Ideal Learning
IN COLORADO

A document that demonstrates strong alignment between Ideal Learning and early learning guidance implemented in Colorado

EARLY MILESTONES
COLORADO

Colorado ELDGs & Ideal Learning

COLORADO EARLY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines (ELDGs) describe the path of children's learning and development from birth to eight years old. They are split into three sections based on age and align with the Colorado Academic Standards: 1) birth to three years old, 2) three to five years old, and 3) five to eight years old. Each age range includes a description of a typical child's abilities and skills, as well as what adults can do to support the child's growth and development. The Guidelines include 10 guiding principles, 6 to 11 essential domains of learning for each age group, and hundreds of skills.

IDEAL LEARNING

Ideal Learning refers to education models that embrace a commitment to play; relationship-based interactions; an ecologically-focused and child-centered perspective; equity; and a strength- and inquiry-based approach with children, adults, and families. The Principles of Ideal Learning represent shared core concepts that form the foundation of high-quality early education.

THE CROSSWALK

This document crosswalks the guiding principles of the ELDGs (column 1) to the Principles of Ideal Learning (column 2). Column 3 provides the alignment between five Ideal Learning education models' design principles or core values: EL Education, HighScope, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and Tools of the Mind.

IDEAL LEARNING IN ACTION

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines (ELDGs) and Ideal Learning promote environments that foster growth in young children. The example activities below offer a sneak peek into how Ideal Learning preschool and kindergarten classrooms support growth within each of the ELDG domains of learning.
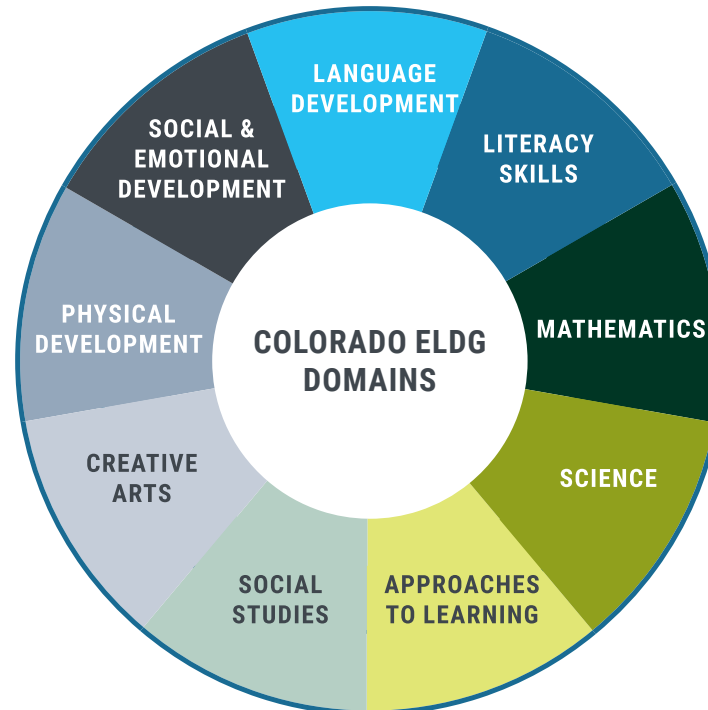
MONTESSORI: When children have a conflict, they visit a Peace Table and learn the language of conflict resolution ("I don't like it when..."). The Peace Table allows for space between children and face-to-face communication. There may be a picture of a well-known peace-maker, such as Martin Luther King, Jr. One child speaks at a time, and everyone is given a chance to respond. The teacher generally visits the Peace Table with preschool children. As children develop these skills, they begin to resolve conflicts on their own.

TOOLS OF THE MIND: In addition to creating an environment rich in spoken language and print, teachers use a variety of pictures to help children remember things like classroom routines or rules to a game. These pictures also serve as a tool for helping Dual Language Learners interact with their peers and teachers. Pictures of different roles or actions can encourage Dual Language Learners to play with others before they are able to participate verbally.

HIGH SCOPE: To build alphabetic knowledge, teachers engage children in "looking for letters" activities. The teacher holds up a newspaper or magazine, discusses the letters and words, and has the children point to and name letters. Children then find and circle letters on their own. Those with visual or motor limitations are given pages with large headlines, and the paper is taped to the table to keep it from moving while they search.

HIGH SCOPE: To build gross-motor skills, teachers engage children in "dancing in the air." Teachers turn on music, lie on the floor, begin moving their feet to the music, and encourage children to join them. As the children join in, teachers describe their motions with comments like, "You're bending your knees up and down." Children with limited mobility receive stuffed animals with long, bendable arms or legs to move to the music.

EL EDUCATION: Children explore the world to understand patterns and relationships. They might learn about measurement by first measuring their bodies and comparing those measurements to other objects. Children build their understanding of mathematics through direct experiences and have a variety of opportunities to practice through songs, movement, and exploration of natural objects.

TOOLS OF THE MIND: Children are encouraged to help decorate their classrooms and create "props" for make-believe play. Children create 2-D and 3-D art, and they learn to care for art materials. Children draw and create collages using familiar shapes in novel ways to explore line, shape, form, and space.

MONTESSORI: The science area includes simple experiments children can do on their own, such as "sink or float" where children fill a tub of water and test one object at a time to see if it floats or sinks. When they remove them from the water, the object is placed in a specific bowl labeled *sink* or *float*. Magnetic versus non-magnetic experiments and exercises also help children to classify materials in the environment.

EL EDUCATION: Children learn about social issues that impact and shape society. Children explore topics like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Harlem Renaissance, the American Revolution, and more.

REGGIO EMILIA: Children choose to create a map of their city for visitors. This involves physical development of fine motor control as they draw the map; use of language to describe the city and write directions; use of mathematics for measurements between locations; and creative arts to draw buildings, streets, and houses.

COLORADO ELDG DOMAINS

- LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
- LITERACY SKILLS
- MATHEMATICS
- SCIENCE
- APPROACHES TO LEARNING
- SOCIAL STUDIES
- CREATIVE ARTS
- PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
- SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Nature and nurture affect children's development. All children are shaped by a dynamic and **continuous interaction between biology and experience**.	Ideal Learning's approach to educating young children is **ecologically-focused and child-centered**. Ideal Learning acknowledges that in addition to biology, children develop within the context of relationships, environments, culture, and chronological time.	EL Education supports young children's physical and cognitive development through **meaningful experiences**, nurturing of **individual cultural identities**, and a deep understanding of the **unique learning needs** of young learners. HighScope recognizes that in addition to **biological influences** on development, children construct knowledge through direct, **immediate experiences** with objects, people, ideas, and events. Montessori places intentional focus on the **relationship between the child, adult, and the learning environment**. Reggio Emilia recognizes that education must **focus on each child in relation** to the family, other children, educators, the school environment, the community, and society. Tools of the Mind is grounded in the theory that the path of child development reflects the interplay between **biologically determined processes** and **cultural development**. This occurs through the interaction of the growing child with others.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Culture influences every aspect of human development and is reflected in childrearing beliefs and practices designed to promote healthy adaptation.	In Ideal Learning programs, decision-making reflects a **commitment to equity**. A principle of Ideal Learning recognizes children construct knowledge from **diverse experiences** to make meaning of the world. IL educators are **knowledgeable about the community** in which they teach and respect family voice and agency to authentically inform decisions. Children's individual **differences are celebrated** as unique aspects of their identity. Administrators and educators recognize the deeply **disparate opportunities and outcomes that have existed and persist for children** from low-income families, children of color, multilingual children, and children with disabilities.	EL Education recognizes that both **diversity and inclusion** increase the richness of ideas, creativity, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. HighScope educators work in partnership with families and communities to create **inclusive and culturally responsive** settings that respect and incorporate diverse cultures, languages, family backgrounds, and unique needs. Montessori environments are designed to reflect the **varied cultures and customs** of children and their families. Grounded in a belief in the inherent worth and potential of all people, educators create the space for children to explore, inquire, and discover. Reggio Emilia views children's learning and development as formed by **cultural contexts** with children as producers of culture. Children with **disabilities have "special rights" to full participation** in the classroom, the school, and society. Tools of the Mind helps children acquire the **tools of their culture** and gives teachers the tools to ensure every child becomes a successful learner by developing the cognitive, social, and emotional skills needed to reach their highest potential.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
The growth of **self-regulation** is a cornerstone of early childhood development that cuts across all domains of behavior.	An Ideal Learning principle emphasizes that young children learn through relationships. Children develop **self-regulation** through warm and responsive relationships with the adults and other children in their lives. In Ideal Learning settings, children engage in multiple forms of play that support symbolic and imaginative thinking, peer relationships, language, physical development, and **problem-solving skills**. Ideal Learning educators empower children to develop **initiative** by providing time, space, and materials for **child-initiated** play, appropriate risk-taking, and experiences that engender a sense of accomplishment. Through play, relationships with adults and other children, and positive adult modeling, children develop the abilities to **control behavior and manage emotions**.	EL Education promotes the development of **self-regulation** by exposing children to experiences that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, **self-discipline**, and imagination. EL Education uses a framework focused on helping children become effective learners, ethical people, and contributors to a better world. HighScope fosters self-regulation and **executive functioning skills** through a "plan-do-review" process where children make plans, follow through with those plans, and then reflect on their plans throughout the process. Educators build on children's ideas, learning, and problem-solving. Montessori provides dynamic and developmentally aligned learning environments designed to foster the skills that lead to the development of **executive functions, emotional intelligence, and social skills**. Reggio Emilia is based on the belief that all children have potential, curiosity, and interest in developing relationships, **constructing their own learning**, and understanding their environments. Tools of the Mind promotes self-regulation by supporting mature make-believe play, conducting activities specifically designed to build **self-regulation** skills, and embeds these activities within instruction that builds skills in literacy, mathematics, and **social-emotional skills**.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Children are **active participants** in their own development, reflecting the **intrinsic** human drive to **explore** and **master one's own environment**.	Ideal Learning models place children at center of their education and share commitment to **self-directed**, student-centered learning to leverage the **intrinsic** drive of students to **explore** and **master their own environments**. Ideal Learning models intentionally design environments to facilitate children's **exploration, independence, and interaction.**	EL Education recognizes learning as a personal **process of discovery** and a social activity, encouraging both children and adults to become increasingly responsible for **directing their own personal** and collective learning. HighScope believes **active learning** and **intrinsic motivation** are core learning components. Children pursue their **personal** interests, questions, and intentions, which leads to **exploration, experimentation, and the construction of new knowledge** and understanding. Montessori is designed to support the **development of focus**, agency, persistence, independence, responsibility, and **intrinsic motivation** through **learning opportunities** that foster wonder, concentration, and joy. Reggio Emilia emphasizes that children are **active** protagonists in their own **growth and development** as a core principle. Tools of the Mind balances adult-supported and **child-initiated activities** with an emphasis on mature make-believe play as the leading activity. **Child choice** is woven across the day as children participate in small group and center activities.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Relationships are the building blocks of healthy development.	Ideal Learning models believe **teachers are guides**, **nurturing presences**, and co-constructors of knowledge. An Ideal Learning principle states that young children and adults learn through **relationships**.	EL Education recognizes that strong, healthy **relationships between educators and children** are directly linked to children's academic success. A **caring adult** looks after their "crew" and acts as an **advocate** for each child. HighScope educators create environments that encourage the exploration of learning materials and **interaction with adults and peers**. Key strategies for adult-child interactions are sharing control, **communicating as a partner**, and problem-solving to resolve conflicts. Montessori includes **multi-age groups** so children spend three years in the same learning environment growing alongside **consistent educators and peers**, **learning from and teaching one another**, and developing interpersonal communication and empathy skills. Reggio Emilia emphasizes that **educators and children are partners** in learning. Educators not only teach basic skills but **also act as learners along with children**. Children, teachers, and families are in relationship with each other and are an interconnected system. Tools of the Mind views **educators and children as collaborators** in learning and has designed activities to help children form relationships with all classmates to create a warm, cooperative **community of learners**.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
The broad range of **individual differences** among young children often makes it difficult to distinguish normal variations and maturational delays from transient disorders and persistent impairments.	In Ideal Learning settings, instruction is **personalized** to acknowledge each child's development and abilities. Ideal Learning educators understand where **individual children** are in their **developmental trajectory** and tailor their practices to each child's needs. Ideal Learning educators are **close observers of children** and use observations to both interpret and project future experiences and opportunities for children and parents. Ideal Learning educators and other professionals work together to make schools and classrooms **inclusive**, allowing for individually different needs of children.	EL Education educators proactively plan instruction to build **on individual students' varied assets and meet students' varied needs** based upon ongoing assessment. Adaptations are made for advanced learners, for English language learners, and for children whose differences have been identified by observing their interests and approaches to learning. HighScope recognizes that the **pace of individual children's development and learning varies**. Through continuous observation, educators assess children's learning and develop strength-based lesson plans focused on **individual development** and abilities. Montessori is designed with the inclusion of **diverse learners as a cornerstone practice**. Each child is seen as **unique**, and services are **tailored** to meet children's individual needs. Reggio Emilia focuses on each **individual** child's right to be respected and valued in their own **identity, uniqueness, difference**, and at their **own pace of growth and development**. Tools of the Mind uses a variety of assessment strategies to establish **each child's current developmental level** as well as an assessment of each child's Zone of Proximal Development (e.g., what a child can do when provided appropriate support from educators) Educators adapt instructional strategies to the needs of children with **special needs, Dual Language Learners**, and others requiring additional supports.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
The development of children unfolds along **individual pathways** whose **trajectories** are characterized by continuities and discontinuities, as well as by a series of significant **transitions**.	Ideal Learning instruction is **highly personalized** to each unique child's development and abilities. Ideal Learning educators understand where individual children are in their **developmental trajectory** and tailor their practices to each child's needs. Daily routines and curriculum reflect and understanding of how trauma might play out in an **individual child's behaviors and needs**.	EL Education honors the **differences in children's developmental trajectories**, offering a structured phonetic program with whole group instruction at grade-level alongside **tailored instruction** that accounts for varying levels of readiness as children learn to read and write. HighScope supports children's learning based on 58 key indicators along a **developmental continuum**. Through ongoing observations and anecdotes, educators develop strength-based lesson plans focusing on children's individual abilities and development. Montessori educators conduct comprehensive scientific observations of each individual child and their learning processes to monitor progress and **tailor learning experiences** to each child's needs. Reggio Emilia educators collaborate to interpret observations of **children's learning trajectories** so they can design responsive environments and experiences that enrich and challenge children's understandings. Tools of the Mind activities are **multi-level**, meaning that children with **different abilities** are able to engage in the same activities, while educators support **learning at different levels**.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines Guiding Principles	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Human development is shaped by the ongoing interplay among sources of vulnerability and sources of resilience. The timing of early experiences can matter, but, more often than not, the developing child remains vulnerable to risks and open to protective influences throughout the early years of life and into adulthood. The course of development can be altered in early childhood by effective interventions that change the balance between risk and protection, thereby shifting the odds in favor of more adaptive outcomes.	An Ideal Learning principle states that children construct knowledge from diverse experiences to make meaning of the world. Some early experiences may be positive and offer children protection from life's stressors; however, other experiences could be negative or traumatic, leaving the child vulnerable. Ideal Learning educators know the effects of adverse experiences on young children of different ages and know how to respond in meaningful ways. In addition to supporting children's cognitive development, experiences in Ideal Learning settings focus on supporting social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and moral development. In Ideal Learning settings, daily routines and curriculum reflect an understanding of how trauma might play out in an individual child's behavior. Resources in Ideal Learning programs are targeted based on individual children's needs and circumstances, which includes differentiated funding or supports. An Ideal Learning principle recognizes the time of childhood is valued. Ideal Learning educators have deep knowledge of child development and build authentic relationships with students to tailor learning experiences to each unique child's needs. Responsive and nurturing student-educator relationships are protective influences that promote optimal child outcomes in early childhood. Ideal Learning programs are rooted in child development research and recognize that high quality early care and education as an effective intervention that can set young children up for success in school and in life. Quality early care and education experiences with nurturing relationships with knowledgeable educators promote more favorable outcomes, build resilience in children, and help to buffer risks posed by negative experiences.	EL Education recognizes that children bring with them rich and varied experiences, some of which may be rooted in trauma. Educators **nurture** and develop the whole child through deep family engagement and support, building **strong relationships** with every student, and creating a sense of **safety and belonging**. HighScope is rooted in research that has influenced the field of early education beginning with the HighScope Perry Preschool study. More than 50 years of research shows that high quality programs advance the **development of each child** and improve their chance of living a better life through adulthood and into the next generation. Montessori educators are intentionally prepared to develop the skills connected to wide-scope **developmental outcomes linked to human flourishing**: executive function, emotional intelligence, social skills, and cultural fluency. Reggio Emilia believes in every child's potential and their right to develop relationships, autonomy, creativity, and learning. Classrooms act as a cultural laboratory for pedagogical research and **social innovation** and a partner in **sharing educational responsibilities** with families and other child-serving organizations. Tools of the Mind successfully boosts executive functions in children living in high-risk environments, which results in improved **behavioral school readiness** and increased **academic performance**.

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes & Ideal Learning

HEAD START EARLY LEARNING OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

The Head Start Guiding Principles for School Readiness are fundamental to Head Start programs and policies that prepare young children for success in school and in life.

IDEAL LEARNING

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THE CROSSWALK

This document crosswalks the Head Start Guiding Principles for School Readiness (column 1) to Principles of Ideal Learning (column 2). Column 3 describes how Ideal Learning programs and educators demonstrate the alignment in action with children and families. Some Ideal Learning principles are included multiple times because they align with more than one principle. The Central Domains of the Head Start Framework are included in a separate crosswalk of Colorado's Early Learning & Development Guidelines with Ideal Learning.

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Guiding Principles for School Readiness	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning in Action
Each child is unique and can succeed. Children are individuals with different rates and paths of development. Each child is uniquely influenced by their prenatal environment, temperament, physiology, and life experiences. With the appropriate support, all children can be successful learners and achieve the skills, behaviors, and knowledge described in the Framework.	Instruction is personalized to acknowledge each child's development and abilities. The time of childhood is valued.	Educators understand where individual children are in their developmental trajectory and tailor their practices to each child's needs. All children are not only entitled to an education that supports human flourishing but that all children, regardless of background, have innate potential to thrive. Curricula aim to use unhurried time as a resource for learning, recognizing that children are born knowing how to learn and use time flexibly, repetitively, strategically, and in relation to new experiences and relationships.
Learning occurs within the context of relationships. Caring families, teachers, and other adults matter in a young child's life. Responsive and supportive interactions with adults are essential to children's learning.	Young children and adults learn through relationships. The teacher is a guide, nurturing presence, and co-constructor of knowledge. Continuous learning environments support adult development.	Educators foster a sense of community among children and adults in the classroom. Educators develop a relationship with each child that helps them feel seen and acknowledged.
Families are children's first and most important caregivers, teachers, and advocates. Families must be respected and supported as the primary influence in their child's early learning and education. Their knowledge, skills, and cultural backgrounds contribute to children's school readiness.	Young children and adults learn through relationships. Children construct knowledge from diverse experiences to make meaning of the world.	Educators, children, and families interact as partners and build trust through relationships. Educators have a strength-based view of children and families, which enables them to partner with and guide them into new areas of learning and growth.
Children learn best when they are emotionally and physically safe and secure. Nurturing, responsive, and consistent care helps create safe environments where children feel secure and valued. In these settings, children are able to engage fully in learning experiences.	Young children and adults learn through relationships. The teacher is a guide, nurturing presence, and co-constructor of knowledge. Continuous learning environments support adult development.	Educators foster a sense of community among children and adults in the classroom. Educators develop a relationship with each child that helps them feel seen and acknowledged.

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Guiding Principles for School Readiness	Principles of Ideal Learning Alignment	Ideal Learning in Action
Areas of development are integrated, and children learn many concepts and skills at the same time. Any single skill, behavior, or ability may involve multiple areas of development. For example, as infants gain fine motor skills, they can manipulate objects in new ways and deepen their understanding of cause and effect. As preschoolers gain new verbal skills, they can better manage their emotions and form more complex friendships.	Instruction is personalized to acknowledge each child's development and abilities. The time of childhood is valued.	Educators understand where individual children are in their developmental trajectory and tailor their practices to each child's needs. All children are not only entitled to an education that supports human flourishing, but that all children, regardless of background, have innate potential to thrive. Curricula aim to use unhurried time as a resource for learning, recognizing that children are born knowing how to learn and use time flexibly, repetitively, strategically, and in relation to new experiences and relationships.
Teaching must be intentional and focused on how children learn and grow. Children are active, engaged, and eager learners. Good teaching practices build on these intrinsic strengths by providing developmentally appropriate instruction and opportunities for exploration and meaningful play.	Play is an essential element of young children's learning. The environment is intentionally designed to facilitate children's exploration, independence, and interaction.	Educators create opportunities for exploration and find ways to integrate them into everyday experiences. Children engage in multiple forms of play that support symbolic and imaginative thinking, peer relationships, language, physical development, and problem-solving skills.
Every child has diverse strengths rooted in their family's culture, background, language, and beliefs. Responsive and respectful learning environments welcome children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Effective teaching practices and learning experiences build on the unique backgrounds and prior experiences of each child.	Children construct knowledge from diverse experiences to make meaning of the world. Decision-making reflects a commitment to equity.	All children and families are valued as contributing members of the community. Educators regularly engage with families to support children's learning and use knowledge of family and community life to organize experiences and environments.

Colorado Educator Guidelines & Ideal Learning

TEACHER QUALITY STANDARDS

Colorado has created a common vision of great teaching that is guided by four quality standards. These standards apply to kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers. The standards also apply to pre-K teachers if their district requires them to have a license from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Each standard includes three to six elements outlining the knowledge and skills required for a teacher. CDE has created a rubric with professional practices that validate a teacher's successful implementation of each standard.

COMPETENCIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS & ADMINISTRATORS

Colorado has created a common vision of a competent and effective early childhood workforce in all early care and education settings for infants through Pre-Kindergarteners. There are eight domains with a combined 512 competencies. As part of Colorado's Preschool Development Grant, the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) is currently streamlining and updating these competencies.

IDEAL LEARNING

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THE CROSSWALK

Early Milestones Colorado compared the standards and current competencies with the educator development pathways for five Ideal Learning models: EL Education, HighScope, Montessori, Tools of the Mind, and Reggio Emilia. This crosswalk outlines the alignment and can be used to guide decisions on alternative opportunities for teacher licensure and early educator credentialing.

Colorado Teacher Quality Standards & Elements	Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators Domains and Categories	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Teachers demonstrate mastery of and **pedagogical expertise** in the content they teach. • Provide instruction that is aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards and their district's organized plan of instruction. • Develop and implement lessons that connect to a variety of content areas/disciplines and emphasize literacy and mathematics. • Demonstrate knowledge of the content, central concepts, inquiry, appropriate evidence-based instructional practices, and specialized charac-teristics of the disciplines being taught.	**Teaching Practice** • Planning Framework for Curricula and Learning Environment • Physical Health Promotion • Physical Proximity and Engagement • Language and Literacy Promotion • Cognitive Development Promotion • Social-Emotional Development Promotion • Fostering Creativity • How Children Learn and Approaches to Learning • Knowledge of Productivity	*In all Ideal Learning approaches, the educator curriculum is closely aligned with the child curriculum. All five models align with Colorado's standards and competencies.* **EL Education:** In-service, curriculum aligned program based on active learning, character growth, and teamwork for pre-K and K **HighScope:** In-service, curriculum aligned program focused on research- and practice-based services that arose out of the 1962 HighScope Perry Preschool Project for pre-K **Montessori:** International pedagogical movement based on the Montessori philosophy and materials; requires pre-service and in-service individuals to undergo an extensive application process for pre-K and K **Reggio Emilia:** International pedagogical movement developed in the city of Reggio Emilia, Italy based on the belief that high-quality pre-K and K is the right of all children and a shared community responsibility **Tools of the Mind:** In-service, curriculum aligned program based on Vygotskian theory, developmental science, and neuroscience research for pre-K and K

Colorado Teacher Quality Standards & Elements	Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators Domains and Categories	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Teachers demonstrate **professionalism** through ethical conduct, reflection, and leadership. • Demonstrate high standards for professional conduct. • Link professional growth to their professional goals. • Able to respond to a complex, dynamic environment. • Demonstrate leadership in the school, the community, and the teaching profession.	**Professional Development and Leadership** • Ethics and Codes of Conduct • Reflective and Continuous Professional Development • Advocacy	*In all Ideal Learning approaches, continuous learning environments support adult development. All five models align with Colorado's standards and competencies.* **EL Education:** Training is 1-5 days with follow-up coaching **HighScope:** aligned; training is 4 weeks over two summers with extensive classroom practice in between; 120 hours total **Montessori:** Training is 9 months to 2 years; 600 to 1,200 hours of preparation depending on age group **Reggio Emilia:** University of Colorado Denver offers a 16-week, 3-credit course, Colorado Interpretation of the Reggio Approach, which articulates with an Innovate Early Childhood Education master's degree; also available are 1-week study group visits to Reggio Emilia, Italy organized by Reggio Children, and a variety of workshops and conferences **Tools of the Mind:** Training is one year of core preparation with the possibility of two subsequent years of in-service support
Teachers establish a **safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment** for a diverse population of students. • Foster a predictable learning environment characterized by acceptable student behavior and efficient use of time in which each student has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults and peers.	**Child Growth, Development, and Learning** • Knowledge of Developmental Domains, Changes and Milestones • Individual Needs and Differences • Identified Special Needs • Fostering Healthy Attachment and Relationships **Family and Community Partnerships Valuing Families** • Respect for Diversity • Effective Communication • Building Reciprocal Relationships with Families • Resources that Support Children and Families	*In all Ideal Learning approaches, teachers engage in relationship-based interactions within an ecologically focused, child-centered perspective. All five models align with Colorado's standards and competencies; however, the Health, Safety & Nutrition domain requires knowledge of site-specific regulations based on funding streams and district policies and is addressed based on the location of the model.* *In all Ideal Learning approaches:* • Administrators and teachers recognize the deeply disparate opportunities and outcomes that have existed and persist for children from low-income families, children of color, multilingual children, and children with disabilities.

(cont.)

Colorado Teacher Quality Standards & Elements	Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators Domains and Categories	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
• Demonstrate an awareness of, a commitment to, and respect for multiple aspects of diversity, while working toward common goals as a community of learners. • Engage students as individuals, including those with diverse needs and interests, across a range of ability levels by adapting their teaching for the benefit of all students. • Work collaboratively with the families and/or significant adults for the benefit of students.	**Guidance** • Positive Interactions and Relationships with Individual Children • Child Guidance: Discipline/ Promoting Social and Emotional Competence • Communication • The Role of Staff and Other Adults **Health, Safety, and Nutrition** • Knowledge of Regulations • Health • Safety • Nutrition	• Educators are knowledgeable about the community in which they teach and respect family voice and agency to authentically inform decisions. • Children's individual differences are celebrated as unique aspects of their identity. • Children's home language is valued and supported while educators facilitate English-language learning in keeping with parental goals. • Educators and other professionals work together to make schools and classrooms inclusive, allowing for individually different needs of children. • Outdoor learning is important whenever possible, allowing children space to run, jump, and engage in play. • Relationships are reflective of authentic and honest engagement with community and families. • Educators foster a sense of community among children and adults in the classroom. • Educators develop a relationship with each child that helps them feel seen and acknowledged. • Educators, children, and families interact as partners and engender trust by building relationships. • Children's relationships with each other are encouraged, valued, and actively supported. • Educators engage regularly with families to support children's learning and use knowledge of family and community life to organize experiences and environments. • Educators know the effects of adverse experiences (ACEs) on young children of different ages and how to respond in meaningful ways. • Educators are thoughtful and intentional about the decisions they make in the classroom, guided by a moral and ethical commitment to the common good of humanity. • Educators have a strengths-based view of children and families, which enables them to partner with and guide them into new areas of learning and growth.

Colorado Teacher Quality Standards & Elements	Competencies for Early Childhood Educators and Administrators Domains and Categories	Ideal Learning Models' Alignment
Teachers plan and deliver **effective instruction** and create an environment that facilitates learning for their students. • Demonstrate knowledge about the ways in which learning takes place, including the levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students. • Use formal and informal methods to assess student learning, provide feedback, and use results to inform planning and instruction. • Integrate and utilize appropriate available technology to engage students in authentic learning experiences. • Establish and communicate high expectations and use processes to support the development of critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. • Provide students with opportunities to work in teams and develop leadership. • Model and promote effective communication.	**Child Observation and Assessment** • Principles • Gathering and Documenting • Summarizing and Interpreting • Sharing and Reporting **Program Planning and Development** • Program Planning and Evaluation • Personnel Management • Resource Management	*In all Ideal Learning approaches, teachers use an individualized, strength- and inquiry-based approach to planning and instruction. All five models align with Colorado's standards and competencies.* *In all Ideal Learning approaches:* • Learning experiences reflect children's interests and are organized to encourage children to learn from and with each other about themselves and the world. • Educators facilitate children's learning through the preparation of enriched learning environments—both indoors and out—and direct exploration and experimentation within those environments. • Educators create opportunities for exploration and find ways to integrate them into everyday experiences. • Educators understand where individual children are in their developmental trajectory and tailor their practices to each child's needs. • Based on that knowledge, educators prepare learning environments designed explicitly to respond to the fundamental needs and tendencies of children. • Educators ensure that experiences are in keeping with children's temperamental and developmental profiles yet strive to stretch their capacities over time. • Educators are close observers of children and use observations to both interpret and project future experiences and opportunities with children and parents. • Projections for curriculum aim to use unhurried time as a resource for learning, recognizing that children are born knowing how to learn and use time flexibly, repetitively, strategically, and in relation to new experiences and relationships. • Educators have deep knowledge of child development that is extended through the regular use of observation, documentation, and interpretation of children's behaviors and learning processes. • Educators help children develop mature play skills by providing background knowledge children can use in their pretend scenarios and by scaffolding peer interactions. • Educators empower children to develop initiative by providing time, space, and materials for child-initiated play, appropriate risk-taking, and experiences that engender a sense of accomplishment.