Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies Study: System-Level Master Semistructured Interview Protocol

INTRODUCTORY SCRIPT

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this discussion. Your participation is very important to the study. My name is [LEAD INTERVIEWER] from Mathematica, an independent research organization. I am joined by [OTHERS ON CALL] who will help take notes.

In this study, the Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies Study, we'd like to better understand different approaches to developing and implementing competency frameworks and assessing competencies for teachers and caregivers of infants and toddlers. We are focusing on using competencies for teachers and caregivers in group settings including center-based and family childcare settings. Ultimately, this information will support efforts to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers.

We are conducting a study for the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with approval from the Office of Management and Budget. This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to support efforts to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 90 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: 0970-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX.

We realize that the word "competencies" can mean different things to different people. For our project, we use the term "competency" to refer to a piece of knowledge, a skill, or an attribute essential to the practice of teaching and caring for infants and toddlers. A "competency framework" is a set of competencies that an organization or entity has compiled to convey the range of knowledge, skills, and attributes that a teacher or caregiver should have. Today, we wanted to speak with you about the framework [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] and how it is used.

We will present our findings in a memo to the Administration for Children and Families The memo will describe what we learn from you and others, and it will identify the competency framework we discussed and list the names of all individuals consulted. In this internal memo, we may also include direct quotes or attribute comments to specific individuals. If you have any concerns about being quoted or named in these internal memos, please let us know. In future public reports, we may highlight key lessons from our conversations and acknowledge your contribution to this project, but we will not attribute quotes or comments to specific individuals.

I would like to record our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the recording. If you want to say anything that you don't want recorded, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the recorder. We will delete all recordings at the end of the study. Please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions and you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to answer. You may withdraw from this study at any time without consequences. We expect this conversation to take up to 90 minutes. Please keep any information discussed today private to those participating in this interview. Do you have any objections to being part of this interview or to my recording of our discussion? If you think of resources or documents related to topics we discuss today that you think would be helpful for our team to review, please let me know. [IF SENT DOCUMENTS] This would be in addition to the resources that you already sent, which were very helpful so thank for taking the time to send those!

Do you have any questions before we begin?

In this interview we will ask you about the work you do related to [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]. We realize that your work since early 2020 will likely have been disrupted by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. When you respond to the questions please consider both how you typically approached your work prior to COVID-19 and also whether and how that has changed due to COVID-19.

I.　　Respondent background

We are going to start with some background questions about you.

    A. Can you start by telling me about your role at [NAME OF ORGANIZATION]? What are your primary responsibilities?

    B. How long have you been working at this agency/organization? How much of this time has been in your current position?

    C. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]? How do you use the framework in your work?

II.　　Development of framework and current implementation status

This next set of questions is about the development of the [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] and how its currently used.

    A. What can you tell me about why [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] was developed? [*Probes*: What were the intended uses of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] For example, for professional development? As part of licensing or credentialing? For self-assessment?]

1. For whom was the framework developed? [*Probes:* For example, those involved in teacher training or teacher certification? For program or center directors? For teachers and caregivers?]

    a. [*If framework is specific to infant and toddler teachers and caregivers*] Why was it decided that the framework should focus on infant and toddler teaching and caregiving specifically?

    b.   [*If framework is for infant and toddler and preschool teachers and caregivers*] Why was it decided that the framework should focus on all early childhood teachers and caregivers instead of having more specific frameworks for different groups?

    c. [*If framework is for specific settings, for example, center-based or family child care/home-based care more broadly*] Why did developers decide to focus the framework on specific settings?

B. What do you know about how the competencies and framework were developed?

    1. Who was involved in the development of the framework and how were they involved? [*Probes:* Was there a particular agency, organization, or person who was the driving force behind the framework? Who provided leadership during the development process? Were any consultants or researchers involved? How did those involved communicate throughout the process? For example, did they hold regular meetings? What was discussed?]

    2. How did developers decide what to include in the framework? [*Probes:* Did the developers look at research studies or consult with any researchers/academics? Was the framework or any of the competencies adopted from other frameworks? How did the developers decide whether to make the competencies specific (for example, focused on a single piece of knowledge or skill) versus broader (for example, something that reflects a combination of knowledge and/or skills)?]

C. [*If framework is organized into domains*] Why did developers decide to group competencies into [SPECIFY TERM FOR DOMAINS]? How were the groupings determined? Were the groupings determined after the competencies were developed? Or were competencies developed based on targeted domains?

D. [*If framework includes proficiency levels*] Why did developers decide to include [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS]? How were those levels determined? How did developers determine which competencies should be in the [INSERT TERM FOR FIRST LEVEL] and which competencies should be in more advanced levels?

E. Were there any cultural considerations (for example, language or to accommodate differences in teaching or caregiving practices) that came up in the process of developing the competencies and framework?

F. How was the development of the competencies and framework funded? *[Probes:* What were the costs involved? Where did the funding come from?]

G. Have you encountered any challenges in the development of the framework. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

H. Have there been any factors that helped support or facilitate the development of the framework. [*Probe if yes*: Can you provide examples?]

I. How have the competencies and framework changed over time? *[Probes:* Why have changes been made? Is there a process for reviewing and evaluating competencies? How long has the current version of the framework been in place? *Have the goals or intended uses of the framework changes over time? How have the goals or intended uses of the framework changed over time?*

J. Are any parts of the framework (for example, specific competencies or domains), aligned with other standards for early care and education? In other words, were any parts of the framework developed or selected to match the content or focus of other standards that are relevant to early care and education programs? [For example, some frameworks have been developed to overlap with state early learning standards or National Association for the Education of Young Children standards.] [*If yes:* How are they aligned?]

K. What agency or organization is responsible for overseeing the use of the competencies and framework and coordinating between the various stakeholders involved in implementation? Can you describe the role of this agency? [*Probes*: How did this agency or organization get this role? What does regular oversight look like? What kind of supports (financial or not) do they provide related to the implementation of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]?

L. Can you describe where it is being used and by whom? [For example, is it currently being used in specific locations or by specific organizations?]

M. Are there plans or ideas under consideration for other ways that [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] could be used in the future?

III.   Use of competencies for professional development

My next questions are about the use [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for professional development within a state or system, including how the framework aligns (or does not align) with other professional development systems, such as training and technical assistance, credentialing, etc.

[*If the competency framework is not specifically focused on infant and toddler teachers and caregivers, throughout these questions probe on whether there are any differences for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. For example:* Can you tell me about any ways that the approach differs for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers compared with preschool teachers?]

Also probe on whether and how the use of competencies for various purposes below differs for teachers in different types of programs or settings. For example: Can you tell me about any ways that the approach differs for teachers and caregivers in center-based vs family childcare settings?]

[*If the competency framework is primarily owned by a national organization, throughout the questions probe on whether there are differences depending on the specific state or locality in which it is being implemented. For example:* Does the approach differ depending on the state that has decided to use the framework?]

A. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to assess training and technical assistance needs? [Examples of ways that training and technical assistance could be provided include workshops and courses, peer learning opportunities, and coaching. *If yes: use probes.*]

   1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to assess training and technical assistance needs? Is it mandatory? If not, how commonly are the competencies used for this purpose?

   2. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that are prioritized or considered to be more important for assessing training and technical assistance needs? [*If yes*: which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

   3. Who oversees or monitors the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for assessing training and technical assistance needs? What other agencies or organizations are involved?

   4. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] come to be used for this purpose?

      a. Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards, such as a quality rating and improvement system?

      b. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework for assessing training and technical assistance needs?

   5. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for assessing training and technical assistance needs. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

   6. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for assessing training and technical assistance needs?

B. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used for developing training and technical assistance materials? [Examples of ways that training and technical assistance could be provided include workshops and courses, peer learning opportunities, and coaching. *If yes: use probes.*]

   1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to develop training and technical assistance materials? Is it mandatory? If not, how commonly are the competencies used for this purpose?

   2. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that that are prioritized or considered to be more important for developing training and technical assistance materials ? [*If yes*: which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or proficiency levels considered to be more important?]

   3. Who oversees or monitors the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for developing training and technical assistance materials? What other agencies or organizations are involved?

   4. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] come to be used for developing training and technical assistance materials?

      a. Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards, such as a quality rating and improvement system?

      b. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework for developing training and technical assistance materials?

   5. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for developing training and technical assistance materials. [Prob*if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges? Are there challenges to combining training and technical assistance related to competencies with other topics that must also be covered? For example, curricula, a quality rating and improvement system standards?]

   6. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for developing training and technical assistance materials?

C. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] tied to requirements for national or state credentials, certifications, or licenses? [*Give examples of credentials based on documentation we find for this site, including any certifications or licenses, apprenticeship programs and CDA*] [*If yes: use probes*]

   1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] tied to requirements for national or state credentials, certifications, or licenses?

2. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that that are prioritized or considered to be more important for credential, certification, or license requirements? [*If yes*: Which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

3. Who oversees or monitors the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for this purpose? What other agencies or organizations are involved?

4. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] come to be used for credentials, certifications, or licensing?

   a. Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards, such as a quality rating and improvement system?

   b. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework for credentials, certifications, or licensing?

5. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in the credentials, certifications, or licensing process. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

6. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in the credentials, certifications, or licensing process?

D. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to determine whether pre-service and/or in-service teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills? [*If yes: use probes for pre-service and/or in-service as applicable*]

1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to determine whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills? Is it linked to state career lattice or pathways?

2. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that are prioritized or considered to be more important for determining whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills? [*If yes*: Which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

3. [*If framework includes proficiency levels based on our review:*] How are the [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] used?

4. Who uses [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for determining whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills? What other agencies or organizations are involved?

5. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] come to be used for determining whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills? Is it mandated by law?

    a. Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards, such as a quality rating and improvement system?

    b. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework for determining whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills?

6. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for determining whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

7. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for determining whether teachers are advancing in their knowledge or skills?

E. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used by institutions of higher education? [*If yes*: *use probes*]

1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used by institutions of higher education? Is it used to design program offerings, curricula, or course content? Is it used for preservice and continuing education?

2. Which institutions of higher education are currently using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]?

3. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that that are prioritized or considered to be more important by institutions of higher education? [*If yes*: which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

4. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] come to be used by institutions of higher education?

    a. Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards, such as a quality rating and improvement system?

    b. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] being used by institutions of higher education?

5. Have you encountered any challenges to the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] by institutions of higher education. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

6. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] by institutions of higher education?

F. Are there other ways [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] is used for professional development initiatives at the state or system level that we have not already discussed? [*If yes: use probes for each additional use*]

1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]?

2. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that are prioritized or considered to be more important for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]? [*If yes*: Which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

3. [*If framework includes proficiency levels based on our review:*] How are the [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] used?

4. Who uses [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]? What other agencies or organizations are involved?

5. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] come to be used for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]?

    a. Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards, such as a quality rating and improvement system?

    b. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]?

6. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

7. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for [SPECIFY PURPOSE]?

G. How do various agencies and organizations involved in using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for professional development work together and coordinate to use and promote the competencies? Who leads the coordination efforts?

H. You told me [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] is used for [*list all aspects of professional development that were identified as linked to the competencies*].

1. How are these activities funded?

2. How consistent is this funding (for example, is it a one-time grant or awarded or appropriated annually, given for a set amount of time etc.)?

IV.   Integration and alignment with early care and education system

My next questions are about the use of competencies and the competency framework in parts of the early care and education system, such as in licensing or in quality initiatives. [*If changes from the COVID-19 pandemic are relevant*: We understand some of these inner workings in the early care and education system may be changing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please share your understanding based on what is currently happening and how that differs from typical practices prior to the pandemic].

[*If the competency framework is not specifically focused on infant and toddler teachers and caregivers, throughout these questions probe on whether there are any differences for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. For example:* Can you tell me about any ways that the approach differs for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers?]

[*Throughout this section, tailor probes to address elements of the early care and education system relevant to this case that were identified as part of case exploration and/or screening (for example,, licensing, credentialing, Head Start Collaboration Offices, Child Care and Development Fund Lead Agencies, Preschool Development Grants, other collaborations among early childhood agencies/offices)*]

A. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] currently used in the licensing standards or process for programs, such as early care and education centers or family child care homes? [For example, some states include competencies as part of their licensing requirements] [*If yes, use probes*]

   1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used in licensing?

   2. Are any of the competencies included in licensing standards? For example, do early care and education staff have to demonstrate certain competencies in order to be licensed?

   3. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that are prioritized or considered to be more important in licensing? [*If yes*: Which ones and why? Are particular [SPECIFY TERM FOR COMPETENCY DOMAINS] or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

   4. Who oversees or monitors the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in licensing? What other agencies or organizations are involved in the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in licensing?

   5. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] become integrated in the licensing process? Is it mandated by law?

   a. Have you seen or experienced any benefits to [SPECIFY COMPETENCY
       FRAMEWORK] being used in the licensing process?

6. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY
   FRAMEWORK] in the licensing process. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed
   those challenges?]

7. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in
   the licensing process?

B. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] currently used in quality initiatives
   (such as a quality rating and improvement system or state infant/toddler specialist
   networks)? [For example, some states include competencies in their a quality rating and
   improvement system requirements for staff or refer to competencies in quality
   improvement or technical assistance activities provided through a quality rating and
   improvement system] [*If yes, use probes*]

   1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used in a quality rating and
      improvement system?

      a. Are any of the competencies included in a quality rating and improvement system
          standards? For example, do early care and education staff have to demonstrate
          certain competencies in order to achieve certain ratings?

      b. Are all the competencies used in a quality rating and improvement system? If not,
          which specific competencies or parts of the framework are used?

      c. Who oversees or monitors the use of competencies in a quality rating and
          improvement system? What other agencies or organizations are involved in the
          use of competencies in a quality rating and improvement system?

      d. How did the competencies become integrated in a quality rating and improvement
          system? Is it mandated by law?

      e. Have you encountered any challenges to using competencies in a quality rating
          and improvement system.

      f. What has helped support the use of competencies in a quality rating and
          improvement system?

   2. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used in other quality
      initiatives?

      a. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that that are
          prioritized or considered to be more important in quality initiatives? [*If yes*:

Which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]?

b. Who oversees or monitors the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in quality initiatives? What other agencies or organizations are involved in the use of competencies in quality initiatives?

c. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] become integrated in quality initiatives?

(1) Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards?

(2) Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework in quality initiatives?

3. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in quality initiatives. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

a. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in quality initiatives?

C. Do any other state or local level early care and education programs use [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]? [For example, the state child care subsidy program, Head Start, state funded Pre-K, etc.?]. [*If yes, for each program use probes*]

1. How is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used in [*program*]?

2. Are there specific competencies or groups of competencies that are prioritized or considered to be more important in [*program*]? [*If yes*: Which ones and why? Are particular competency domains or [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS] considered to be more important?]

3. Who oversees or monitors the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in [*program*]? What other agencies or organizations are involved in the use of competencies in [*program*]?

4. How did [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] become integrated in [*program*]?

(1) Is it required? By whom? For example, is it mandated by law or required for licensing or another program certification, or required by another set of standards?

(2) Have you seen or experienced any benefits to using the framework in [*program*]?

5. Have you encountered any challenges to using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in [*program*]. [*Probe if yes*: How have you addressed those challenges?]

6. What has helped support the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in [*program*]?

D. Are there other ways that [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] is used within the early care and education system or by your organization that we have not yet discussed? [*If yes*: Tell me about those other ways]

E. How do various agencies or organizations in the early care and education system work together and coordinate to use and promote [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]? Who leads the coordination efforts?

F. What are challenges to integrating the use of the competency framework across different agencies serving early care and education programs and professionals?

G. What has helped facilitate the integration and use of the competency framework across different agencies in the early care and education system?

V.   Evaluation and use of data about competency framework

This next section is about how the competency framework is evaluated. This may include any data about how the framework is used or how effective it is.

A. Can you tell me about any data that are collected about [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]? [For example, data to monitor the use of the competencies, or data about outcomes associated with the framework] [*If data are collected and for each type of data collected, use probes.*]

1. What are the data used for?

2. Who collects these data?

3. Where does the funding for data collection come from? How consistent is this funding (for example, is it a one-time grant or awarded or appropriated annually, given for a set amount of time etc.)?

4. [*If there is an existing workforce registry:*] Is any information about competencies stored in the workforce registry or in any other administrative data systems?

B. Do you know of any studies that have been or are being conducted to examine how the [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] is being used, or outcomes associated with the competencies and framework? [*If any studies, use probes 1-3]*

　　1. What is the purpose of the study?

　　2. Who is conducting the study?

　　3. How is the study funded? How consistent is this funding (for example, is it a one-time grant or awarded or appropriated annually, given for a set amount of time etc.)?

VI.　　Dissemination of information about competency framework

My next questions are about how information about [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] is shared with potential users, including teachers and caregivers and [*list other users described in Part II]*. Specifically, we are interested in learning about how your organization disseminates information to help potential users learn about and implement the framework.

[*If the competency framework is focused on both infant and toddler teachers and caregivers AND preschool teachers and caregivers, throughout these questions probe on whether there are any differences for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. For example:* Can you tell me about any ways that the approach differs for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers?]

A. What strategies are used to ensure that potential users know about the framework, understand its relevance and content, and how it can be used? [For example, how is information about the framework shared with early care and education centers or family child care homes, and current or prospective teachers and caregivers? Are there trainings provided? Written materials?]

　　1. What dissemination materials are available? Are the competencies available in different formats (for example, website, PDF document)?

　　2. Are there specific materials or strategies developed for various audiences (for example, coaches, administrators, teachers and caregivers)? For example, to help teachers learn more about the framework or help administrators implement the framework in their programs.

　　3. Are there strategies that have been used in the past that you are not using anymore? Why?

　　4. Are there other strategies you are considering for sharing information in the future?

B. Who is primarily responsible for promoting the framework to potential users? What other agencies or organizations are sharing information about the framework?

1. How do various agencies and organizations involved in disseminating information about [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] work together and coordinate to use and promote the competencies? Who leads the coordination efforts?

C. How are dissemination activities funded? How consistent is this funding (for example, is it a one-time grant or awarded or appropriated annually, given for a set amount of time etc.)?

D. What are challenges to disseminating information about the framework?

E. What has helped facilitate the dissemination of information about the framework?

VII.   Assessment of competencies

My next questions are about assessment efforts related to [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]. I will ask about any existing assessments tied to [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK], how they were developed, and what they are used for.

[*If the competency framework is focused on both infant and toddler teachers and caregivers AND preschool teachers and caregivers, throughout these questions probe on whether there are any differences for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. For example:* Can you tell me about any ways that the approach differs for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers?]

A. Tell me about any existing assessment(s) that can or have been used to assess the competencies of teachers and caregivers?. [*If any existing assessment(s), use probes 1-11 for each.*]

1. Why was the assessment developed?

2. How was the assessment developed? [*Probes:* Did the developers consult any research literature or consult with any researchers/academics? Was the assessment adapted from another existing assessment?]

3. What agencies, organizations, and/or individuals were involved in the development of the assessment and how were they involved?

4. How is the assessment used? *[Probes:* Who is assessed? How often are assessments conducted? Who conducts the assessment(s)? What is the method of assessment (for example, observation, paper/pencil, self-assessment, etc.)?]

5. Is the assessment required to be used? By whom? Are there incentives for using the assessment?

6. Is there training to use the assessment? Can you tell me more about that?

7. Does the assessment cover all the competencies in the framework or a subset? Does it assess [SPECIFY TERM FOR COMPETENCY DOMAINS] or individual competencies?

8. Does the assessment align with the [SPECIFY TERM FOR PROFICIENCY LEVELS]?

9. Has any research been done about the assessment and how well it works? There are many different kinds of research that can be done about assessments—from asking people who use the assessment if it is helpful to them, all the way to comparing scores on the assessment with other measures, like a classroom observation measure, to test whether they give similar messages about teachers' competencies. [*If any research conducted:* Can you describe the studies that have been conducted? Who were the participants and what was involved?]

10. What costs are associated with conducting (including training and analyzing data) the assessment? Where does the funding currently come from? How consistent is this funding (for example, is it a one-time grant or awarded or appropriated annually, given for a set amount of time etc.)?

11. Who is able to see the results of the assessment? Is that information collected/stored anywhere?

B. Do you think there is a need for any or additional assessments? If so, for what purpose?

C. How do various agencies and organizations involved in assessment efforts related to [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] work together and coordinate to use and assess the competencies? Who leads the coordination efforts?

D. What are challenges to assessing competencies? [*Probe:* Are there challenges related to the use of multiple assessments?]

E. What has helped facilitate the assessment of competencies?

VIII. Program and staff use of competencies

My next questions are about how [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] is used by early care and education centers or family child care homes and staff directly providing services to children and families. We will also be speaking with centers or family child care homes and staff directly but are interested in your insights based on your own interactions with centers or family child care homes and staff who use the framework.

[*If the competency framework is focused on both infant and toddler teachers and caregivers AND preschool teachers and caregivers, throughout these questions probe on whether there are any differences for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. For example:* Can you tell me about any ways that the approach differs for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers?]

A. Do you know of any early care and education centers or family child care homes that use [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] in the process of recruiting and hiring staff?

1. [*If yes:* Which ones? Can you give me an example of how this works? For example, do job listings include specific competencies or refer to the framework in any way?]

2. [*If no:* Why do you think the framework is not being used for this purpose?]

B. Do you know of any early care and education centers or family child care homes that use [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] for staff training and professional development? [*If yes:* Which ones? Can you give me an example of how this works? For example, is the framework used to determine staff training needs or plan training activities?]

C. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to make staffing decisions?

1. [*If yes:* Can you give me an example of how this works? For example, is the framework used to make decisions about promotions or increased compensation]?

2. [*If no:* Why do you think the framework is not being used for this purpose?]

D. Is [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] used to make other decisions about service delivery? [For example, is the framework used to design instructional services activities, select or develop curriculum, guide family engagement, or inform approaches to child assessment?]

1. [*If yes:* Can you tell me more about this?]

2. [*If no:* Why do you think the framework is not being used for this purpose?]

E. Do early care and education centers or family child care homes and staff tend to use the framework in full or do they focus on individual competencies or subsets of competencies?

F. Does the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] vary by types of early care and education centers or family child care homes? [For example, is the framework more likely to be used by multi-site or larger organizations? Center-based vs family childcare settings? Centers or family child care homes serving particular ages of children or mixed-age settings? Centers or family child care homes receiving child care subsidies? Head Start programs?] [*If yes:* Can you tell me more about this?]

G. Do current or prospective teachers and caregivers use the framework for planning their professional development? [*If yes:* Can you give me an example of how this works? For example, do staff use the framework for selecting courses they take or training they attend?]

H. Does the use of [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] vary by types of staff? [For example, is the framework more or less likely to be used by teachers or caregivers with more or less experience, or by teachers or caregivers with particular educational backgrounds? Or by education managers or coaches?]

I. Are there or have there been any cultural considerations (for example, language or to accommodate differences in teaching or caregiving practices) that have come up in the process of encouraging and helping centers or family child care homes use the competencies and framework?

J. Are there any other factors/incentives (beyond those we discussed earlier) that influence how much (or how little) current or prospective teachers or caregivers use [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]?

K. Are there requirements for early care and education centers or family child care homes and staff to use the competency framework? [*If there are requirements, use probes 1-5:*]

1. How were these requirements developed?

2. Who was involved in the development of these requirements? For example, funders, licensing agency, etc.

3. Are there incentives tied to completing the requirements? If so, what are they?

4. Are there factors that may discourage early care and education centers or family child care homes and staff from fulfilling the requirements? If so, what are they?

5. What is the process for monitoring whether the requirements are being met?

L. What challenges do early care and education centers or family child care homes and staff face in using the framework? [*Probe:* Do early care and education centers or family child care homes face challenges in using multiple frameworks or standards?]

M. How do other early childhood professionals (for example, home visitors, early intervention, mental health consultants) use the framework?

IX.   Supports and challenges for implementation

[*If the competency framework is focused on both infant and toddler teachers and caregivers AND preschool teachers and caregivers, throughout these questions probe on whether there are any differences for infant and toddler teachers and caregivers. For example, in question A ask if the goals have been achieved for both infant and toddler teachers and caregivers and preschool teachers and caregivers.*]

A. How well has the competency framework achieved the goals it was developed for? [*Probe:* Which goals have not been achieved? Why is that? Do you think the competency framework is being used as intended? Why or why not?]

B. What factors facilitate or motivate the use of the competency framework? [*Probe:* How do you think the following factors support the use of the framework? *Ask about 1-9 below, excluding answers already provided*]

    1. Federal, state, and local policy environments

    2. Existence of and alignment with other policies/standards

    3. Accessibility of the framework – whether people know about it and understand it, whether it is available in usable formats with adequate supporting materials

    4. Relevance for early care and education centers or family child care homes, staff, and other stakeholders

    5. [*If framework is specific to infant and toddler teachers and caregivers*] Specific focus on infant and toddler teachers or caregivers

    6. Availability of professional development, training or education opportunities that are linked to the competencies

    7. Availability of assessments linked to competencies

    8. Adequate funding

    9. Leadership - presence of leaders in different agencies who are committed to and provide leadership for the use of competencies

C. What, if anything, makes it challenging to implement and use of the framework? [*Probe:* How do you think the following factors hinders the use of the framework? *Ask about 1-9 below, excluding answers already provided*]

    1. Federal, state, and local policy environments

    2. Costs/lack of funding

    3. Conflicts with other policies/standards

    4. Accessibility – do stakeholders know about it and understand it? Is it relevant to stakeholders? Is it available in usable formats with adequate supporting materials?

    5. [*If framework is specific to infant and toddler teachers and caregivers.*] Specific focus on infant and toddler teachers or caregivers

6. Lack of professional development, training or education opportunities

7. Lack of assessments linked to competencies

8. Leadership - lack of leaders in different agencies who are committed to and provide leadership for the use of competencies

9. Any other barriers?

D. What do you hope to see in the future in terms of the use of the competencies and framework?

CLOSING SCRIPT

Thank you for this extremely helpful information.

Here are the resources and documents you identified for us during our call [LIST]. Aside from those listed, are there other resources and documents that you think would be helpful for us to look at?

Are there other people that you think would be helpful for us to speak with to learn more about the topics we discussed today? [FOR EACH PERSON IDENTIFIED, ASK FOR: NAME, ORGANIZATION, TITLE, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMAIL, AND TOPICS. CONFIRM IF WE CAN USE THE CURRENT RESPONDENT'S NAME WHEN WE REACH OUT TO THE PERSON/PEOPLE.]

Before we end the call, do you have any questions for me?

Thank you so much for your time.