Fostering Essential Dispositions in Young Children

Strategies for use of the video within your program

Have staff view the video and read page 10 *Fostering Competent Learners: Essential Dispositions* in the CT ELDS document. Have each member of the team consider their current ability to foster these dispositions and identify their greatest strengths, and be prepared to share their own strategies with the rest of the team.

- As a group, create a list of strategies to try in all classrooms. Also identify those practices that might undermine the development of these dispositions. What are some alternatives? Post the list in an area where teachers plan, or print and give copies to each classroom team.

- Teachers could also identify areas in which they could use further support. Team each person up with a peer that listed that same area as a strength. Teachers could do peer observations and look for evidence of useful strategies in each other’s classrooms. Work in teams to create a walk-through checklist to use in classrooms. Identify what to look for.

- Acknowledge what is working. Identify areas for improvement. Do program policies support teachers’ efforts to foster the CT ELDS Essential Dispositions in children? Review program philosophy and curriculum and identify which dispositions are emphasized. Also identify whether policies at the center are supportive of these dispositions in the adults who work there.

- How does the program communicate this topic with families? Consider how to share the work that is being done and lessons learned with families. A web resource to share: Creativity and Play: Fostering Creativity (pbs.org)

- When teachers feel that they have made significant progress in this area, celebrate their efforts and discuss what they have noticed about the children’s responses to the changes. Have them reflect on their own dispositions and consider how they could make these more visible to children through modeling.

- Explore the possibility of developing a Community of Practice to further study this topic. Support staff who are interested by providing: time to meet and discuss, resources to expand their thinking, and an opportunity to share what they learn.