

The ExCELS measure: Administration and scoring guide

Appendix B: ExCELS Measure Center Manager Survey



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OPRE Report 2023-273

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EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION LEADERSHIP STUDY (ExCELS) MEASURE

Center Manager Survey



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The ExCELS team welcomes the use of the measure in future research on its own or in combination with other measures. If someone uses items in the development of their own survey work, please include the source citation.

INTRODUCTION

This survey asks about the people in your center who make decisions about what happens in the center, center operations, how staff work together in the center, and how your center works with families and the community. We will also ask about your background, and work experience.

The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete.

Please place an “X” in the box below if you agree to take the survey.

☐

By placing an “X” in the box, I agree that I understand the purposes of this study, including any privacy assurances, and that my participation is voluntary.

The next page provides you with general instructions on how to complete the survey.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions. Please answer questions in the order they appear, regardless of the question number. You may be asked to skip some questions that don't apply to you.

For most questions in the survey, you will answer by simply placing a check mark or "X" to select your response, or by entering a number in the appropriate box.

Some of the questions in the survey ask about meetings, collaborations, trainings, or other types of interactions that may be occurring at your center. Please think about in-person and virtual activities when answering these questions.

KEY TERMS

Here are a few words and phrases used throughout the survey. Please read these before beginning the survey. Come back to this page as you complete the survey if you need a reminder of what these words and phrases mean.

- **Center management** refers to center staff who have oversight and supervisory roles and responsibilities for what happens at the center. Such staff may include directors, care and education program leads, coordinators, or other managers who oversee center operations, educational programs, center finances, human resources, family or special services, or other areas (such as marketing and enrollment or information technology).
- **Center staff** refers to anyone in the building who is paid to work with or support the care and education of children from birth to age five. This could include contracted staff or service members from organizations like Teach for America or AmeriCorps if they are paid to work with or support the care and education of children from birth to age five.
- **Children whose ages are from birth to age five** refers to children within that age range and not yet in kindergarten.
- **Classroom** refers to a group of children who are instructed or cared for together.
- **Teachers** refers to lead, head, or co-teachers who are regularly in charge of a group or classroom of children.
- **Teaching staff** refers to center staff who provide care and education to children in the classroom including lead, head, or co-teachers and assistant teachers. This may include short-term positions or service members from organizations like Teach for America or AmeriCorps if they are paid to provide care and education to children in the classroom.

A. PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

First, please answer a few questions about teaching staff and decision-making in your center.

Teaching staff refers to center staff who provide care and education to children in the classroom including lead, head, or co-teachers and assistant teachers. This may include short-term positions or service members from organizations like Teach for America or AmeriCorps if they are paid to provide care and education to children in the classroom.

Decision-making refers to weighing options and making a choice related to policies and practices about the early care and education of children.

A1. How much do teaching staff contribute to the following?

Classroom refers to a group of children who are instructed or cared for together.

Center management refers to center staff who have oversight and supervisory roles and responsibilities for what happens at the center. Such staff may include directors, care and education program leads, coordinators, or other managers who oversee center operations, educational programs, center finances, human resources, family or special services, or other areas (such as marketing and enrollment or information technology).

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Contribute a lot	Contribute some	Contribute a little	Do not contribute
a. Determining care and instructional practices <u>across</u> classrooms in the center (for example, by doing joint planning with other teaching staff, or developing training and guidance materials).....	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Selecting curriculum or instructional materials that are common <u>across</u> classrooms serving children of similar ages	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. Hiring other teaching staff	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
d. Providing input on other teaching staff performance reviews	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
e. Providing input on center management staff performance reviews.....	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

A2. How much influence do teaching staff have on the following?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	A lot of influence	Some influence	A little influence	No influence
a. Developing strategic goals for the center	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Developing center-wide initiatives (for example, promoting healthy habits for children, supporting the transition to kindergarten, or supporting children with special needs).....	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. Developing plans for involving families in center activities	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
d. Developing solutions to problems the center faces so that the center can provide the best services it can ..	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

A3. How much influence do you think families have on the following?

***Center staff** refers to anyone in the building who is paid to work with or support the care and education of children from birth to age five. This could include contracted staff or service members from organizations like Teach for America or AmeriCorps if they are paid to work with or support the care and education of children from birth to age five.*

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	A lot of influence	Some influence	A little influence	No influence
a. Developing strategic goals for the center	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Curriculum planning or development	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. Evaluating center staff	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
d. Developing center-wide initiatives (for example, promoting healthy habits, supporting the transition to kindergarten, or planning for how to include children with special needs)	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
e. Developing plans for involving families in center activities	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
f. Developing solutions to problems the center faces so that the center can provide the best services it can	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

B. CENTER VISION AND PLANNING

Next, we have a few questions about your center's vision and planning.

B1. Do you do any of the following to make sure everyone working in the center has the same understanding of what the center's mission and values are?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 ☐ Our mission statement is posted in the center.
- 2 ☐ I discuss the mission and values with teaching staff during hiring and/or orientation.
- 3 ☐ I often talk with teaching staff about how center practices and policies support the mission.
- 4 ☐ I include teaching staff in reviewing and updating the mission statement.
- 0 ☐ None of these
- NA ☐ This center does not have a mission statement.

Please think about your work since the beginning of this program year in answering the next two questions.

B2. How often do you...?

Standards refers to benchmarks or guidelines around classroom practices and children's development that providers are expected to meet.

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. Work with teaching staff to develop their own professional development plan	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Address performance problems when teaching staff do not meet expectations (for example, not meeting standards for teaching and classroom management practices, not showing up for work or being late, having poor communication with families)	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

B3. How much do you emphasize the following with teaching staff?

Quality improvement refers to actions or steps taken to change classroom activities and teaching practices to support the care and education of young children.

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. Set goals for quality improvements for the center as a whole	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Implement classroom activities and teaching practices to meet the goals for quality improvement ...	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. Make changes in the classroom activities and teaching practices based on data that show how much progress is being made toward goals	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

C. CENTER AND STAFF PRACTICES

The next set of questions are about your views on center and staff practices.

- C1.** The following are statements that some staff may express about early care and education centers. Remember all your responses are private. Please indicate whether each statement agrees or disagrees with your personal beliefs about staff roles and how centers may work best.

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. Teaching staff improve the quality of their practices in the classroom by collaborating with other teaching staff.	4 ○	3 ○	2 ○	1 ○
b. It is important for teaching staff to support children's learning and development by incorporating feedback from families into classroom practice.....	4 ○	3 ○	2 ○	1 ○
c. Center management should set high expectations for the performance of all staff in the center.	4 ○	3 ○	2 ○	1 ○
d. Being eager to learn new knowledge and skills is important for meeting the needs of children and families.	4 ○	3 ○	2 ○	1 ○
e. It is important for teaching staff to support children's learning and development by incorporating different cultural views.	4 ○	3 ○	2 ○	1 ○

For the next questions please think about yourself and your work within this center.

C2. How much do you agree with each of the following statements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. I contribute to my center by collaborating with my colleagues and supporting them to improve what they do.....	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. I play an important role in how the center helps children make progress in their learning and development.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. I seek out ways to increase my knowledge or skills beyond required training.....	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
d. I see myself as a leader in my center.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

C3. How much do you agree with each of the following statements?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. I help create a safe environment for staff to question each other's views in a respectful way.*	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. I encourage teaching staff to tell me about any concerns they have about meeting licensing requirements or program standards (such as maintaining correct ratios).	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

**Modified Q10, School Leader Questionnaire 2003-2004, Study of Instructional Improvement.*

C4. How much do you agree with each of the following statements about how you approach children's care and education?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. I use state or program learning standards (for example, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework) to set expectations for children's learning and development.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. I hold teaching staff accountable for meeting the center's expectations for children's learning and development.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. I support teaching staff in figuring out how to help children meet the center's expectations for learning and development.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
d. I promote innovation among teaching staff to try new activities or methods to help children meet the center's expectations for learning and development.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
e. I set expectations about including materials from different cultures in classroom activities.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
f. I provide training to teaching staff in how to help children from all backgrounds meet expectations for children's positive behavior.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

Next are questions about your own practices. Please think about your work since the beginning of this program year in answering the next few questions.

C5. How often do you encourage teaching staff to publicly recognize other teaching staff showing positive practices or support of others?

MARK ONE ONLY

- 4 ☐ Encourage a lot
- 3 ☐ Encourage some
- 2 ☐ Encourage a little
- 1 ☐ Do not encourage

C6. How often do you encourage teaching staff to share information with each other about practices that support children's learning and development?

MARK ONE ONLY

- 4 ☐ Encourage a lot
- 3 ☐ Encourage some
- 2 ☐ Encourage a little
- 1 ☐ Do not encourage

C7. How often do you meet with teaching staff to discuss learning activities and teaching strategies (for example, lesson planning, curriculum development, teaching methods, ways to support children's development)?

MARK ONE ONLY

- 5 ☐ Once a week or more
- 4 ☐ Once or twice a month
- 3 ☐ Three or more times a year, but less than once a month
- 2 ☐ Once or twice a year
- 1 ☐ Never

C8. How many hours of paid planning time do you give teachers to plan curriculum, activities, and lessons, including time to review assessment data?

***Paid planning time** refers to hours in teachers' normal workdays dedicated to creating lesson plans, developing activities, and goal setting.*

***Teachers** refers to lead, head, or co-teachers who are regularly in charge of a group or classroom of children.*

MARK ONE ONLY

- 4 ☐ 8 hours or more a week (or 32 hours or more a month)
- 3 ☐ 5 to 7 hours a week (or 20 to 31 hours per month)
- 2 ☐ 1 to 4 hours a week (or 4 to 19 hours per month)
- 1 ☐ Less than 1 hour a week (or less than 4 hours per month)
- 0 ☐ No paid planning time
- D ☐ Don't know

C9. How many hours of paid planning time do you give assistant teachers to plan curriculum, activities, and lessons, including time to review assessment data?

MARK ONE ONLY

- 4 ☐ 8 hours or more a week (or 32 hours or more a month)
- 3 ☐ 5 to 7 hours a week (or 20 to 31 hours per month)
- 2 ☐ 1 to 4 hours a week (or 4 to 19 hours per month)
- 1 ☐ Less than 1 hour a week (or less than 4 hours per month)
- 0 ☐ No paid planning time
- D ☐ Don't know
- NA ☐ Not applicable, no assistant teachers in this center

STOP

IF YOU GIVE TEACHERS OR ASSISTANT TEACHERS PAID PLANNING TIME ANSWER QUESTION C10, OTHERWISE SKIP TO QUESTION C11 ON PAGE 13.

C10. How much of that planning time is for teaching staff from different classrooms to collaborate and plan together?

MARK ONE ONLY

- 4 ☐ More than half
- 3 ☐ About half
- 2 ☐ Less than half
- 1 ☐ None

C11. How often do you engage in any of the following activities with teaching staff?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Once a week or more	Once or twice a month	Three or more times a year, but not monthly	Once or twice a year	Never
a. Model practices for supporting children's learning and development (that is, teaching staff watch you do things you expect of them)	5 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Observe teaching staff to see how they support children's learning and development	5 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. Share information with teaching staff about practices to support children's learning and development.....	5 <input type="radio"/>	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

Modified Q8, School Leader Questionnaire 2000-2001, Study of Instructional Improvement.

C12. Have you given your teaching staff trainings or guidance (for example, manuals, tools like video libraries, or lessons) in the following areas?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Yes	No
a. Connecting children's real-world experiences to classroom activities	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
b. Including materials and activities from different cultures in classroom materials and activities (for example, books or toys that show children from different cultures, tasting food from different cultures)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
c. Understanding biases and identifying them in their own behavior with children and families.....	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>

Next, please answer a couple of questions about center policies and how your center uses data. Please think about your center’s practices or your own work since the beginning of this program year in answering the next few questions.

C13. How many policies or other forms of support have you been able to establish to help teaching staff increase their education and training? I have established...

***Policies** may involve written procedures about providing help with tuition or course books/training materials, staff release time, or onsite trainings or courses.*

MARK ONE ONLY

- 4 ☐ Many policies and other forms of support
- 3 ☐ Some policies and other forms of support
- 2 ☐ A few policies or forms of support
- 1 ☐ No policies or forms of support

C14. How often do you share or use data with teaching staff in the following ways to support children’s learning and development?

***Data** may include observations, work samples, anecdotal records, checklists, tests of developmental milestones or school readiness skills, or similar sources. These data may be shared or used in group or individual staff meetings.*

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. I review individual children’s data with teaching staff to make decisions together about changing curriculum or classroom practices.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. I tell teaching staff what changes to make in curriculum or classroom practices based on individual children’s data.	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

D. FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

This next section is about family partnerships. Please think about your work since the beginning of this program year in answering the next two questions.

D1. How much do you emphasize the following topics about family/center partnerships with teaching staff?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Emphasize a lot	Emphasize some	Emphasize a little	Do not emphasize
a. Encouraging families to give feedback on caregiving and teaching practices	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Ensuring the center has a culture of inclusion, respect, and belonging for staff, children, and families	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
c. Giving all families a voice in how we support their children's development	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

D2. How often do you do the following related to family/center partnerships?

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. Set specific time aside for center staff to plan and carry out activities that provide ways to involve families in the center	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>
b. Provide information and materials to families in languages spoken by families (written or through a translator)	4 <input type="radio"/>	3 <input type="radio"/>	2 <input type="radio"/>	1 <input type="radio"/>

E. ABOUT YOURSELF

Next, please tell us about your education and experience.

E1. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

MARK ONE ONLY

- 1 ☐ High school or some college → **SKIP TO QUESTION E3 ON PAGE 17**
- 2 ☐ Associate's degree
- 3 ☐ Bachelor's degree
- 4 ☐ Master's degree or higher



STOP

**IF YOU HAVE AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE OR HIGHER ANSWER QUESTION E2,
OTHERWISE SKIP TO QUESTION E3 ON PAGE 17.**

E2. What was your major (as your primary field of study) for the degree or degrees you have earned?

Please include associate's, bachelor's, and graduate degrees.

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 ☐ Early childhood education or child development/developmental psychology
- 2 ☐ Education administration/management and supervision (including early childhood education administration) or business administration/management and supervision
- 3 ☐ Other education-related field (elementary education, special education, bilingual education, reading/literacy, secondary education, educational counseling or social work, sociology, science education, music education, etc.)
- 99 ☐ Other

E3. Do you currently hold any of the following licenses, certificates, or credentials?

Please do not include fields of study for any associate's, bachelor's, or graduate degrees earned.

MARK ONE RESPONSE PER ROW

	Yes	No
a. Teaching certificate, credential, or license that includes teaching any children from birth to age 5 including infant/toddler, preschool, or in family/home-based child care (this includes a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
b. Care and education director or administrator certificate or credential specifically for early childhood (birth to age 5)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
c. Other teaching certificate, credential, or license (for example, credentials for teaching grades kindergarten or higher)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>
d. Other director/administrator certificate or credential (for example, credentials for administration for grades kindergarten or higher)	1 <input type="radio"/>	0 <input type="radio"/>

E4. In total, how many years have you worked in a classroom providing early care and education for children from birth to age 5 in any center?

Include time as a lead, head, or co-teacher, assistant teacher, or aide. Do not include time spent volunteering in classrooms.

IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, WRITE IN NUMBER OF MONTHS

|_|_| ☐ Month(s) ☐ Year(s)

E5. In total, how many years have you been a director or manager in any early care and education center?

Include your time as a director or manager in this center.

IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, WRITE IN NUMBER OF MONTHS

|_|_| ☐ Month(s) ☐ Year(s)

E6. In total, how long have you been working in this center in any position?

IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, WRITE IN NUMBER OF MONTHS

|_|_| ☐ Month(s) ☐ Year(s)

E7. In total, how long have you been a director or manager in this center?

IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, WRITE IN NUMBER OF MONTHS

|_|_|_|

☐ Month(s)

☐ Year(s)

E8. Which of the following comes closest to describing your primary position in this center?

Please think about your current position when answering this question.

MARK ONE ONLY

- 1 ☐ Director (center director, executive director, program director, administrator, etc.)
- 2 ☐ Assistant director
- 3 ☐ Care and education program lead (education or program coordinator, curriculum coordinator, etc.)
- 4 ☐ Other supervisor or manager (financial manager, staff supervisor, etc.)
- 5 ☐ Owner or center executive (president, vice president, chief officer, etc.)
- 99 ☐ Other

E9. Do you have management, oversight, or supervisory responsibilities in any of the following areas?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY

- 1 ☐ **Center operations** including overall management and oversight of the day-to-day operations of the program as well as planning and managing staff and resources to provide early care and education.
- 2 ☐ **The care and education program** including management of the aspects of the center that specifically focus on child development, curriculum, and instructional planning.
- 3 ☐ **Center finances** including financial management, budgeting center resources, tracking expenses, managing grants and tuition payments, and managing payroll.
- 4 ☐ **Human resources** including management or oversight of professional development including mentoring and coaching, recruitment, selection, hiring, training, and evaluation of staff as well as the provision of benefits and supports to staff.
- 5 ☐ **Family engagement and special services** including the management, oversight, or supervisory responsibilities of nonacademic or noninstructional services for children, such as health screenings, therapeutic services, or mental health services, or the oversight of supports provided to families such as social services, adult education programs, or home visiting.
- 99 ☐ **Other aspects of the center's operations**, such as marketing and enrollment, community partnerships, nutrition programs and kitchen staff, or information technology.
- 6 ☐ **Direct supervision of teaching staff** including supervisory responsibilities over any number of lead, head, or co-teachers and assistant teachers.

Thank you for your participation!

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