needs
• Staff license/certification/qualifications
• Incentives/recognition program/system
• Policies that require relevant and related trainings
• Personnel evaluation forms
• Staff compensations/benefits
• Professional and support staff/child ratios
• Stakeholder results
• Policies, processes, procedures and other documentation related to the hiring, placement and retention of professional and support staff
• Policies that require relevant and related trainings
• School calendar
• School schedule
• Examples of efforts of school leaders to secure necessary material and fiscal resources
• Alignment of budget with school purpose and direction
• Audited budget
• Budget for authorized expenses and activities
• Funding overview--public and private funders
• Equipment purchasing and maintenance
• Resource materials for training
• Written health and safety policies
• Records of depreciation of equipment
• System for maintenance requests
• Facilities and equipment maintenance records and schedules
• Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements
• Updated health records
• Building inspections record
• CPR/First Aid Certification/health safety trainings
• Documentation of emergency procedures such as fire drills and evacuation routes
• Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements
• Building and grounds inspections record
• Documentation of emergency procedures such as fire drills and evacuation routes
• Lists of instructional concepts with supporting classroom materials
• System for ordering/maintaining sufficient supplies
• Curriculum standards, guides, expectations
• Examples of interactive media and technology work such as digital portfolios, educational texting, artwork, audio and video recordings
• Data on media and information resources available to staff and children
• Technology and interactive media inventory
• Assessment and evaluation of technology and media literacy
• Survey results
• Technology plan and budget to improve technology services and infrastructure
• Assessments to inform development of technology plan
• Policies relative to technology use
• Cyber-safety plan; policies and procedures
• Security of information policies
• Hardware and software inventory
• Evidence of central depository and data back-up mechanism
• Family engagement networking plan
• Displays pictures/photos
• Lists of support services available to students
• Agreements with school community agencies for student-family support
• Social classes and services, e.g., bullying, character education
• Assessment system for identifying children’s needs
• Intervention services referral
• Example of home and community interventions
• Examples of child assessments
• Special classes/activities for children with disabilities
• Educational advocacy plan for families
• Example of full inclusion parent-child program
• Parent/Staff communications procedures and expectations
• Facility/classroom design for storage space of personal items
• Student records indicating personal needs
• Stakeholder communication forms
• Health inspection records
• Parent/Staff communications procedures and expectations
• Student records indicating personal needs
• Lists of services available related to counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning
• Description of referral process
• Budget for counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning
• Demographics
• Program evaluations
• Assessment plan
• Parent professional development referral
• Parent opportunity information sheets
• Professional development calendar
• Parent/Staff communications procedures and expectations
• Statement of principles
• Code of conduct
• Written policies on positive guidance strategies
• Complaints policies and procedures

Standard 5: Documenting and Using Results
Examples of Evidence

Practices
• Children are assessed for the purpose of planning appropriate activities and evaluating the progress of students to meet identified needs
• Children are assessed based on a program that includes developmentally appropriate methods such as continuing observation, recording and evaluation of each child's growth and development that includes information from parents; and that considers the special needs of the student
• Parents are informed on a regular basis concerning the progress of their children
• Evaluation of student progress using a variety of assessments
• Efforts by the center to determine gaps between achievement goals and improvement expectations
• A variety of ways to provide training on data analysis for individuals and groups of teachers
• Reports by teachers about how data analysis, including analysis of assessment results, has been used to assist them in improving instruction for individual students or has altered instruction within their classes or throughout the center
• A center-wide process of ongoing data analysis and use of data to improve student performance
• The degree to which students can articulate expectations for their performance and their performance status
• A variety of assessments that are directed both toward student learning, growth and development and organizational effectiveness
• The inclusion of data analysis topics in the agenda of professional development activities
• The degree to which staff have analyzed student results in the context of school or center improvement plan interventions and programs
• Alignment of the school or center improvement goals with needs identified in the profile and supported by data analysis
• Professional development activities are aligned with and a part of the school or center improvement plan
• Indication that individual professional staff development plans are related to the goals of the school or center improvement plan
• Reports from staff regarding the impact of professional development activities upon their ability to implement school or center improvement interventions
• Reported/observed changes in teacher behaviors as a result of professional development activities delivered in support of the school or center improvement plan
• A variety of baseline and interval data to describe progress toward the goals
• A continuous review process to ensure ongoing monitoring and adjustment of the improvement plan
• A rigorous data analysis process to evaluate the degree of success in goal attainment
• Success demonstrated in reaching goals of the school or center improvement plan

Artifacts

• Written protocols and procedures for data collection and analysis
• List of data sources related to growth, development and learning of young children, instruction, program effectiveness and conditions that support learning
• Examples of use of data to design, implement and evaluate continuous improvement plans and apply learning
• Survey results
• Training materials specific to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data
• Documentation of attendance and training related to data use
• Professional learning schedule specific to the use of data
• Policies specific to data training
• Description of process for analyzing data to determine verifiable improvement in learning
• Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data
• Evidence of growth, development and learning
• Evidence of student readiness for the next level
• Evidence of student success at the next level
• Examples of use of results to evaluate continuous improvement action plans
• School leadership monitoring process of information about the growth, development and learning of young children, conditions that support learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals
• Communication plan regarding learning; conditions that support the growth, development and learning of young children; and achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders
• Samples of communications to stakeholders regarding learning; conditions that support the growth, development, and learning of young children; and achievement of school improvement goals
• Executive summaries of student learning reports to stakeholder groups
• Minutes of governing authority meetings regarding achievement of learning goals