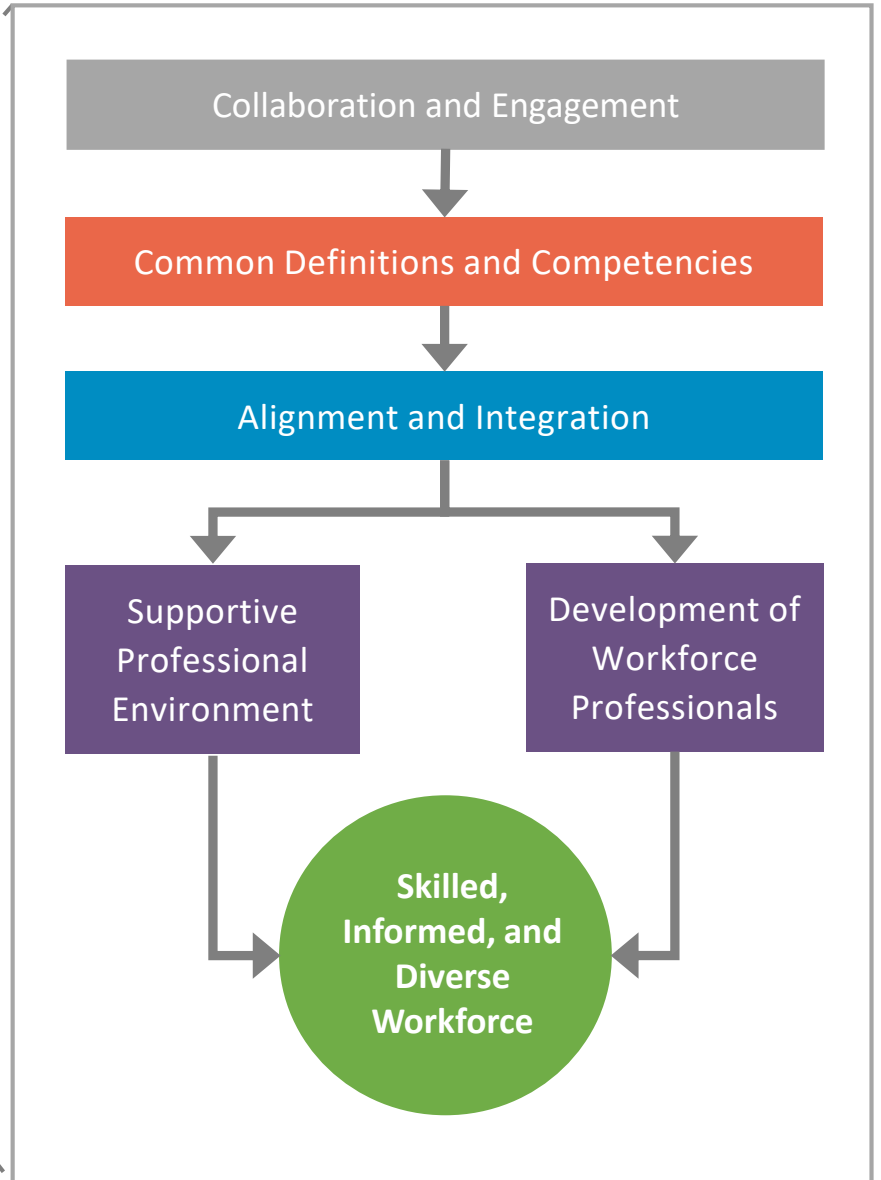
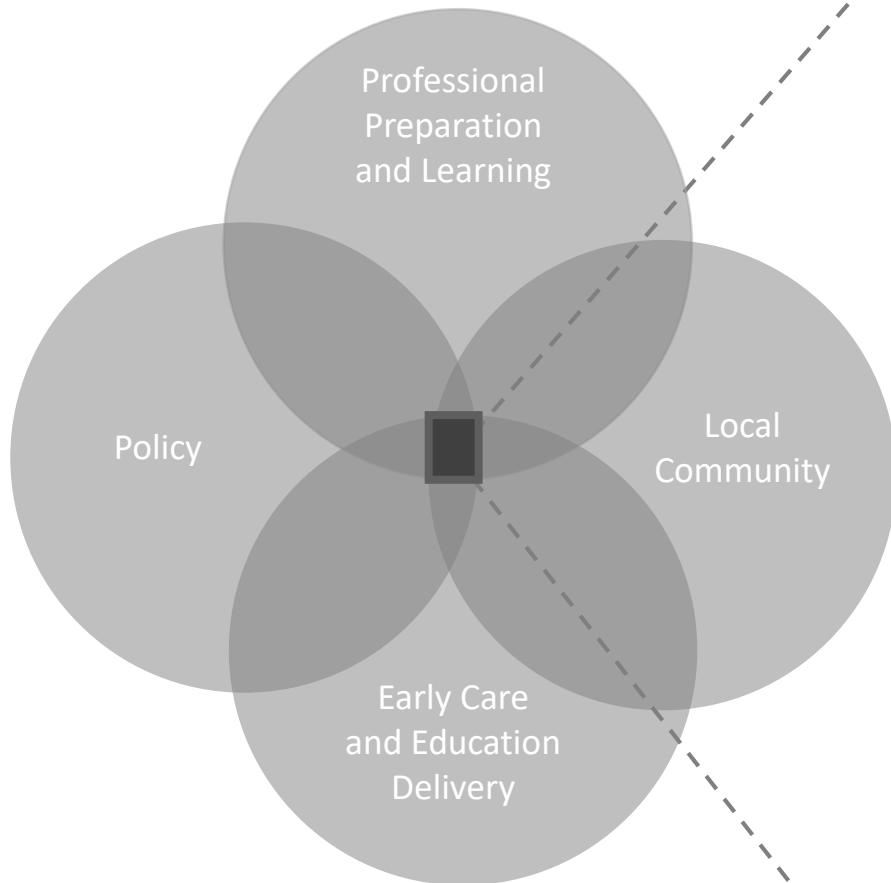


Blueprint for Transforming Nebraska's Early Childhood Workforce



Collaboration and Engagement

Engage key systems representative of professional preparation and learning, early care and education delivery, local community, and policy.

Common Definitions and Competencies

As a state and professional field, we need a common set of definitions and qualification criteria for early childhood educators across the mixed-delivery system. Specific skill and competency statements tied to these definitions are essential for all professional learning systems, including two- and four-year preparation programs, auxiliary professional development options, and systems of certification and regulation.

Alignment and Integration

A review of regulations, certification standards, and professional learning systems that reflect the competencies and higher education course and program requirements is vitally important. Aligned competencies increase efficiency and effectiveness, remove barriers to the current and future workforce, and allow for integration within and across systems of practice and regulation. Once alignment is achieved, systems of care and education can begin using these competencies for hiring, training, and structuring their programs.

Supportive Professional Environment

The workforce environment is essential for enabling early childhood educators to implement best practices for children and families. A supportive professional environment that compensates workers fairly and offers career advancement opportunities is critical for attracting and retaining high-quality practitioners in the field. Moreover, supervisors, principals, and directors need sufficient background in child development and early education to effectively support and understand best practices.

Development of Workforce Professionals

Creating the early childhood workforce of the future requires recognizing and expanding these individuals' expertise so they feel valued by their employers, the communities they serve, and the general public. This calls for induction and mentoring and professional development programs that ensure that those who comprise the early childhood workforce are prepared to see themselves as professionals who fulfill a critical role in the healthy growth and development of Nebraska's children and have opportunities to continue their own professional learning.

This blueprint is built on a commitment to principles of equity, collaboration, evidence-based practice, responsiveness to local needs, and sustainability.