Standards of Excellence

For Jewish Community Centers and Synagogues with Early Childhood Education Centers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE *STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE*

The *Standards of Excellence* are the result of 10 years of work and millions of dollars invested to enhance and improve Jewish early childhood education (ECE) and family engagement in Denver and Boulder synagogues and Jewish community centers (JCCs). Why has this community invested so much in promoting excellence and improving quality, access, and engagement? Because when Jewish communities reach out to families with young children with high-quality services, everybody wins. Study after study shows how much of children's cognitive development, personality, and identity—including their religious identity—occurs during the preschool years. So if we wait to engage the youngest members of our community, we lose out on being an integral part of their development.

Family units, too, are in the midst of formative years when their children are young. This is often when friendships are cemented and life routines established. ECE isn't just about teaching children—it is a way of welcoming entire families into our communities, helping both parents and children form lifelong Jewish friendships, and showing them all that Jewish life offers. When children are involved in Jewish rituals and Jewish life, their parents are more likely to become involved in home rituals and holidays too.

Synagogues, JCCs, and entire Jewish communities benefit when families with young children are engaged. Yet we must do a better job of attracting them—in Denver/Boulder, 72 percent of current Jewish ECE students with a Jewish parent do not belong to the JCC or synagogue. Let's welcome these families, and break down the silos between ECE centers and their synagogue or JCC. Financially, too, ECE and family engagement makes sense. A 2012 economic study found that if Jewish ECE centers in the Denver/Boulder area were operating at best practice standards, their congregations and JCCs' revenues could increase $720,000 annually, an average of 11 percent.

The *Standards of Excellence*, developed for the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative, are a tool to help Jewish ECE centers document their accomplishments and develop action plans for educational change. They offer a clear and effective framework for overall quality improvement work, including seamlessly integrating Jewish values and ideas into the curriculum and environment. By engaging in a self-reflective inventory of current practices and taking concrete steps towards higher and higher levels of mastery, programs can support ongoing and intentional growth.

The *Standards* provide guidelines for exemplary educational practice in Jewish settings as well as guidelines for marketing, enrollment conversion, customer service and retention, and family engagement. Synagogues and JCCs with ECE centers can either use them in their entirety or select ones most applicable to their work, in order to track their progress over time. Centers and their leadership teams are guided to identify at least three areas in which they want to set goals for improvement.

The *Standards of Excellence* emerged during the independent evaluation of the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative, a partnership of JEWISHcolorado (formerly the Allied Jewish Federation of Colorado), Colorado Agency for Jewish Education, Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado, Rose Community Foundation, nine Jewish ECE centers, and other anonymous donors. Subsequently, the standards were refined and expanded to evaluate the impact of BUILDing Jewish ECE, a two-year Rose Community Foundation capacity-building initiative in the Denver and Boulder areas, which was also supported by JCC Association, Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado, the Union for Reform Judaism, and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. **BUILDing Jewish ECE** is a groundbreaking early engagement program—the first of its kind in the nation—designed to help synagogues and JCCs with ECE centers increase enrollment, better engage Jewish families, and build stronger connections to the Jewish community.

The idea to develop standards for Jewish ECE centers was sparked by a comment made by a teacher. In a group interview of Jewish ECE teachers as part of the independent evaluation of the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative, a teacher remarked, "What we need is a Jewish Qualistar." Qualistar rates the quality of Colorado early childhood educational programs based on their scores on standards. In response, the evaluation team drafted standards for Jewish ECE. Many others (all listed as authors at the end of this publication) subsequently contributed to these standards as well.

To promote a shared understanding of each standard, a rubric was developed with descriptions of initial, satisfactory, and exemplary practices that provide teachers and directors with clear definitions that effectively differentiate among these levels of practice. Consider the standard that addresses nature-based environment: A satisfactory score indicates that the center pays attention to natural beauty and aesthetics. An exemplary score builds on this description to also include: "The use of nature as an instructional method (e.g., outdoor classrooms, natural materials, gardens, etc.) promotes children's creativity, knowledge of the world around them, and their interest in discovery."

In developing the standards, consideration was given to the needs of different audiences. For example, there are families who judge ECE centers on the extent to which they promote children's preparedness for kindergarten, especially in literacy and numeracy. Others focus on emotionally-responsive practice. Another audience comprises those who work on enrollment management. Thus, standards address such areas as brand identity and marketing strategies as well as whether teachers' professional development is aligned with the needs of the children. As a result, the *Standards of Excellence* are comprehensive and multidimensional and include guidelines related to preparation, action, and outcome. That said, individual ECE centers may need to develop their own standards for areas not covered by the *Standards of Excellence*.

The impetus for developing some of the *Standards of Excellence* was to guide independent evaluations of Denver and Boulder ECE professional development initiatives, and to provide ECE centers with a framework for internally reviewing their practices. To date, these independent evaluations depended on the initiatives' designers to determine the "yardstick" by which they wanted to be measured. While the *Standards of Excellence* help to remove this dependency, they were not designed for the purpose of national accreditation.

Finally, as the designers of the initiatives wrote standards to reflect their short- and long-term objectives, a measure of validity—meaning whether the research instrument or standards address the real issues facing ECE centers—was built into the development process. This process relied on the "expertise of experts." Statistical analyses that were conducted on the scores that were collected showed that the standards were useful and actionable. Each standard, however, was not subject to empirical investigation to determine whether it meets the "evidence-based" criteria.

We encourage synagogues and JCCs to review these standards and to start tracking progress towards all of the standards or a select few that are most relevant to them. We hope to receive feedback at www.rcfdenver.org/standardsofexcellence on their applicability and helpfulness in supporting ECE centers to achieve excellence as they work towards their goals. Together, we can welcome more families with young children into Jewish life and into our vibrant communities.

Michael Ben-Avie, Ph.D.
Independent Evaluator
Building Jewish ECE and
the Colorado Jewish Early
Childhood Education Initiative

Lisa Farber Miller
Senior Program Officer
Rose Community Foundation

HOW TO USE THE STANDARDS

The *Standards of Excellence* are a self-assessment tool to help organize, visualize, and track quality improvement progress for synagogues and JCCs with Jewish ECE centers. It is intended to be used by executive directors, clergy, ECE center directors, staff, supervisors, and leadership teams who recognize and work toward levels of competency related to educational practice and professional development, family engagement, increasing enrollment, and fostering connections to the Jewish community.

Regardless of who leads the work around the *Standards of Excellence*, all programs should have the flexibility to choose exactly how and what this strategic quality improvement entails. Each synagogue or JCC will decide which standards it wishes to improve and how the standards align with its mission, values, educational philosophy, and culture. Again, the *Standards of Excellence* do not constitute national standards for accreditation.

Additionally, the tool provides programs with the beginning of a resource library. Embedded in the standards are resources that can spark further investigation and learning. These resources are a starting point that provides ways for programs to dig deeper into the standards through research, study, and investigation. They can be added to and adjusted based on the needs and interest of individual programs.

Here are some examples or variations for using the *Standards of Excellence*:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Annual inventory of program quality to inform growth or action plans.	Periodic reviews over the course of a year to review progress made towards meeting the goals embedded within the growth or action plans.	Use the standards to collaborate with staff, families, and supervisors in creating new goals for growth or action plans.	Create a common language and understanding in order to make adjustments to the growth or action plans based on assessment.	Evaluate and connect the impact of focused and intentional growth on children's learning and development.	Communicate the complexity and impact of chosen goals in a user-friendly manner for advocacy purposes within the broader community.

ECE centers and their leadership teams can use these standards as guidelines to determine needs, to identify specific goals, and to build action plans to achieve excellence in those areas. In the rubric beginning on page six, the BUILDing Jewish ECE logo is placed near sections that relate specifically to the goals of that initiative, which promotes exemplary marketing, enrollment conversion, customer service/retention, and family engagement practices in ECE centers. While there is no specific standard section entirely for family engagement, there are many standards throughout that address family engagement, indicative of the understanding that the center-home partnership is critical to foundational excellence. Please also note that BUILDing Jewish ECE moved forward only once the participating ECE centers had achieved significant progress toward improving educational practices.

For centers that elect to use the *Standards of Excellence* as a guide for assessment and planning, center managers, supervisors, mentors, and others can work together to review each relevant standard and then write the appropriate score in the far-right column. Scores range from 1 to 6 (1= "Minimal" and 6 = "Engrained").

Identify three areas where you want to set goals for improvement:

1 A strength that the center would like to make even stronger over the next year

2 A weakness that can be an opportunity to make significant changes

3 An area you specifically want to address

These goals then become the focus of a growth or action plan, and the *Standards of Excellence* can be used as a guide and an evaluation tool. ECE directors and their supervisors can formally complete the *Standards of Excellence* rubric once per year to assess progress in achieving goals.

Guidelines for Exemplary Educational Practice in Jewish Early Childhood Education Centers

Standard 1: Growth Plans

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Shared vision 1.1	The entire program and all enrolled families plan to collaborate on developing a shared vision for the program.		The entire program collaborates to develop a shared vision that incorporates Jewish values, promoting children's development and the relationships among home, center, larger organization, and community. Families are invited into the process.		The director, staff, families, and clergy collaborate to develop a shared vision that incorporates Jewish values, promoting children's development and the relationships between home, center, larger organization, and community. It is revisited and revised every 3-5 years.		
Development of growth plan 1.2	The director identifies growth priorities.		The staff and director work collaboratively to create and implement a plan that builds upon the identified growth priorities.		The staff and director work collaboratively to create a center-wide growth plan targeting the areas in which they will focus to achieve their shared vision. Input is additionally sought from the leadership team and families.		
Awareness of plan 1.3	The director informs staff on the purpose of growth and focus of growth priorities.		The director and staff are aware of and processing the various components of the growth priorities.		The director, staff, and families are aware of the growth priorities and are actively engaged towards achievement.		
Assessment and modification 1.4	The center begins to identify ways to assess growth in line with the plan.		The center collects some data related to the plan, including plans for staff assessment.		The center collects data related to the plan, engages staff in assessment, and makes modifications as necessary.		

Resources

Recommended texts:

Circle of Influence, Paula Jorde Bloom

Visionary Director, Margie Carter and Deb Curtis

Recommended websites:

Colorado Shines:
http://coloradoshines.force.com/ColoradoShines/programs?p=Your-Program-Colorado-Shines

McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership:
http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/program-evaluation/

Standard 2: Physical Environment

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Center-wide physical environment 2.1	The physical environment needs concrete and visible alignment with the center's vision.		The physical environment (including hallways, entry area, offices, and classrooms) partially reflects the center's vision.		The entire physical environment (including hallways, entry area, offices, and classrooms) reflects the center's vision. Furniture arrangement, lighting, documentation, displays, etc. all communicate "what we really value here."		
Nature-based program-wide environment 2.2	Centers begin to identify what aspects of natural beauty and aesthetics to include in the overall environment.		Elements of natural beauty and aesthetics are intentionally integrated in some classes and some spaces.		There is center-wide integration of natural beauty and aesthetics. Also, the natural world is used as an instructional method as evidenced in outdoor classrooms, natural materials, gardens, etc.		
Classroom environment 2.3	Classrooms take inventory of current supplies and how the supplies relate to children's engagement and learning. Plans are made to reduce extraneous supplies and materials.		Most of the classrooms are clutter-free and aesthetically appealing and contain rich and interactive materials. The classroom invites children to independently access materials.		All of the classrooms are clutter-free and aesthetically appealing and contain rich and interactive materials. The classroom invites children to independently access materials. Children participate in determining available materials.		
Safety 2.4	Some, but not all, of the center staff have received training around best practices in health and safety.		All center staff are attuned to best practices in health and safety. Some receive annual training in health and safety.		All center staff are attuned to best practices in health and safety and get annual training around current health and safety practices.		

Resources

Recommended texts:

Caring for Our Children; National Health and Safety Performance Guidelines for Early Care and Education Guidelines, Issued jointly by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education

Cultivating Outdoor Classrooms, Eric Nelson

Designs for Living and Learning, Margie Carter and Deb Curtis

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer

Experiencing Nature With Young Children: Awakening Delight, Curiosity, and a Sense of Stewardship, Alice Sterling Honig

Inspiring Spaces for Young Children, Paperback, August 1, 2010, by **Jessica DeViney**, **Sandra Duncan**, and **Sara Harris**.

Lens on Outdoor Learning, Wendy Banning and Ginny Sullivan

Standard 3: Dynamic and Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum						
	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Play-based learning: daily schedule and routines 3.1	Daily schedules and routines limit children's dramatic play and meaningful engagement with materials.		Children are given some time to play and staff use play as a vehicle for learning. In some classrooms, staff fully integrate play and learning opportunities.		Children are given enough time for play and learning to be fully integrated in all classrooms. Daily schedule and routines reflect the value of play.		
Value of play 3.2	Play is considered an activity on the periphery of the core mission of academic learning.		In some classrooms, play is viewed as a vehicle for learning. The children engage in sustained and high-quality dramatic play.		In all classrooms, play is viewed as a vehicle for learning. The children engage in sustained and high-quality dramatic play. Staff observe play and respond by adjusting the environment.		
Artistic expression and creative opportunities 3.3	Artistic expressions and opportunities only provide interaction with precut materials and a predetermined product. All projects look identical.		Staff provide artistic materials that encourage children to represent their world and experiences.		In all classrooms, children encounter open-ended materials that allow them to creatively express themselves. High-quality art materials are valued and explored. Artistic experiences are viewed as "languages" through which children symbolically represent their world, theories, and feelings.		
Emergent curriculum 3.4	Curriculum is predetermined by staff and planned weeks or months in advance without observing children's interests or possibilities for building on those interests.		In most classrooms, children's ideas are an important source of curriculum and staff see themselves as co-constructing curriculum. Staff invite children into exploring topics aligned with children's interests and will support their learning.		In all classrooms, there is a "back and forth" dynamic between the staff's ideas and the children's: Staff are actively listening, observing and engaging children's interests and ideas that form the foundation for the curriculum.		
Project approach 3.5	Learning experiences are brief. Children concentrate on the surface of a topic and move quickly to the next topic. Topics are viewed as "themes" where educators plug in activities on the topic.		In most classrooms, learning experiences grow into longer term investigations. Staff begin to identify and begin sustaining children's interest over longer periods of time.		In all classrooms, long-term projects provide complex opportunities for children to explore, build knowledge, and investigate over an extended period of time. Staff's observation of children's engagement and thinking drive the complexity and duration of the investigation.		

Resources

Bringing Learning to Life: A Reggio Approach to Early Childhood Education (Early Childhood Education, 86), illustrated edition, **Louise Boyd Cadwell** and **Carlina Rinaldi**

High Quality Dramatic Play: https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200305/Chopsticks_Bodrova.pdf
https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200709/DaRos-Voseles.pdf

The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Experience in Transformation, Third Edition, **Carolyn Edwards**, **Lella Gandini**, **George Forman**, and **Reggio Children S.r.l.** (eds.).

Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children, Lisa Daly

Standard 3: Dynamic and Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Inquiry 3.6	Staff primarily use closed-ended questions and predetermined answers and narrow the scope of inquiry and investigation.		In some classrooms, staff create framing questions for their work, and ask open-ended questions of children that begin to widen the scope of inquiry and investigation. Children are encouraged to ask questions, make predictions, and answer their own questions.		In all classrooms, staff create framing questions for their work, and ask open-ended questions of children that begin to widen the scope of inquiry and investigation. Children are encouraged to ask questions, make predictions, and answer their own questions. Staff make visible—and celebrate— the complexity of children's thinking.		
Approaches to learning 3.7	Staff gain knowledge on identifying children's learning dispositions and begin to intentionally support dispositions like curiosity, persistence, and resourcefulness.		In some classrooms, staff intentionally support positive learning dispositions, including curiosity, persistence, and resourcefulness.\n\nStaff include positive learning dispositions as primary learning objectives for all children.		In all classrooms, staff intentionally support positive learning dispositions such as curiosity, persistence, and resourcefulness.\n\nStaff seamlessly integrate positive learning dispositions into the classroom culture.		
Reflective practice 3.8	Staff recycle traditional lesson plans and teaching experiences, thereby missing the opportunity to be reflective and analytical about their practice.		In most classrooms, staff reflect on lesson plans, learning experiences, and children's engagement.\n\nThese reflections impact ongoing curriculum development.		In all classrooms, staff reflect on lesson plans, learning experiences, and children's engagement.\n\nThese reflections impact ongoing curriculum development.\n\nStaff use reflections and observations to refine and grow teaching practice.		
Processes of learning 3.9	Learning experiences are one-time activities focusing on isolated skills or small discrete pieces of knowledge, overlooking the opportunity to wonder, predict, discover, and think.		In some classrooms, staff intentionally integrate thinking and discovery experiences into daily experiences.\n\nStaff also use classroom routines and unexpected moments when the opportunity arises authentically to support children's thinking skills.		In all classrooms, staff intentionally integrate thinking and discovery experiences into daily experiences.\n\nStaff also use classroom routines and unexpected moments when the opportunity arises authentically to support children's thinking skills. Classroom experiences—planned and emergent—support children's learning processes of predicting, hypothesizing, experimenting, analyzing, and evaluating.		

Nurturing Creativity: An Essential Mindset for Young Children's Learning, Rebecca Isbell and Sonia Akiko Yoshizawa

Powerful Interactions: How to Connect with Children to Extend Their Learning, Amy Laura Dombro, Judy Jablon, and Charlotte Stetson

The Unscripted Classroom: Emergent Curriculum in Action, May 17, 2011, **Susan Stacey**

Values and Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach,
http://learningmaterialswork.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ValuesAndPrinciples.pdf

Working the Reggio Way: A Beginner's Guide for American Teachers, Julianne P. Wurm

Young Investigators: The Project Approach in the Early Years, Second Edition, Judy Harris Helm, and Lilian Katz

Standard 4: Teacher-Child Relationships and Interactions						
	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Emotionally-responsive practice 4.1	Children's emotional language and experiences are identified in a narrow range with the goal of uniformly positive emotion.		In most classrooms, staff talk about emotions with the children, and begin to label an increasing range of complex emotions. Some evidence in the curriculum and materials reflects children's emotional needs and complexity.		In all classrooms, staff acknowledge and value the wide range of emotions children express in response to developmental moments and other life experiences. Staff consciously and consistently invite children to share their emotional experiences, both positive and negative, encouraging them to express, identify, and manage them appropriately. Curriculum is intentionally planned to support children in understanding, managing, and expressing emotions.		
Emotionally-responsive practice: classroom culture of empathy 4.2	Children's natural empathetic response is overlooked. Staff begin to see these moments as opportunities for building empathetic capacity.		In response to emotional opportunities, staff in most classrooms identify and support empathetic moments. Some evidence in the curriculum and materials reflects exploration of empathy and compassion.		In response to emotional opportunities, staff in all classrooms identify and support empathetic moments. Everyday interactions and responses demonstrate empathy and compassion towards all members of the school community. Staff intentionally build curriculum around empathy, compassion, and relationship building.		
Response to challenging behavior: the pyramid approach 4.3	Challenging behaviors are seen as disruptions instead of growth and learning opportunities.		Staff in most classrooms follow portions of the pyramid approach, which asks educators to answer three key questions: Why does behavior change? What should we teach? Who should we teach? Staff receive training on the pyramid approach.		In all classrooms, when challenging behaviors occur, staff follow the entire pyramid approach. Staff receive specific training and coaching on the pyramid approach.		
Social and emotional fluency 4.4	Staff expect all children in the class to have the same social-emotional response to everyday classroom life.		Staff in most classrooms realize the variety of social-emotional responses to everyday classroom life. Staff begin to adjust practice to meet developmental levels and variances of temperament.		In all classrooms, staff acknowledge, respond, and plan for the wide variety of social-emotional and temperamental needs within the classroom community. Staff proactively adjust the emotional and physical environment to meet the needs of all children and plan for their success.		

Standard 4: Teacher-Child Relationships and Interactions

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Conversation 4.5	Staff begin to use conversations as a means to gather topical and functional information.		In some classrooms, staff engage in meaningful conversations with children, if the opportunity presents itself. In some classrooms, staff identify and value the specific opportunity of small group and one-on-one conversations to guide their practice.		In all classrooms, staff actively seek and plan for meaningful conversations with children. In all classrooms, staff identify and value the specific opportunity of small group and one-on-one conversations to guide their practice.		

Resources

Recommended texts:

Challenging Behaviors in Young Children; http://www.challengingbehavior.com/young.html

Guidance for Every Child:Teaching Young Children to Manage Conflict, Dan Gartrell; http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu

A Matter of Trust: Connecting Teachers and Learners in the Early Childhood Classroom, Carolee Howes and Sharon Ritchie; Foreword by Barbara Bowman

More resources for emotionally responsive practice:

https://www.bankstreet.edu/professional-education/emotionally-responsive-practice/resources/

Demonstration of Pyramid Model Practices; http://www.pyramidmodel.org/resources/trainers-coaches/media/

Including One, Including All: A Guide to Relationship-Based Early Childhood Inclusion,
Todd Wanerman, **Leslie Roffman**, and **Cassandra Britton**

The Pyramid Approach; http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/pyramid_model.htm

Routines and Transitions: A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals, **Nicole Malenfant**

Why Children's Dispositions Should Matter to ALL Teachers; https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200709/DaRos-Voseles.pdf

Standard 5: Focus on Child Development and Content Learning						
	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Language development 5.1	Staff need support in identifying opportunities to draw on children's experiences to promote language development (e.g., tell stories about experiences, talk about pictures, write down stories that children dictate). Staff need training and support to identify the developmental stages of language development.		Staff in most classrooms draw on children's experiences to promote language development. In some classrooms, staff can identify the developmental stages of language.		Staff in all classrooms draw on children's experiences to promote language development. All staff are fluent in the developmental stages of language. All staff support, promote, and plan for children's language development by taking into consideration the developmental stages.		
Emergent literacy 5.2	Reading books to children usually happens between curricular learning experiences and serves as transitional activity or a time filler. Staff expect children to passively and quietly listen to the story. Staff need training and support to identify the developmental stages and components of literacy.		In some classrooms, staff incorporate phonological awareness in all aspects of playing and learning; staff support children's exploration and interest in print and its variety of uses and meaning; and staff provide authentic and naturalistic ways for children to learn alphabet and letter-sound relationships.		In all classrooms, reading books to children is an integral and enjoyable part of the curriculum; staff incorporate phonological awareness in all aspects of playing and learning; staff support children's exploration and interest in print and its variety of uses and meaning; staff provide authentic and naturalistic ways for children to learn alphabet and letter-sound relationships.		
Emergent writing 5.3	There are limited writing materials (e.g., pencils, crayons, markers, paper, cardboard) or the writing materials are not readily accessible to children. Staff need support and training to identify the developmental stages of writing.		In some classrooms, there are writing materials all through the classroom (e.g., pencils, crayons, markers, paper, cardboard) that are readily accessible to children; writing materials are displayed in an organized and inviting manner; and staff are fluent in the developmental stages of writing.		In all classrooms, staff connect the power of the written word to children's thought and play. There are writing materials all through the classroom (e.g., pencils, crayons, magnetic letters, markers, tracing paper, construction paper, cardboard), displayed in an organized and inviting manner that are readily accessible to children. Staff anticipate and plan for authentic and embedded writing experiences. Staff are fluent in the developmental stages of writing and apply their knowledge during routine activities in the classroom.		
Hebrew language 5.4	In some classrooms, staff are investigating strategies for integrating Hebrew into the environment.		In some classrooms, staff integrate Hebrew language throughout the daily schedule. Hebrew is a visible and vibrant part of the print environment.		In all classrooms, staff integrate Hebrew language throughout the daily schedule. Hebrew is a visible and vibrant part of the print environment. Staff and children use Hebrew words in daily conversations and interactions.		

Standard 5: Focus on Child Development and Content Learning						
	Initial		**Satisfactory**		**Exemplary**		**Score**
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Mathematical Skills 5.5	In some classrooms, staff provide children with opportunities and experiences to build number concepts and operations.Staff provide exposure to shapes and spatial relations.		In some classrooms, staff embed mathematical experiences into authentic and naturalistic contexts.Staff read texts, have conversations and choose materials to grow skills in number concepts and operations, and shapes and spatial relations.		In all classrooms, staff integrate a wide range of mathematical concepts and operations into all parts of the curriculum. Staff use children's interests and experiences to build mathematical based analysis in open ended play.Staff provide authentic experiences for integrating mathematical learning including knowledge of complex patterns, and comparing and measuring.		
Cognitive development 5.6	Staff need support, guidance and training to identify activities and approaches to learning through the lens of developmentally appropriate cognitive development.		In some classrooms, staff support children's cognitive development by encouraging activities that require children to attend and engage over time.In some classrooms, staff identify and plan opportunities for a variety of learning approaches. Learning approaches could include visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and multiple intelligences.In some classrooms, staff look for opportunities to build skill capacity in delayed gratification.		In all classrooms, staff support children's cognitive development by encouraging activities that require children to focus attention and remain engaged over time.In all classrooms, staff identify and plan opportunities for a variety of learning approaches. Learning approaches could include visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and multiple intelligences.In all classrooms, staff look for opportunities to build skill capacity in delayed gratification. In all classrooms, staff promote children's cognitive development by leveraging authentic moments to grow their capacity for creative problem solving.		
Social and emotional development 5.7	Staff need support, guidance and training to identify activities that grow children's social and emotional development.		In some classrooms, staff implement classroom experiences that support children's developmentally appropriate social emotional growth. (e.g. promoting children's smooth transitions by expecting them to develop appropriate behavior, and adult support as a way to gain more independence.)		In all classrooms, staff create a daily schedule, and classroom culture with Social Emotional Developmental goals interwoven. This schedule accounts for emergent ideas from children as well.Staff document and make visible the story and experiences of social and emotional development among the children.		

Standard 5: Focus on Child Development and Content Learning

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Documen-tation of children's learning 5.8	Staff need training, support and time to understand the value and purpose of documenting children's learning.		In some classrooms, staff create panels or documentation boards comprised of photographs, examples of children's words and accompanying text to tell the story of children's learning and development. In some classrooms, staff and children use documentation to connect, create and take next steps to deepen learning and assessment.		In all classrooms, staff create panels or documentation boards comprised of photographs, examples of children's words and accompanying text to tell the story of children's learning and development. Staff and children use documentation to connect, create and take next steps to deepen learning and assessment. Documentation serves to engage and inform the entire school and family community about the complexity and value of children's learning.		

Resources

Recommended texts:

Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice: An Introduction for Teachers of Children 3 to 6, Carol Copple and Sue Bredekamp

Be Reggio Inspired–Documentation and Display
http://www.letthechildrenplay.net/2013/03/be-reggio-inspired-documentation-and.html

Carla Rinaldi on Documentation (interview/video); http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=hUVi-fLc0zA

***The Cooking Book: Fostering Young Children's Learning and Delight**, Laura J. Colker*

Increasing the Power of Instruction: Integration of Language, Literacy, and Math Across the Preschool Day, Judith A. Schickedanz

Informing Our Practice: Useful Research on Young Children's Development, Eva L. Essa and Melissa M. Burnham, eds.

Learning About Language and Literacy in Preschool, the editors of *Teaching Young Children*

The Power of Documentation in the Early Childhood Classroom; https://www.naeyc.org/files/tyc/file/Seitz.pdf

Reflecting Children's Lives: A Handbook for Planning Child-Centered Curriculum, Second Edition, **Deb Curtis** and **Margie Carter**

The Young Child and Mathematics, Second Edition, Juanita V. Copley

Recommended websites:

Multiple Intelligences: What Does the Research Say?; https://www.edutopia.org/multiple-intelligences-research

Tools of the Mind; http://toolsofthemind.org/learn/resources/

Documentation – Transforming our Perspective (interview/video);
https://www.dropbox.com/s/ey90z3noj9onnhw/Reggio%20Emilia%20Summer%20School%20-%20Ligonchio%202011.mp4

Standard 6: Seamless Judaism

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Integrating Jewish lenses/ values 6.1	The center begins to talk about a set of core Jewish values and ideas, known as lenses: Masa: Journey (Reflection, Return, and Renewal); B'rit: Covenant (Belonging and Commitment); Tzelem Elokim: Divine Image (Dignity and Potential); K'dushah: Holiness (Intentionality and Presence); Hit'orerut: Awakening (Amazement and Gratitude); D'rash: Interpretation (Inquiry, Dialogue, and Transmission); and Tikkun Olam: Repair of the World (Responsibility).		The center studies the lenses in order to apply personal and relevant meaning. The Jewish lenses are discussed, and in some classes, staff experiment with how the lenses can guide their relationships and teaching. The center implements seamless Judaism (educators embody Jewish values in their interactions with others and examine the "big ideas" as part of their lesson planning; the classroom clearly is a "Jewish place") through documentation of learning experiences, ritual objects in the classroom, and conversations between the educators and the children. However, seamless Judaism is left to the ad hoc initiative of individual educators or is peripheral to the core characteristics of the ECE center.		The center continues to study and examine the lenses for deeper meaning and action. In all classrooms, staff frame the work of education and community building through the lenses and values. In all classrooms, there is documentation displaying the seamless relationship between the lenses and the daily life of the school. The center implements seamless Judaism (educators embody Jewish values in their interactions with others and examine the "big ideas" as part of their lesson planning; the classroom clearly is a "Jewish place") as one of its core, defining characteristics.		
Interactions with children 6.2	There is little connection between the center's Jewish values and staff's verbal and nonverbal interactions with children.		In some classrooms, the center's Jewish values are apparent through staff's verbal and nonverbal interactions with children. In some classrooms, staff identify and connect interactions to Jewish values. In some classrooms the staff and children begin to explore additional Jewish values beyond the lenses.		In all classrooms, the center's Jewish values are apparent through staff's verbal and nonverbal interactions with children. All classrooms identify and connect interactions to Jewish values. All classrooms explore additional Jewish values beyond the lenses. Children's interactions reflect the seamless nature of the values.		
Exploring key Jewish concepts 6.3	There are limited opportunities for children to explore key Jewish concepts (Shabbat, Menschlikeit, Kehilla, Derech Eretz, B'Tzelim Elohim, etc.).		In some classrooms, key Jewish concepts are integrated into the curriculum. Children demonstrate their growing knowledge through their exploration and play.		In all classrooms, key Jewish concepts are integrated into the curriculum and children demonstrate their growing knowledge through their exploration and play. In all classrooms, key Jewish concepts are reinforced and revisited through conversation, interactions, and documentation.		

Standard 6: Seamless Judaism

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Jewish holidays 6.4	Classrooms prepare for Jewish holidays by pulling out the "holiday box." Emphasis is on creating project-related products to take home.		In some classrooms, staff begin to explore the big ideas framing each holiday. In some classrooms, staff begin to formulate ways to connect children's thoughts and experiences to the big ideas.		In all classrooms, staff begin to explore the big ideas framing each holiday. In all classrooms, staff begin to formulate ways to connect children's thoughts and experiences to the big ideas. The staff and children bring to life all aspects of the holiday, including the rituals, the stories, and the big ideas.		
Judaism is authentically represented in the daily life of the classroom and center 6.5	There is environmental evidence throughout the center of Jewish life, such as ritual objects, posters of Israel, holiday posters, and Hebrew words.		In some classrooms, authentic ritual items are available for children's investigation, play, and discussion. In some classrooms, staff begin to include family stories and experiences around Jewish life.		In all classrooms, authentic ritual items are available for children's investigation, play, and discussion. All classrooms integrate the values of Jewish life to build relationships and communicate with children and families. Evidence includes family inclusion in classroom Jewish events, stories shared, and relationships between the school and families.		
All staff have dedicated time and professional development to explore seamless Judaism 6.6	All staff receive information regarding the Jewish lenses and core Jewish values. Some staff begin to define their interests and needs in relation to further study of the Jewish lenses and core Jewish values.		All staff come together to develop a working knowledge of Jewish lenses and core Jewish values. Some staff build visible connections between the Jewish lenses and core Jewish values through daily curriculum and relationships in the center.		All staff are brought together for intentional study and learning grounded in a deeper examination and application of Jewish lenses and core Jewish values. Staff in all classrooms maximize the opportunities for creating visible connections made through deeper personal and professional understanding of the Jewish lenses and core Jewish values.		

Resources

Relevant blogs from Paradigm:

All I Really Need to Know I learned in Jewish Preschool;
http://www.jparadigm.org/learn/all-i-really-need-to-know-i-learned-in-jewish-preschool

Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative Progress Report, Summer 2012;
http://www.rcfdenver.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/JECEIProgressReport08-12Brochure.pdf

From Reggio Emilia to Seamless Judaism;
http://www.covenantfn.org/sightline/news/385/96/From-Reggio-Emilia-to-Seamless-Judaism

Jewish Every Day: The Complete Handbook for Early Childhood Teachers, Maxine Handelman

http://www.jparadigm.org/learn

What's Jewish About Butterflies?, Maxine Handelman and Deborah Schein

The Jewish lenses:

http://uscj.org/congservices/forms/EarlyChildhoodResources/Recognizing%20Excellence/JECEI%20Principles%20of%20Excellence%20Indicators%20Evidence.pdf

http://jecei.org/through_the_lense.php

http://jecei.org/PDF/2%20a%20JECEI%20Lenses%20Short%20Version%20with%20copyright.pdf

Excellence in Jewish Early Childhood Education, Michael Ben-Avie, Ilene Vogelstein, Roberta Louis Goldman,
Eli Schaap, and Pat Bidol-Padva

Standard 7: The Center-Home Partnership						
	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Child development resources 7.1	The center is beginning to identify its potential as a source of resource and support to families around child development issues.		The director and staff provide resources and support around child development, parenting practices, and benefits of the center-home partnership to families.		The director and staff provide resources and support around child development, parenting practices, and benefits of the center-home partnership to families in addition to providing modeling and coaching support to families.		
Relationship-driven practices 7.2	The director and staff know the children only through what they directly observe at the center. The director and staff begin to talk about ways to reach out to families to build the relationship.		The director and staff build relationships with families through formal exchanges, informal conversations, and sharing objective information. Some staff provide supportive, respectful, and responsive relationship support to the families.		All staff provide supportive, respectful, and responsive relationship support to the families. The entire center builds in family-centered relationship practices as a primary center value. Home visits are used as a foundational relationship builder.		
Family involvement 7.3	Family involvement is defined as specific center support tasks. Staff is beginning to explore additional options.		Family involvement mainly consists of broad participation and support or volunteering in classrooms. Staff begin to examine nontraditional ways to involve families in the center life and community.		Staff frequently examine the center life and community for opportunities to involve families. Family involvement activities include broad participation and volunteering in classrooms, as well as such customized options as promoting classroom learning and involvement in center leadership.		
Family engagement and commu-nication 7.4	Home-center communication is characterized as a mechanism to inform family members. Some staff explore more reciprocal ways to communicate with family members.		Family engagement opportunities begin to evolve as a result of ongoing and reciprocal communication. Some staff build family engagement and communication opportunities into the daily life of the program.		Staff in all classrooms build family engagement and communication opportunities into the daily life of the program. The home-center partnership is characterized by an intentional, long-term plan and is coordinated by the center, larger organization, and a planning team comprised of families in order to improve the functioning of the center.		
Facilitating family social networks 7.5	The director and staff need to identify "customer service" opportunities and gain skills around meeting identified needs of customers—the families.		The director and staff "customer service" plans evolve with the needs of the customers. The center starts to provide opportunities for families to connect with other families.		The center provides ongoing, accessible, and facilitated opportunities for families to connect with other families. Family social networking happens inside the program environment and independent of the program.		

Standard 7: The Center-Home Partnership

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Relationship building: director and families 7.6	The director infrequently sends communications to the families. The director is infrequently available for spontaneous conversations.		The director regularly sends communications to the families. The director is consistently available at drop-off and pick-up times to connect with families.		The director regularly sends communications to the families and regularly engages them in formal and informal conversations, including during drop-off and pick-up times. The director facilitates and prioritizes communicating the value of family relationships to center life.		
Meeting the needs of working families 7.7 **BUILDing** Jewish ECE	The center does not provide care for the full length of standard work hours. The center is beginning to look at ways to expand care hours to attract and meet the needs of working families.		The center operates during standard work hours. The center begins to adjust family opportunities and participation to meet the needs of working families.		The center offers "extended hours" and vacation care to meet the needs of working parents. The center consistently offers flexible and responsive ways for working families to engage with center life.		
Survey results 7.8	The director reads the reports or sections of the report on the findings from the *Family Survey* discussed further in standard 12.3.		The leadership team of the center considers the findings from the *Family Survey* and engages in strategic planning based on the data.		The director, educators, families, and leadership of the larger organization consider the findings from the *Family Survey* and engage in strategic and effective planning based on the data.		
Family conferences 7.9	The center plans to hold family conferences annually. The content is based on simple forms and developmental checklists.		The center holds family conferences at least annually. The content covers broad information about child growth and development with some supporting documentation of the specific child's progress. Some classrooms explore ways to partner with families to support the child's growth and development.		The center holds family conferences at least twice a year to partner with families to support the child's growth and development. Family conferences provide a rich and detailed picture of the child's development, strengths, and goals for next steps.		
Families have the opportunity to joyfully celebrate together 7.10 **BUILDing** Jewish ECE	The center has a traditional approach to working with families where families are invited to attend events that have been created for them and look the same year to year.		The center partners with families to create meaningful celebrations that bring the whole community together and reflect the needs and desires of the families. The center embraces the diversity of the families in its community.		The center helps families to organize events for themselves as a way of promoting families' connectedness to other families. Shared experiences as members of the center, larger organization, and the community in which the organization is embedded foster retention of children in the center.		

Standard 7: The Center-Home Partnership

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Family education 7.11	The center starts to offer parenting and family workshop opportunities. The center starts to survey families for topics.		The center offers parenting and family workshops based on topics identified by the families. The center and families begin to collaborate on offering educational opportunities on the topics identified by the families and on providing families with experiences related to these topics.		The center and families work collaboratively to design family experiences that foster family engagement and grow families' knowledge around parenting skills and child development.		
Center promotes a peer group among the families to strengthen recruitment and retention 7.12	The center needs support in identifying how to create family peer groups.		Individual families have formed informal peer groups without the external support of the program.		The center actively encourages families to form peer groups. The center provides guidance to families on how to effectively foster shared experiences e.g., exploring together Jewish ideas or Jewish activities, holiday celebrations, and gatherings on Shabbat).		

Resources

Recommended texts:

From Parents to Partners: Building a Family-Centered Early Childhood Program, Janis Keyser

Harvard Family Research Project; http://www.hfrp.org

Meeting Families Where They Live, Mary Newnam Block

A Parent's Guide to Preschool, Diane Trister Dodge & Joanna Phinney

PTHV (Parent Teacher Home Visits program), a home visit program used by Denver Public Schools and schools across the country; http://www.pthvp.org/toolbox/for-educators/

Partnering with Families: Winning Ways for Early Childhood Professionals, **Gigi Schweikert**

NAEYC link regarding Principles of Effective Practice: Family Engagement; https://www.naeyc.org/familyengagement/principles/2

Roots and Wings, Third Edition: Affirming Culture and Preventing Bias in Early Childhood, Third Edition, **Stacey York**

A Seattle school sharing its journey of integrating home visits into its program; http://seattlejewishearlychildhood.weebly.com/blog/category/home-visits

The Welcoming Classroom: Building Strong Home-to-School Connections for Early Learning, Johnna Darragh Ernst

Young Children (NAEYC – National Association for the Education of Young Children Journal)

Standard 8: Leadership Team(s): Teams comprised of administrators, educators, parents, lay leaders of the JCC or synagogue						
	Initial		**Satisfactory**		**Exemplary**		**Score**
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Building a Leadership Team 8.1	Staff identifies potential members of the leadership team.		Staff reaches out to ask for time and participation from list of potential members.		The membership of the leadership team formalizes and begins to meet.		
Basic procedures 8.2	The team is working towards clear agreements about basic procedures (e.g., setting time limits for agenda items).		The team has clear agreements about basic procedures and sometimes follows the agreements (e.g., setting time limits for each agenda items).		The team has clear agreements about basic procedures and consistently follows these procedures.		
Agenda 8.3	The team is working towards creating and adhering to an agenda.		The team creates an agenda and usually adheres to it.		The team always creates and adheres to an agenda.		
Action plans 8.4	The team is working towards developing realistic action plans and next steps.		The team routinely develops realistic action plans and next steps.		The team routinely develops realistic action plans, next steps, and reassesses actions and/or goals when necessary.		
Asset to center 8.5	The team is beginning to understand how it can be an asset to the center.		The team is an asset to the center.		The team is an indispensable asset to the center.		
Addressing issues 8.6	The team is beginning to identify and address the real issues facing the center.		The team develops a deeper awareness of growth opportunities. The team begins to create action and movement around the growth.		The team explores the depth and complexity of program quality. The team strategically supports implementation of action plans.		
Functioning well 8.7	The team needs support and facilitation to stay on task regarding issues on the agenda and support for the center.		The team mostly stays on task in regards to the agenda and support for the center.		The team operates professionally, efficiently, and with sensitivity to the issues facing children, families, and the center.		

Standard 9: Professional Development							
	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Purpose of professional development 9.1	The center provides minimum and basic professional development without individualization for the staff.		The professional development plan is tailored and incremental (i.e., it takes staff from where they are to the next level).		The professional development plan is tailored and incremental (i.e., it takes staff from where they are to the next level). The plan includes how to move the whole center forward.		
Professional development alignment 9.2	Professional development topics and experiences are randomly chosen.		Professional development is somewhat aligned with the growth plan designed by the center.		Professional development is completely aligned with the growth plan designed by the center.		
Resources from the local bureau of education 9.3	The center needs support and information to identify opportunities to leverage resources from the local bureau of education.		The center uses the local bureau of education as an event-by-event resource or resource for urgent matters. The center begins to partner with the local bureau of education's Director of ECE as a resource and support for professional development experiences.		The center consistently partners with the local bureau of education's Director of ECE as a resource and support for professional development experiences. The center maximizes the local bureau of education's support to sustain the center's growth beyond the professional development experience.		
Setting individualized goals 9.4	Director and staff begin to dialogue about individualized goals. Staff begin to reflect on identifying professional goals.		Directors support some staff in creating and implementing individual growth plans and goals. Directors explore ways to include all staff in creating and implementing individual growth plans and goals.		Each director and staff have created an individualized professional development plan reflecting his/her goals. Directors support staff in achieving the stated goals. Director and staff annually reflect on the progress and relevancy of the goals in order to update the plan.		
Paid non-student contact time 9.5	The center needs support in creating non-student contact time for collaborative planning and professional development activities.		The center begins to provide staff with non-student contact time to engage in collaborative planning time and to participate in professional development activities.		The center provides staff with non-student contact time that is consistent and protected. Staff bring to life the lessons learned in collaboration and professional development opportunities. Staff create professional learning communities, coaching conversations, and reflective supervision.		

Standard 9: Professional Development						
	Initial		**Satisfactory**		**Exemplary**		**Score**
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Approaches to professional development 9.6	The Center's professional development plan articulates only one or two different modalities for professional development.		The plan articulates many different modalities for professional development (e.g., collaborative learning with staff in other centers; multi-session seminars, shared reading; coaching and mentoring).		The plan is based on data that shows which of the many different modalities for professional development are effective for the educators in its own center.		
Leadership development 9.7	The center's leadership is traditional with only the director involved in decision making.		Shared leadership opportunities are offered to only a few select staff. Center's leadership begins to explore ways in which leadership capacity and ongoing shared learning opportunities can be expanded.		Shared leadership and learning opportunities are available for all staff in the center. Center leadership continually works to build leadership capacity within the center with broad based participation and skill.		

Resources

Recommended texts:

A Framework for Shared Leadership, Linda Lambert
http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may02/vol59/num08/A-Framework-for-Shared-Leadership.aspx

A Great Place to Work: Creating a Healthy Organizational Climate, Paula Jorde Bloom, Ann Hentschel, and Jill Bella

Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement, Linda Lambert

Strengths-Based Leadership: Great Leaders, Teams, and Why People Follow, Tom Rath and Barry Conchie

The Three Rs of Leadership: Building Effective Early Childhood Programs Through Relationships, Reciprocal Learning, and Reflection, Julie K. Biddle

The Visionary Director: *A Handbook for Dreaming, Organizing, and Improvising in Your Center*
Second Edition, **Deb Curtis** and **Margie Carter**

What You Need to Lead an Early Childhood Program: Emotional Intelligence in Practice, Holly Elissa Bruno

Guidelines for Exemplary Marketing, Enrollment Conversion, Family Satisfaction and Retention, and Integration of Center Families into JCCs and Synagogues

Standard 10: Marketing Communications

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Shared center vision for marketing communications 10.1 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The director, staff, and professionals from the broader organization that houses the ECE center plan to collaborate on a shared vision for marketing communications.		The director, staff, and professionals from the broader organization collaborate on a shared vision for marketing communications. The shared vision for marketing communications sometimes guides the marketing efforts.		Periodically, the director, staff, and professionals from the broader organization collaborate to refresh the shared vision for marketing communications. The shared vision for marketing communications regularly guides marketing messages and activities.		
Key target markets 10.2 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The center's marketing is intended to reach a broad audience. The director and professionals from the broader organization have not yet identified key audience demographics or lifestyles.		Directors and professionals from the broader organization are generally aware of key target audience demographics and lifestyles. The center's marketing is intended to reach parents with young Jewish children, but not specific key target audiences.		Directors and professionals from the broader organization clearly identify primary and secondary target audiences of potential enrollees and are aware of both demographic and lifestyle factors for each. The center's marketing is strategically directed toward identified target audiences of families with young Jewish children.		
Brand identity 10.3 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Directors, staff, and professionals from the synagogue or JCC have a general idea of their center's story and need support to create a clear brand identity. They need help to identify ways they can communicate their center or larger organization's uniqueness in their marketing messages.		Directors, staff, and professionals from the synagogue or JCC have a clear brand identity, specific to their ECE center and the entire organization. The brand identity is inconsistently communicated in marketing messages.		Directors, supervisors, and staff have a clear brand identity, specific to their ECE center and broader organization. A center leadership team, parent ambassadors, and lay leaders also have the same clear brand identity. The brand identity is consistently communicated in their marketing messages.		
Marketing messages 10.4 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Centers create and use marketing messages without specifically addressing key ECE needs/desires of their target audiences.		Centers create and use marketing messages that address general ECE needs/desires of parents with young children and inconsistently communicate how their centers can meet those needs.		Centers create and use marketing messages that address specific key ECE needs/desires of select target audiences and communicate how their centers can meet those needs. The center has a primary marketing message that underscores all their marketing communications and supports their vision.		

Standard 10: Marketing Communications

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Effective avenues to reach target markets 10.5 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Centers need to identify prospect or customer data to determine effective marketing communications avenues for reaching key target audiences. Centers and their larger organizations randomly select venues to promote their center's marketing messages.		Centers use customer data to begin to identify a combination of effective marketing communications avenues for reaching key target audiences. Centers and their larger organizations use one or more of these venues to promote their center's marketing messages.		Centers use prospect and customer data to identify a combination of effective marketing communications avenues for reaching key target audiences. Methods may include online and offline advertising, public relations, community involvement, and customer relations. Centers and their larger organizations use a combination of venues to promote their marketing messages.		
Marketing action plan 10.6 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Directors and supervisors lack a marketing action plan to guide the center's marketing activities. Marketing efforts occur only as needed and require a stated method of evaluating effectiveness.		Directors and supervisors develop a marketing action plan to guide effective marketing activities. Plans include an overall goal to generate inquiries about enrolling at the ECE center and a method of evaluating the effectiveness of each action designed to lead to these inquiries. Plan implementation and quarterly director/supervisor plan review and revision are inconsistent.		Directors and supervisors develop and implement a marketing action plan to guide effective marketing activities. In addition to action steps, timelines, people responsible, budget, and deliverables for each action, plans include an overall goal for inquiry generation and a method of evaluating effectiveness of each action. Directors and supervisors review and revise marketing action plans at least quarterly.		
Tracking marketing effectiveness 10.7 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Directors, administrative staff, and supervisors plan to track effectiveness of marketing efforts. Specific data needs to be collected and used to identify marketing leading to inquiry generation and enrollment or to plan future marketing efforts.		Directors, administrative staff, and supervisors sometimes track effectiveness of marketing efforts. Collected data is used to help plan future marketing efforts.		Directors, administrative staff, and supervisors regularly use a customized customer relationship management (CRM) system to track effectiveness of marketing efforts. Report data is used to identify marketing leading to achievement of goals for inquiry generation and enrollment and to plan future marketing efforts.		

Standard 10: Marketing Communications

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Referrals 10.8 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The center gets new families as a result of word-of-mouth referrals, and needs to actively seek methods to generate referrals. The center needs support in identifying a formal referral program. Supervisors need notification about enrollment referrals to the center.		The director regularly acknowledges parent referrals and has an informal referral program for parents and staff. The center needs to actively seek referrals. Parent testimonials are used on the center's website and in print marketing collateral. Supervisors are aware of referral data and need to be actively involved in center enrollment referral program planning.		The director and supervisor identify methods for generating enrollment referrals from parents, staff, and other opinion influencers both inside and outside the center and larger organization. Referrals are acknowledged and encouraged with a referral program that is regularly communicated to potential sources for referrals of new families. Reviews from current parents are included in online and offline marketing. The center regularly seeks and uses cross-referral and reciprocal link opportunities to generate inquiries.		
Supervisor involvement in center marketing 10.9 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Supervisors of ECE Center Directors need to be actively engaged in center marketing. Meetings with directors and key staff are primarily sessions for directors to report current center marketing activities. Supervisors irregularly access customized CRM system reports of marketing campaign effectiveness and need to use report data to assist the center in planning future marketing efforts.		Supervisors of ECE Center Directors are occasionally engaged in center marketing. Supervisors sometimes meet with directors and key staff regarding brand identification, message development, and marketing action planning. Supervisors sometimes access customized CRM system reports of marketing campaign effectiveness. The responsibility for marketing to generate the maximum number of qualified inquiries primarily belongs to the ECE Center Director and staff.		Supervisors of ECE Center Directors are actively engaged in center marketing. Supervisors meet regularly with directors, key staff, and the BUILDing Jewish ECE Team (where applicable) regarding brand identification, message development, marketing action planning, and execution. Supervisors regularly access customized CRM system reports of marketing campaign effectiveness, and use report data to assist the center in planning future marketing efforts to generate the maximum number of qualified inquiries.		

Resources

Five Smart Marketing Moves to Build Enrollment
https://www.childcareexchange.com/catalog/product/five-smart-marketing-moves-to-build-enrollment/5022644/

How Comfort Can Steal Enrollment
http://juliewassom.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/How-Comfort-Steals-Enrollment-Jan-20131.pdf

Standard 11: Enrollment Conversion

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Action plan to increase enrollment (enrollment conversion) and enrollment management 11.1 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The director and staff need help and support in identifying the essential actions to increase and retain enrollment.		The director takes responsibility for increasing enrollment over time, uses only select enrollment conversion and retention skills, and is unfamiliar with best practices for enrollment management.		The director, staff, and supervisors coordinate their efforts to increase enrollment over time by developing a conversion enrollment plan, bolstering effective skills, enhancing confidence, applying proven conversion techniques and sales strategies, and consistently using a customized CRM system to track the sales process from lead to enrollment. Senior leaders and the Board of Trustees of the broader organization are aware of and supportive of the center's enrollment building efforts.		
Inquiry–to-center visit conversions 11.2 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The director and administrative staff responding to prospect inquiries do not thoroughly or professionally engage with the prospective family, or use best practices for converting the email or call to a center visit. The supervisor does not monitor inquiry-to-center visit conversions.		The director and administrative staff responding to prospect inquiries are friendly and professional to inquiring prospects but do not apply all the skills necessary to convert the maximum number of emails or calls to center visits. The director may have goals for inquiry-to-visit conversions which are shared with the supervisor, but there is no performance accountability to achieve the goals, nor does the supervisor regularly monitor conversions.		The director and administrative staff responding to prospect inquiries are friendly and professional and consistently use best practices for converting the maximum number of emails or calls to a center visit. These include greeting, assessing needs, presenting unique benefits of the center, asking for the center visit, overcoming objections, setting up follow-up, and concluding professionally. The supervisor regularly monitors inquiry-to -visit conversions and works directly with the director to set conversion goals.		

Standard 11: Enrollment Conversion

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Center visit–to-enrollment conversions 11.3	The director and select staff who conduct center visits present the center without customizing the visit to the prospect's need, involving the child's teacher, or using best practices for converting the center visit into an enrollment. The supervisor does not monitor center visit-to-enrollment conversions. The director has no specific goals for enrollment conversion or capacity utilization.		The director and select staff who conduct center visits are friendly and professional as they present the center, but inconsistently apply all the skills necessary to convert the maximum number of center visits to enrollments. Center visits for new families inconsistently capture the philosophy, competitive strengths, and unique values of the center while introducing families to the opportunities within the entire organization. The director may give the visiting family a brochure or other information about the center. The director has goals for center visit-to-enrollment conversions that are shared with the supervisor, but there is no performance accountability to achieve the goals. The center does not have specific capacity utilization goals, meaning the supervisor occasionally monitors conversions but does not use the data to work with the director on goals or skills needed to achieve them.		Directors and select staff who conduct center visits consistently use best practices for converting the center visit into an enrollment. These include greeting, assessing needs, presenting unique benefits of the center, asking for the enrollment, overcoming objections, setting up follow-up, and concluding professionally. Center visits for new families capture the philosophy, competitive strengths, and unique values of the center while introducing families to the opportunities within the entire organization. The director and staff have a clear brand identity that they communicate proudly, consistently, and confidently. Directors provide visiting families with branded information about the center to take with them. Families feel that the director and educators demonstrate keen interest in enrolling their child(ren). The supervisor regularly monitors center visit-to-enrollment conversions, and works directly with the director to provide needed training and set goals for enrollment conversions, capacity utilization, and revenue generation.		

Standard 11: Enrollment Conversion

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Staff involvement in enrollment conversions 11.4 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Staff see themselves as educators of children rather than as partners in the enrollment conversion process. They lack the opportunity to interact with visiting prospective families. Prospect visits in classrooms may be perceived as disruptive.		The staff warmly greet potential families when they enter their classrooms. During the center visits, the director does all the communicating with visiting parents, and staff engage with the parents or child only by greeting them.		The director notifies staff of scheduled center visits to their classroom and provides basic information about the family. The staff warmly greet potential families by name when they enter their classrooms. When appropriate, the teacher engages the visiting child in an activity and/or talks with the parent briefly explaining the classroom and addressing any parent questions, while the director fills in for the teacher. Families feel that the director and educators demonstrate keen interest in enrolling their child(ren).		
Communi-cations with families on the ECE center waitlist 11.5	The center is not yet initiating regular follow-up with enrollment prospects registered on the waiting list beyond what might be generated by the use of a customized CRM system. The center does respond to inquiries from waiting list families as to their placement on the list. The supervisor does not monitor follow-up efforts with families on the waiting list.		The director and administrative staff initiate limited follow-up with parents who have registered for the waiting list. Follow-up may include mailings generated by a customized CRM system, a personal telephone call, or an invitation to a center or organization event for young families. When families inquire about their placement on the waiting list, the center asks if they would like to be on the email list of communications sent periodically to enrolled families. The supervisor does not monitor follow-up efforts with families on the waiting list, but does periodically check on the status of the waiting list.		The director and administrative staff have a system of regular periodic contact with parents who have registered for the waiting list but are not yet enrolled. This follow-up includes mailings generated by a customized CRM system, personal phone calls from the director or a Parent Ambassador, and regular emails specifically tailored to this list to include them in center activities and organizational events for young families. Waiting list families are periodically notified of their placement on the waiting list and any special opportunities to improve that placement, such as enrolling in summer camp. Families whose children will get a space are given ample notice. For those who have chosen to enroll elsewhere, the director re-contacts them when their child is age-eligible for an older class. The supervisor regularly monitors follow-up efforts with waiting list families and uses the data to work with the director to plan future enrollment building activities.		

Standard 11: Enrollment Conversion

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Prospect data collection and communications 11.6 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Directors lack a formal system for collecting or retrieving data on prospective and current enrollees. Supervisors do not review the data, nor do they work with the director to manage enrollment or broader organization participation based on the data.		Directors use an informal system for gathering prospect data, such as a spiral notebook, inquiry cards, or spreadsheets. Data is only used for the center and not shared with the larger organization. The supervisor irregularly reviews the data and may, on occasion, use it to improve communications to segmented populations within their larger community.		Directors demonstrate comprehensive data collection with all prospective and current enrollees. They use this data to build a database of prospective and current enrollees. Information gathered is input on a timely, complete basis into a customized online system like a Child Care CRM. Supervisors regularly review prospective enrollee data, using it to help manage center enrollment and to take advantage of opportunities for increased participation in the broader organization.		
Use of a customer relations management system (CRM), such as Child Care CRM 11.7 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The center has implemented a customized customer relations management (CRM) system but is not yet using it effectively to track enrollment or marketing effectiveness.		The director and administrative staff input partial information on every enrollment lead into the customized CRM system within a week of the date the lead was generated. Families are sent customized information from the center, though it may not be timely enough to generate their continued interest in visiting or enrolling. The director and supervisor occasionally monitor reports generated by the CRM system.		The director and administrative staff input complete information on every enrollment lead into the customized CRM system the day the lead was generated. Families are sent timely, customized information from the center, encouraging them to learn more, visit, or enroll. The director and supervisor regularly monitor reports generated by the CRM system and use the data to plan future marketing, training, and enrollment conversion strategies.		

Standard 11: Enrollment Conversion

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Prospect follow-up 11.8 BUILDing Jewish ECE	The center is not yet initiating regular follow-up with enrollment prospects beyond what might be generated by the use of a customized CRM system. The supervisor does not monitor follow-up efforts.		The director and administrative staff initiate limited follow-up with parents who have not yet scheduled a center visit or enrolled. Follow-up may include mailings generated by a customized CRM system and a personal telephone call. After a few follow-up efforts, the director considers such prospects a lost opportunity and does not pursue these potential enrollments further. Those prospects who did not enroll are sent a lost opportunity survey.		The director and administrative staff have a system of regular periodic contact with parents who have not yet scheduled a center visit or enrolled, including mailings generated by a customized CRM system, personal phone calls, and emails. Those prospects who did not enroll are sent a lost opportunity survey and re-contacted at a future opportune time for them to reconsider enrolling in the center. For those for whom the center is not the right choice, the director may refer them to another Jewish ECE center that could better serve them. The supervisor regularly monitors prospect follow-up efforts, lost opportunity survey results, and uses the data to work with the director to plan future enrollment building activities.		

Standard 11: Enrollment Conversion

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Supervisor involvement in enrollment conversions 11.9 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Supervisors of ECE Center Directors are rarely actively engaged in enrollment building. Meetings with directors and key staff are primarily sessions for directors to report current levels of enrollment. Supervisors rarely access CRM reports of enrollment conversion data and rarely use report data to assist the center in enrollment conversion efforts.		Supervisors of ECE Center Directors are occasionally engaged in enrollment conversion efforts. Supervisors sometimes meet with directors and key staff regarding enrollment conversion skill needs, parent decision making, and sales strategic planning. Supervisors sometimes access CRM reports of enrollment conversion data, and place the primary responsibility on the director and staff for converting inquiries into visits and enrollments.		Supervisors of ECE Center Directors are actively engaged in enrollment conversion efforts. Supervisors regularly meet with directors and key staff regarding enrollment conversion planning and execution. Supervisors regularly access CRM reports of enrollment conversion data and use report data to assist the center in determining conversion skill training needs and developing effective strategies for maximizing enrollment conversions. Supervisors periodically conduct professional "mystery shops" of the center, sharing findings with the director, and using the data to identify training needs. Supervisors hold directors accountable for achievement of goals for enrollment conversions, capacity utilization, and enrollment revenue generation.		
Families are intentional ambassadors of the centers 11.10 BUILDing Jewish ECE	Families rarely or seldom talk about the center with their friends. The center has not made this request of families at all.		The director and staff are intentional about asking the families to talk about the center. They meet with families to discuss what this might look like.		Center develops a formal Family Ambassador Program. The ambassadors meet with selected family members and task specific roles, such as contacting newly enrolled families for welcome and support. Families partner with the director and staff in promoting the center to other families and serve as ambassadors to other families with young children.		

Resources

Make It Easy to Ask for the Enrollment Wassom's Child Care Marketing Wisdom Newsletter; http://conta.cc/2ihuXgs

Using Your Basic Competitive Advantage to Increase Enrollment
https://www.childcareexchange.com/article/using-your-basic-competitive-advantage-to-increase-enrollment/5021330/

Why Should I Choose Your Center? Wassom's Child Care Marketing Wisdom Newsletter; http://conta.cc/2ihuBXa

Standard 12: Family Satisfaction and Retention

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
Ongoing parent/family communications 12.1 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	The director does not typically send communications to the families.		The director and educators occasionally send or give communications to the families about their child's development, opportunities to engage with other center families, and opportunities outside the center for family engagement in Jewish life.		The center regularly provides multiple forms of communication to families, both online and offline, about their child's activities and development, resources helpful to them in parenting, and events and opportunities to connect with other Jewish families with young children. (See Standard 7: Center-Home Partnership.)		
Newly-enrolled family communications 12.2 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	Follow-up communication is needed with newly-enrolled families beyond regular center communications.		The director and staff informally communicate with newly-enrolled families beyond regular center communications. The director or staff may call or email the family during the child's first week and may ask about the child's adjustment and concerns.		The center has a program for providing newly-enrolled families with communication beyond regular center communications, such as calls from the director or staff, photos sent via email, connection with a family ambassador, informal conversations regarding expectations, concerns, and their child's adjustment and interests.		
Family surveys 12.3 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	The center administers a Family Survey once per year or less, assessing satisfaction with center services. The director reads the report on the findings from the Family Survey. Follow-up communication to families of survey results or changes due to findings is needed.		The center administers a Family Survey one time per year, assessing satisfaction with center services. The center's leadership team reviews the findings from the Family Survey, and engages in strategic planning based on the data. Communication to families of survey results or changes due to findings is done informally.		The center administers a Family Survey at least twice per year, to assess family satisfaction, unmet expectations, and marketing factors. The entire leadership team reviews the findings from the Family Survey and engages in strategic planning based on the data. Families are formally notified of survey results and changes to be made due to survey findings.		
Exit surveys 12.4 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	The center does not administer an exit survey for families who unenroll.		Each family who leaves receives an exit survey. The director reviews survey results and reports the data to the supervisor. The director notes patterns of reasons for unenrollment.		Each family who leaves receives an exit survey. The supervisor and leadership team review survey results and engage in retention planning based on the data. The director re-contacts un-enrolled families at opportune times for re-enrollment.		

Resources

BUILDing Jewish ECE Family Survey; https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=148174348325

CAJE Family Survey; https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=145390670887

Parent Ambassadors as Enrollment Builders Wassom's Child Care Marketing Wisdom Newsletter; http://conta.cc/2ihzEql

Standard 13: BUILDing Jewish ECE (Leadership) Team							
Note: This standard is applicable to centers that are part of BUILDing Jewish ECE, the early engagement program to guide synagogues, JCCs, and their early childhood education centers in Colorado toward increasing enrollment, Jewish family engagement, and connections to the Jewish community. The initiative's theory of change was that leadership change creates organizational change.							
	Initial		**Satisfactory**		**Exemplary**		**Score**
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
BUILDing Jewish ECE Team membership 13.1	The BUILDing Jewish ECE Team is comprised of only center administrators.		The BUILDing Jewish ECE Team is comprised of center administrators and staff with a representative from the synagogue or JCC.		The BUILDing Jewish ECE Team is comprised of ECE center director, center leadership team supervisor, executive director of the synagogue or JCC, board member, Rabbi (where appropriate), board member, two family members (one current, one former). Optional members include the ECE assistant director, lead teacher, and/or an administrative assistant who has direct contact with ECE families.		
BUILDing Jewish ECE Team functions well 13.2	The BUILDing Jewish ECE Team needs support in maintaining focus on how to effectively address topics related to enrollment building and family engagement activities within the center and larger organization.		The BUILDing Jewish ECE Team functions well, including maintaining focus on effectively addressing topics related to enrollment building and family engagement activities within the center and larger organization.		The BUILDing Jewish ECE Team functions very well, including effectively addressing successes, challenges, and strategic planning regarding center marketing, enrollment building, customized CRM tracking, customer service and retention, referrals, family engagement, and larger organization involvement in enrollment recruitment and retention. At the beginning of each BUILDing Jewish ECE Team meeting, the director gives a report of current enrollment, spaces available in each classroom, marketing efforts and family engagement activities since the last meeting.		

Standard 13: BUILDing Jewish ECE (Leadership) Team

Note: This standard is applicable to centers that are part of BUILDing Jewish ECE, the early engagement program to guide synagogues, JCCs, and their early childhood education centers in Colorado toward increasing enrollment, Jewish family engagement, and connections to the Jewish community. The initiative's theory of change was that leadership change creates organizational change.

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
The team is focused on BUILDing Jewish ECE Team objectives exclusively when they meet 13.3	The team needs an agenda and a scheduled regular meeting time.		The team, in consultation with the mentor/coach and ECE director, creates an agenda that reflects the part of the journey in which the center is engaged.		The team selects a team leader. The center leadership team, Mentor/Coaches, the Marketing Specialist and the team create action plans and assign action step tasks among members. The team members work consistently, even when Mentor Coaches are not on-site holding Team meetings, communicating in person and through technology. The action plans are revisited and updated at subsequent meetings.		

Resource

BUILDing Jewish ECE Cohort II Overview; www.buildingjewishece.org

Standard 14: Integration of Center Families into JCCs and Synagogues

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
JCC/ synagogue supports the center 14.1 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	Few within the JCC or synagogue know much about the ECE center.		The entire staff of the organization—from the receptionist to the Rabbi, director, or equivalent—knows the mission of the ECE center.		The entire staff of the organization— from the receptionist to the Rabbi, executive director, or equivalent—knows the mission of the ECE center, is able to articulate key unique characteristics of the center, and actively supports it.		
Addressing silos 14.2 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	The JCC/synagogue does not "cross-sell" its programs to families with young children and thus families with children enrolled in the center are not informed of other resources or programs offered by the JCC/ synagogue.		The JCC/synagogue and the center create a portal for interested Jewish families with young children to become involved in Jewish life in the JCC/ synagogue.		The JCC/synagogue and the center encourage Jewish families with young children to become involved in Jewish life in the JCC/ synagogue. The JCC/synagogue regularly communicates with families with children enrolled in the center about the services available to families with young children. The JCC/synagogue and the center actively "cross-sell" services and have developed tracking mechanisms to see the "people flow" from program to program within the organization.		
The JCC/ synagogue is a resource portal for engaging interested and exploring families with each other in Jewish life and living 14.3 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	The center, but not the JCC/ synagogue, invites interested and exploring families to holiday celebrations, orientation meetings and open houses; they serve dessert.		There are opportunities for adult Jewish learning and study in the JCC/synagogue for interested and exploring families. The Center informs families of these opportunities, but it does not encourage participation.		The JCC/synagogue and the center help interested and exploring families to develop their own network of Shabbat dinners, holiday celebrations, and other social events in the homes of family members, to which all families are invited. Families feel a strong sense of connectedness that results in their continued decision to enroll their children in the center.		
Families are valued as competent thinkers and learners 14.4 [BUILDing Jewish ECE]	Families are typically asked to be room parents to communicate about snow days or field trips and give out pizza and bagels, and they are invited to attend parent meetings to help raise funds for the center.		Families regularly receive articles and communications that explain the philosophy of the center and the larger organization, support changes that are being made, and attend workshops and seminars not only about their child's development but also about research in the field of early childhood education.		Families are invited to partner with the center to determine in what ways they would like to be learning and growing and how they would like to be supported. There are regular study sessions with key staff members and particularly staff from outside the early childhood department.		

Standard 14: Integration of Center Families into JCCs and Synagogues

	Initial		Satisfactory		Exemplary		Score
	Minimal = 1	Emerging = 2	Developing = 3	Competent = 4	Consistent = 5	Engrained = 6	
JCC/synagogue and center are mindful of their communities' child care needs 14.5	The center provides hours and days of service that benefit the center and its operations.		The JCC/synagogue and center assume they understand the needs of its changing communities and build extended hours around this assumption.		The JCC/synagogue and center survey families, hold serious conversations, and take action on the needs of its families in collaboration with them in conjunction with the realities and needs of the organization.		

Resource

JECA Journal on Family Engagement; http://media2.urj.net/learninginstitute/Week1ResourceJECADec2011JournalonEarlyEngagement.pdf

Standard 15: Integration of Center Educators into JCCs and Synagogues

	Initial	Satisfactory	Exemplary	Score
JCC/synagogue sparks the Jewish journeys of interested and exploring educators 15.1	Staff need information about the possibilities in their organization or community for continuing Jewish education and Jewish experiences for interested or exploring staff members.	Staff are given the opportunity (through workshops and field trips) to become familiar with continuing Jewish education and Jewish experiences for interested or exploring staff members.	Staff are given the opportunity (through workshops and field trips) and sometimes receive tuition subsidies to become familiar with continuing Jewish education and Jewish experiences for interested or exploring staff members. As part of their professional development, staff of the JCC/synagogue create time for intentional conversations with interested and exploring staff about Jewish life.	
The early childhood educators feel like and are treated as an integral part of the JCC/synagogue 15.2	Staff see themselves as only educators of children who work exclusively in and for the ECE center.	The JCC/synagogue is intentional about including the director and staff as a part of the synagogue/JCC community. For example, organizational email addresses and/or whole staff meetings keep them abreast of policies and procedural changes.	Directors and staff see themselves as an integral part of the synagogue/JCC team and understand and care about each of its programs.	

Resources

Becoming a Family Ambassador, Shellie Dickstein and Susan Remick Topek, JECA Journal, December 11
http://media2.urj.net/learninginstitute/Week1ResourceJECADec2011JournalonEarlyEngagement.pdf

Strengthening Congregations Engaging Families with Young Children: A Report from 2013–2014 Communities of Practice, Union for Reform Judaism; http://www.urj.org/sites/default/files/FamilieswithYoungChildrenGuide_0.pdf

The Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative

The Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative is a partnership of the Colorado Agency for Jewish Education (CAJE), which now is part of JEWISHcolorado (formerly Allied Jewish Federation), Jewish Early Childhood Center Directors Council, Rose Community Foundation, Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado and other anonymous donors, and nine Denver and Boulder synagogues and JCC early childhood education centers.

In 2007, the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative Steering Committee was formed following **a study that mapped the ECE landscape**. The Committee—comprised originally of representatives from CAJE, JEWISHcolorado, the Jewish Early Childhood Center Directors Council, and Rose Community Foundation—convened a community summit to consider the study recommendations to improve ECE quality, access, and Jewish identity development. Following the summit, the Steering Committee worked to refine and oversee the new comprehensive strategic plan developed there to improve and enhance Jewish early childhood education and family engagement.

The newly formed Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative sought to:

- Improve the quality of ECE centers
- Promote Jewish identity
- Expand access to Jewish ECE for families

In 2008, the first strategic decision of the Steering Committee was to partner the Initiative with the national Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative (JECEI) in order to help nine ECE centers learn new approaches to the teaching, learning environment, and integration of Jewish values into classrooms.

The Initiative's specific goals underscored a larger hope of regional Jewish stakeholders: to make ECE a gateway to a lifetime of Jewish engagement for children and families alike. To achieve these goals, ECE centers took transformative steps. Educators experienced new ways of teaching and learning and undertook intensive professional development from national experts and from one another. They employed innovative approaches to communicating Jewish content in the classroom and forged new connections with families and synagogues and Jewish community centers.

In 2011, the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative commissioned the *Economic Study of Jewish Early Childhood Centers in the Denver/Boulder Area*, which included an economic analysis of eight Jewish early childhood centers. The report found that the power of connecting early with families is not fully realized because most centers do not have a proactive, systematic approach to market to families. Among other recommendations, the study recommended that synagogues and JCCs and the ECE centers need to develop programs, campaigns, and marketing efforts that focus on creating inclusive relationships with members while aggressively communicating all that the synagogue or JCC offers to families.

To gauge the Initiative's progress, in 2012 Michael Ben-Avie, Ph.D., conducted a **comprehensive research study** that found positive outcomes were being achieved, including:

- Better teaching at ECE centers
- Better learning environments
- Better integration of Judaism into ECE curricula
- Better connections between families and Jewish life

While the journey has not been without challenges (including the dissolution of JECEI that developed the educational model), families, educators, and synagogues and JCCs alike report that the Jewish ECE landscape is changing for the better. The impacts can be felt in households and classrooms, and they reverberate in JCCs and synagogues. To continue to grow the number of families who choose Jewish ECE, it is critical that the centers' teaching, classroom environments, and family engagement be of the highest caliber. By keeping quality teaching and educator training at the forefront, we can increase the impact of the Jewish ECE experience and make our institutions and Jewish community more sustainable for the long term.

BUILDing Jewish ECE: A Response to ECE Center Needs, 2014 to 2017

BUILDing Jewish ECE, informed by the *Economic Study of Jewish Early Childhood Centers in the Denver/ Boulder Area*, is the next stage of 10 years of work to enhance Jewish early engagement in Denver/ Boulder centers. The 36-month capacity-building process was launched in 2014 and aims to enhance enrollment, retention, recruitment, customer service, branding, marketing, and Jewish family engagement and relationship building. Partners include the JCC Association, Union for Reform Judaism, and United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Funders include the Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado and Rose Community Foundation. To determine the extent to which this new stage meets expectations, progress along the *Standards of Excellence* serves as a critical indicator.

A preliminary evaluation of the first phase of BUILDing Jewish ECE, conducted by Michael Ben-Avie, Ph.D., indicates that BUILDing Jewish ECE successfully achieved nearly all the desired outcomes. It promoted:

- The use of a customer relations management system
- The tracking of marketing effectiveness
- Development of marketing messages and action plans
- Discovery of effective avenues to reach target markets
- Enrollment conversion action plans and enrollment management
- Prospect data collection and communication
- Conversions of inquiries into center visits
- Conversions of center visits into enrollment
- Newly-enrolled family communications

There is evidence that a significant amount of positive change has occurred in terms of implementing specific practices advocated by BUILDing Jewish ECE. This is an important finding because it is now known that the strategies that BUILDing Jewish ECE used were effective in promoting these specific practices in the ECE centers. For more information about BUILDing Jewish ECE, go to **www.buildingjewishece.org**.

The *Standards of Excellence* were developed and written by:

Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative was made possible by support from:

Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative Partners:

Participating Denver/Boulder Jewish Childhood Education Centers:

BMH-BJ Preschool

Boulder Jewish Community Center Preschool

Congregation Rodef Shalom Preschool

Garden Preschool and Early Learning Center at Chabad Jewish Center of South Metro Denver

Hebrew Educational Alliance Preschool

Jewish Journey Early Learning Center (formerly Aish Denver Preschool)

Rabbi Steven Foster Early Learning Center at Temple Emanuel

Robert E. Loup Jewish Community Center Early Learning School

Temple Sinai Preschool

BUILDing Jewish ECE is made possible by support from:

The Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado

JCC Association

Rose Community Foundation

Union for Reform Judaism

United Synagogues of Conservative Judaism

BUILDing Jewish ECE Partners:

Colorado Agency for Jewish Education (now JEWISHcolorado)

Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative Steering Committee

Jewish Early Childhood Center Directors Council

For more information about the 10 years of work and research conducted by the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative, please see:

Identity, Quality, Access: Jewish Futures Begin Here, Jewish Early Childhood Education in Denver and Boulder, 2006
http://www.rcfdenver.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/JewishECEBrochure0906.pdf

Toward a Lifetime of Jewish Engagement: Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative Progress Report, 2008 to 2012
http://www.rcfdenver.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/JECEIProgressReport08-12Brochure.pdf

Resources That Informed the Development of the *Standards of Excellence*

The Center for Applied Child Development Eliot Pearson Department of Child Development (2004). Defining excellence in early childhood Jewish education. A report submitted to the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education. Medford, MA: Tufts University.

Katz. L. (2010). STEM in the early years. Collected papers from the SEED (Stem in Early Education and Development) Conference. http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/beyond/seed/katz.html/.

Mayes, L. and Cohen, D. (2006). The development of a capacity for imagination in early childhood. In Andres Martin and Robert King (Eds.), Donald Cohen: Life is with others (pp. 142-158). New Haven: Yale University Press.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (2002). Early childhood mathematics: Promoting good beginnings. http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/psmath.pdf.

Smith, M. W. and Dickinson, D. K. (2002). Early language & literacy classroom observation (ELLCO) toolkit, research edition with user's guide. http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED462158.