

New Brunswick Early Learning Centre

Quality Improvement Plan

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Early Learning Centre Quality Improvement Cycle

Quality improvement is about creating a vision for growth and then taking manageable steps every year toward achieving that vision. As part of designation, New Brunswick Early Learning Centres must participate in an annual quality improvement cycle. The goal of this cycle is to continuously improve the quality of services offered to children from birth to 5 years and their families.

Quality in early learning and childcare environments encompasses many elements including curriculum, inclusion, professional learning, governance, educator interactions and relationships, documentation, parent engagement, and indoor and outdoor early learning environments. Our understanding of quality is advanced through engagement with assessment tools, reflection, conversation and planning. While a new assessment tool for Early Learning Centres is in the development phase, current Quality Improvement Plans will rely on the important forms of feedback gathered through reflection, conversation and planning.



Quality Improvement Plans

The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is an essential piece of the annual quality improvement cycle that is shared and reviewed by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development partners. Although operators are responsible for ensuring the QIP is formally updated annually, it is encouraged that the development of the QIP is a collaborative activity involving educators, support staff, administrators, families and/or parent committees and owner/operators. Between annual updates, the QIP is to be treated as a living document, meaning that it may continuously change as your centre's team implements plans and makes intentional improvements over time.

This document is designed to guide your team through the steps of developing and using your QIP to enhance quality through meeting the curricular expectations of the New Brunswick Curriculum Framework for Early Learning and Child Care ~English (NBCF~E). This document provides you with a template to document and reflect. There are four steps for developing and continuously working with your QIP. We recommend that each step be completed as a team, involving educators, relevant staff and collaborative partners.

Step 1: Reflecting & Reviewing Feedback

Step 2: Planning

Step 3: Taking Action

Step 4: Revisiting & Adjusting

*See Appendix D for a template with prompts and space for your centre’s team to create and keep track of your Quality Improvement Plan, supporting you from Step 1 to Step 4.

Step 1: Reflecting & Reviewing Feedback

1.1. Reflection

Through ongoing use of the CAT and CAT Reflective Guide, educators are engaged in observation, documentation and reflection of their everyday practices. Think about and question the ways that you and the staff in your centre are currently meeting the curricular expectations of the NBCF~E. Educators should take the time to review their recent reflective journal entries before coming together to share what they have been reflecting on and noticing lately. Are there any common potential strengths or areas of focus coming up within the team?

As educators use the CAT Reflective Guide, they should document and keep track of their observations, conversations and reflections in a reflective journal. Their reflective journals document evidence of their ongoing thoughts, curiosities and learning, and they will be able to reference this as time passes.

1.2. Feedback

For review and reflection, encourage educators to document and keep evidence of all feedback they hear on an ongoing basis in their reflective journals and educator portfolios.

With your team, review and consider both positive and constructive feedback regarding your Early Learning Centre from any relevant sources, including children, families, the educators/staff at your centre, other colleagues, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development partners (e.g., Early Learning Consultants, Licensing) and others. This feedback may be received through observations, conversations/requests, or meetings. As you review and consider this feedback, re-examine related curricular expectations and pedagogical practices within the CAT Reflective Guide that can help to inform and focus your team’s

strengths or areas that require further attention.

1.3. Prior Areas of Focus (Goals)

*If this is your centre’s first time developing a QIP and setting goals, this section (1.3.) does not apply to you.

With your team, review your centre’s last set of QIP goals. Perhaps there were some unexpected obstacles or circumstances that prevented your team from achieving one or more of the prior goals. If there were prior goals that were not able to be achieved, consider if they should be kept on the next QIP.

Even if your team decides to keep a prior goal(s) for your centre’s current QIP, make sure to carry this over into a fresh QIP document rather than doing minor edits to your old QIP document. Keep copies of your old QIP documents so you can review and track your growth over the years!

1.4. Long-Term Vision (5-10 years)

Consider the long-term objectives of your Early Learning Centre. In annual reviews and updates of the QIP, your team will be able to see growth toward the future you envision.

Step 2: Planning

As you work through Step 2, consider team members' reflections as prompted by the CAT Reflective Guide, any feedback they have received, the successes and challenges experienced in reaching previous QIP goals, and your centre's long-term vision.

The Early Learning Consultants in your district are ready to help you as needed throughout this process. As you collaborate with the Early Learning Consultants, be sure to share your team's reflections. See Appendix A for contact information.

2.1. Early Learning Centre Strengths

With your team, identify and document at least three practices that are considered 'strong'. In what ways do your centre's educators/staff demonstrate their competencies, knowledge, skills and dispositions?

See Appendix B for an example of a strength.

2.2. Early Learning Centre Areas of Focus (Goals)

Feedback and educator/staff reflections have likely helped to identify some areas of your centre's practice that require more focus. With your team, identify at least three practices to work on (areas of focus) and develop goals using SMART goal elements. Focus on practices that are beyond minimum requirements and strive for higher quality. As you develop your goals, reflect on the ways your team can involve and engage children and their families in reaching these goals. Be sure to consider the unique strengths of each team member and how their actions can contribute to your goals.

See Appendix C for an example of an area of focus detailed using SMART goal elements.

As educators, support staff, administrators and owner/operators, you will always be striving for higher quality across many practices in your day-to-day work. Keep in mind individual educators may have their own goals specific to them and their particular room, beyond the centre's QIP, that will also impact your centre's quality. Your centre's QIP areas of focus are a few practices that your team as a whole are prioritizing and choosing to pay stronger attention to. Reaching one of your QIP goals does not mean that area of focus can be forgotten about or requires no further efforts or attention. You may even find your centre revisiting a similar area of focus the next year, or a couple years later! That is what continuous improvement is all about.

Specific

Goals specify **what** needs to be done, **where** it will be done, & **who** is going to do it.

Measurable

Goals are measurable so you can map your progress & identify roadblocks. How will you know when your goal has been achieved?

Attainable

Goals are reasonable to achieve. Are you able to access the time & resources needed to reach your goal? What limitations may exist?

Relevant

Goals should lead to higher quality in your Early Learning Centre. How will achieving this goal support children, families &/or educators (if applicable)?

Timely

Goals are time-based to maintain organization & encourage completion. When should each step toward your goal be completed?

Step 3: Taking Action

It is time for your team to do what you planned in each of your goals. The steps you put in the template will help guide your plan. Remember, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development partners are ready to support you as needed in achieving your goals. Reach out to the Early Learning Consultant(s) in your region for team contacts and available resources that may be helpful.

Step 4: Revisiting & Adjusting

Remember that QIPs are intended to be a living document that change as your team makes progress and reaches goals. Revisit your goals on an ongoing basis but be sure to revisit with your team 6 months after setting your goals to ensure they are not forgotten and you are continuing to make progress.

Appendix A

Anglophone Early Learning Consultant Contacts

District	Phone	Mail
Anglophone School District South	(506) 643-6900	490 Woodward Avenue Saint John, NB E2K 5N3
Anglophone School District East	(506) 856-2674	Riverview Middle School 45 Devere Road Riverview, NB E1B 2M4
Anglophone School District West	(506) 453-8903 (Wanda Butt) (506) 453-3377 (Cheryl McCrea)	20 McGloin Street Marysville, NB E3A 5T8
Anglophone School District North	(506) 440-4387	78 Henderson Street Miramichi, NB E1N 2R7

Appendix B

Example of a strength

Step 2.1: Planning- Strengths	
Strength #1	
Describe a practice that you would consider 'strong' at your Early Learning Centre.	We, as a facility, have been working to build relationships with each family & this is a practice we consider to be quite strong. The CAT Reflective Guide helped us articulate this strength, by focusing on a particular aspect of relationship building. We reflected on the curricular expectation "I build strong affirmative relationships with each family" & realized that there are many ways to demonstrate this. One of the ways that we are currently demonstrating this is educators invite families to read a story with the children in their rooms & we're currently doing this through video calls. We know not all families have the flexibility to take the time during the day, but it's wonderful when it does happen!
How can/do you acknowledge & celebrate this strength?	Documentation posted in the entry-way has been a wonderful way to acknowledge & celebrate the building of these important relationships. Photos & stories have prompted conversations with families & children about their time spent here together. Educators and I have also received positive comments from family members who are appreciative of being able to join us & see their children interacting with their friends. We make sure to take a moment to jot down their words of encouragement in our reflective journals. We find that reflecting on these notes helps us stay positive & serves as a reminder that what we do makes a difference.
Is there a way this strength can support other areas/practices in your Early Learning Centre? In what ways will this improve quality?	Some educators have noticed that families are more comfortable having conversations with them & this also helped them to relax with families & feel their confidence level has strengthened. Conversations with families about their children are more engaging & relaxed. Reflecting on our strengthened relationships with families has also encouraged us to value their role as their child's first & most influential teacher & we now see them in a different way.
Do you feel supported to continue succeeding with this practice? Are there additional supports or resources you require to continue to build on this strength?	We do feel supported to continue succeeding with this practice. As we continue to use the CAT-Reflective Guide as a resource, we are reflecting on many other ways that we can build upon these relationships with families & how our strengthened practices support so many aspects of our work.

Appendix C

Example of an area of focus using SMART goals elements

Step 2.2: Planning- Areas of Focus	
Name of NB Early Learning Centre:	Date of QIP development:
Name of Operator:	
Goal #1	
Describe the area of focus you would like to further examine. After describing your area of focus, reflect on the SMART goal elements below to identify details that are important to be aware of as you purposefully plan to achieve your goal.	<p>As we examined various areas within the CAT Reflective Guide, we were curious to know more about the curricular expectation “I use a wide repertoire of texts” (props, materials, furnishings & loose parts). We examined some of the pedagogical practices that provide examples of this curricular expectation in action, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • images in books, photos & displays that reflect all of the children & their families • real images of children, local spaces & objects <p>We found ourselves reflecting on the books in our Early Learning Centre & asked ourselves, “do the children see themselves & their families represented in the books that we are reading each day?”</p> <p>This particular ‘area of focus’ will examine the books in our centre to determine whether they reflect all of the children & their families. In particular we will focus on the different cultures & family compositions represented within our centre.</p>
Specific- Who will be supporting you or involved in reaching this goal? What does the end goal look like? Where do you want to see your progress (e.g., outdoor or indoor environment?)	The educators are leading this goal in each of their rooms (with the support of the administrator and operator), but we will also engage the children & their families as well as the local community to help identify and introduce books that represent the children & families in our Early Learning Centre.
Measurable- How will you know when you are making progress or your goal has been achieved?	<p>We will know we’re making progress when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A variety of fiction, non-fiction & homemade books that reflect all of the children & their families are available & independently accessible to all children & families in our centre - Books are available throughout each room to support all learning areas - All children are able to see images of people who look like them & their families in the books - Children & families are engaging with the books - Homemade books are prompting sharing of stories, traditions and ideas - Families are sharing their books with educators & educators are sharing their books with families - Books are prompting conversations among children, families & educators

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation co-created with children and families reflects the ongoing work around this project
<p>Attainable- What supports/resources do you already have or still need in order to reach this goal? What are your limitations, if any?</p>	<p>We already have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our most valuable support/resource- children & their families -Photos of children & families -Our reflective journals -Current book collections - Family book collections or ideas? - Book-making materials (paper, photos of children & families, meaningful words in children’s languages) - Library & community organizations - Dept of Education & Early Childhood partners. The resource lending library. <p>Might still need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional books (limitations: budget. But we can take advantage of the library, resource lending library, making homemade books) - Additional family photos for homemade books – ask families - Professional Learning opportunities – What professional learning supports & resources are we beginning to identify?
<p>Relevant- How will this improve quality? In what ways does this align with the NBCF~E?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports children’s & families’ well-being: Supports sense of self, sense of other, sense of belonging - Supports relationship building with & among families - Opportunity to celebrate & respond to children’s & families’ uniqueness & individuality - Opportunity for family engagement, input & participation
<p>Timely- When might you expect to see progress? *Tip: It may be helpful to plan out your steps below first, then document here when you may want to see each step completed! Depending on your goal, some of your steps may be actioned simultaneously or at different times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By mid-March: have Step 1 complete - By mid-late April: Complete inventory of current books - Throughout April-May: Reach out to available resources, begin co-creating homemade books. - Ongoing: documentation of co-creation of homemade books, & children’s & families’ interaction with them. - Ongoing: As homemade books are co-created & new books are acquired, make them available & accessible to all children & families. - By mid-June: All children & their families are reflected in the available & accessible books, with the understanding that this is an ongoing area of focus.
<p>What actions are required to reach your goal? Break down your goal into smaller, achievable steps.</p>	<p>Step 1: Educators will have conversations with children & families. Seek input, ideas for books from families including ideas for homemade books (ask for photos; if other home languages, ask for written & oral language supports). Build relationships during greeting & departure times.</p> <p>Step 2:</p>

- Educators will do an inventory of books they currently have available & accessible in their rooms (they can do this with the children). I will do an inventory of books we have available in storage that we may want to bring back out.
- The administrator will reach out to the community library, other organizations. Reach out to district Early Learning Consultant to ask about the district resource lending library.
- Educators will co-create homemade books with children & families.

Step 3:

- As a team we will ensure plenty of books are available & accessible to all children & families & ensure all the children & their families are represented
- Educators will invite families into their rooms to read books & tell stories to the children
- Educators will document the children's & families' experiences engaging with the new books
- We will all document our thoughts, questions, experiences & learnings in our reflective journals. Reflect on how this area of focus will support other areas of our practice.
- As a team we will co-create a small lending library for children & families

Question for further reflection: Consider the example above. How might this area of focus extend to children's poetry and songs?

Appendix D

Early Learning Centre QIP Template (Steps 1-4)

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE QIP TEMPLATE		
Name of NB Early Learning Centre:		Date of QIP development:
Name of Operator:		

Step 1: Reflecting & Reviewing Feedback	
1.1 Reflection. Have all educators review their recent reflective journal entries and share some of their key thoughts. Summarize some of the common practices your team has been examining & reflecting on through use of the CAT Reflective Guide that you may want to consider in this current QIP.	
1.2 Feedback. Review feedback your team has received & documented in your reflective journals since you last updated your QIP. Summarize any particular pieces of feedback you would like to focus on in this current QIP.	
1.3 Prior Goals (if applicable). Review your last set of QIP goals. Did you achieve all of these goals, or are there any that should remain in this current QIP? Which one(s)? To achieve these goal(s), does your approach need to change in any way?	
1.4 Long-Term Vision. Summarize your long-term vision here, so you can remember the bigger picture of what you are working toward.	

Step 2.1: Planning – Strengths	
Strength #1	
Describe a practice that you would consider 'strong' at your Early Learning Centre.	
How can/do you acknowledge & celebrate this strength?	
Is there a way this strength can support other areas/practices in your Early Learning Centre? In what ways will this improve quality?	
Do you feel supported to continue succeeding with this practice? Are there additional supports or resources you require to continue to build on this strength?	

Strength #2	
Describe a practice that you would consider 'strong' at your Early Learning Centre.	
How can/do you acknowledge & celebrate this strength?	
Is there a way this strength can support other areas/practices in your Early Learning Centre? In what ways will this improve quality?	
Do you feel supported to continue succeeding with this practice? Are there additional supports or resources you require to continue to build on this strength?	
Strength #3	
Describe a practice that you would consider 'strong' at your Early Learning Centre.	
How can/do you acknowledge & celebrate this strength?	
Is there a way this strength can support other areas/practices in your Early Learning Centre? In what ways will this improve quality?	
Do you feel supported to continue succeeding with this practice? Are there additional supports or resources you require to continue to build on this strength?	
Step 2.2: Planning – Areas of Focus	
Goal #1	
Describe the area of focus you would like to further examine. After describing your area of focus, reflect on the SMART goal elements below to identify details that are important to be aware of as you purposefully plan to achieve your goal.	
Specific- <i>Who</i> will be supporting you or involved in reaching this goal? <i>What</i> does the end goal look like? <i>Where</i> do you want to see your progress (e.g., outdoor or indoor environment?)	
Measurable- How will you know when you are making progress or your goal has been achieved?	
Attainable- What supports/resources do you already have or still need in order to reach this goal? What are your limitations, if any?	
Relevant- How will this improve quality? In what ways does this align with the NBCF~E?	
Timely- When might you expect to see progress? *Tip: It may be helpful to plan out your steps below first, then document here when you may want to see each step completed!	

Depending on your goal, some of your steps may be actioned simultaneously or at different times.	
What actions are required to reach your goal? Break down your goal into smaller, achievable steps.	Step 1:
	Step 2:
	Step 3:
Goal #2	
Describe the area of focus you would like to further examine. After describing your area of focus, reflect on the SMART goal elements below to identify details that are important to be aware of as you work to purposefully plan to achieve your goal.	
Specific- <i>Who</i> will be supporting you or involved in reaching this goal? <i>What</i> does the end goal look like? <i>Where</i> do you want to see your progress (e.g., outdoor or indoor environment?)	
Measurable- How will you know when you are making progress or your goal has been achieved?	
Attainable- What supports/resources do you already have or still need in order to reach this goal? What are your limitations, if any?	
Relevant- How will this improve quality? In what ways does this align with the NBCF~E?	
Timely- When might you expect to see progress? *Tip: It may be helpful to plan out your steps below first, then document here when you may want to see each step completed! Depending on your goal, some of your steps may be actioned simultaneously or at different times.	
What actions are required to reach your goal? Break down your goal into smaller, achievable steps.	Step 1:
	Step 2:
	Step 3:
Goal #3	
Describe the area of focus you would like to further examine. After describing your area of focus, reflect on the SMART goal elements below to identify details that are important to be aware of as you work to purposefully plan to achieve your goal.	

Specific- <i>Who</i> will be supporting you or involved in reaching this goal? <i>What</i> does the end goal look like? <i>Where</i> do you want to see your progress (e.g., outdoor or indoor environment?)	
Measurable- How will you know when you are making progress or your goal has been achieved?	
Attainable- What supports/resources do you already have or still need in order to reach this goal? What are your limitations, if any?	
Relevant- How will this improve quality? In what ways does this align with the NBCF~E?	
Timely- When might you expect to see progress? *Tip: It may be helpful to plan out your steps below first, then document here when you may want to see each step completed! Depending on your goal, some of your steps may be actioned simultaneously or at different times.	
What actions are required to reach your goal? Break down your goal into smaller, achievable steps.	Step 1:
	Step 2:
	Step 3:

Step 3: Taking Action

Step 4: Reviewing & Adjusting Revisit & adjust your goals as often as you feel appropriate. Revisit your QIP at least once 6 months after setting your goals.			
Review Date #1:		Review Date #2:	
What progress have you made toward your goals so far?		What progress have you made toward your goals so far?	
Reflect on your goals that have been fully achieved...		Reflect on your goals that have been fully achieved...	
Which of your goals have been achieved?		Which of your goals have been achieved?	

What can be done in order to maintain this success?	What can be done in order to maintain this success?
Reflect on the goals you are still working toward...	Reflect on the goals you are still working toward...
Have you run into any obstacles or challenges to reaching your goals?	Have you run into any obstacles or challenges to reaching your goals?
If you are facing any obstacles, what can be done to move past them & continue progressing?	If you are facing any obstacles, what can be done to move past them & continue progressing?
Do you need to make any changes to the time & resources assigned to any of your goals?	Do you need to make any changes to the time & resources assigned to any of your goals?