Module 3C: Outline & Manual

Program Operations

Contents

Module Description

Effective communication is a key component to the operations of early learning program. Without good communication, programs do not run smoothly. Good communication enhances the goal of creating an environment that is conducive to high quality. The use of systems, policies, and procedures helps accomplish this through: classroom management utilizing systems for planning, record keeping, and reporting, leadership and coaching utilizing individualized staff development plans as an important component, well-planned staff meetings held on a regular basis and designed to generate constructive employee interaction, and teacher training as a part of staff development necessitating planning and budget considerations.

Materials

- Chart paper and markers
- Copy paper
- Pencils or pens for participants
- Handouts
    - *"What Do Teachers Need Most From Their Directors" Reading*
    - *"Advancing Preschool Teachers Through Evaluation and Coaching" Reading*
    - *Pre- and Post-Assessment*

Learning Outcomes

Candidates who actively participate in this session will be able to…

- Understand that classroom planning, record keeping, and reporting rely on the use of well-constructed systems
- Understand that listening and feedback are important communication tools
- Understand the role of a coach
- Know how to write a staff development plan
- Know how to use systems, policies, and procedures effectively
- Understand that systems only work when communicated and used
- Improve staff interaction
- Know the importance of staffing meetings and how to conduct them
- Identify that teacher training necessitates planning and research

Training Agenda

Total Content Time: 2.0 hours
Total Session Time: 3.0 hours

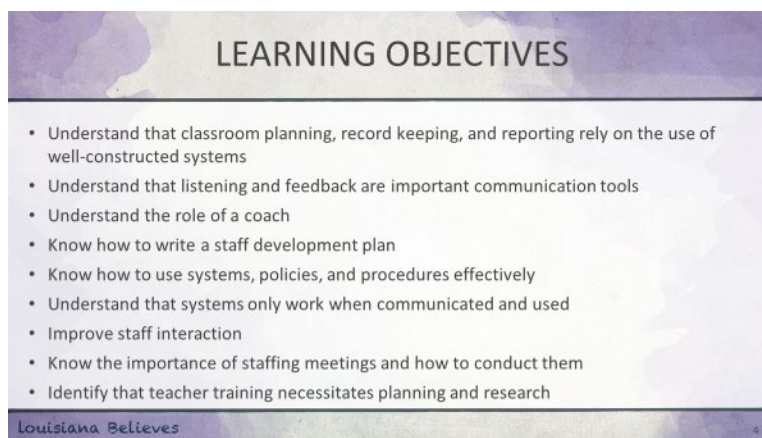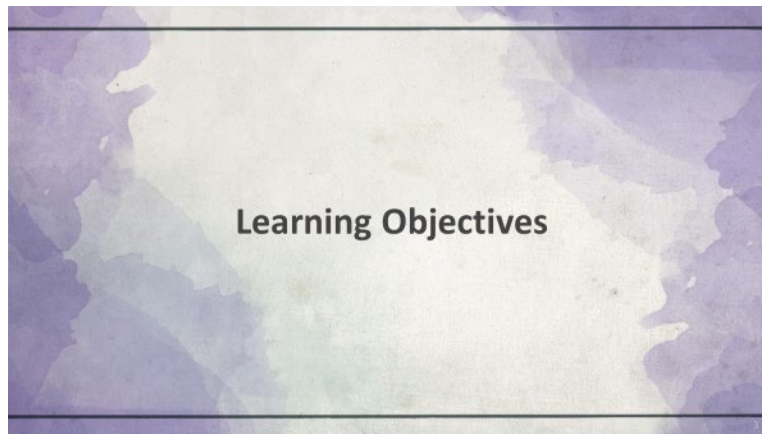| Item	Time/Duration
Registration/Sign-In	30 minutes prior to course start (*not included in total course time*)
Welcome, Session & Group Introductions	20 minutes
The Difficulties of Communication	25 minutes
The Role of a Coach and Staff Development	15 minutes
Using Systems, Policies, and Procedures Effectively	25 minutes
System Communication	20 minutes
The Roles of Leadership, Positive Environment, and Staff Meetings	15 minutes
Teacher Training as Staff Development	5 minutes
Session Closing & Post-Assessment	15 minutes (*not included in total course time*)
Individualized Q&A	15 minutes following course completion (*not included in total course time*)

Training Manual
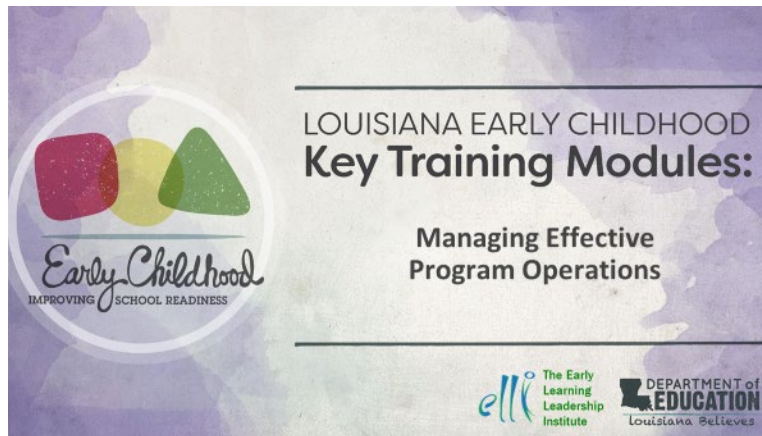
Distribute the Pre-Assessment Evaluation as participants enter the training.
- *Ask them to complete the Pre-Assessment Evaluation and return to you*
- *Briefly review the forms to identify the group's needs*
- *Emphasize the learning objective(s) identified by the group as needing support*
- *Modify the session to spend more time on knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by the group*
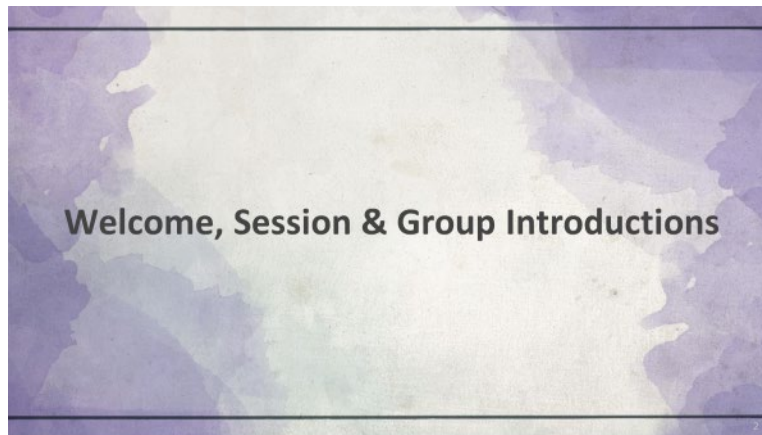
Good morning/afternoon. This is a presentation of the Louisiana Early Childhood Key Training Modules. I am (insert name) and I will be your trainer today.

First, I want to welcome and thank you for taking the time to join us today. I appreciate your dedication to young children in Louisiana. Your efforts to grow will help them grow, so thank you.

Learning Objectives

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand that classroom planning, record keeping, and reporting rely on the use of well-constructed systems
- Understand that listening and feedback are important communication tools
- Understand the role of a coach
- Know how to write a staff development plan
- Know how to use systems, policies, and procedures effectively
- Understand that systems only work when communicated and used
- Improve staff interaction
- Know the importance of staffing meetings and how to conduct them
- Identify that teacher training necessitates planning and research

Louisiana Believes

The purpose of today's training is understanding the role that systems, policies, and procedures play in the operations of an early learning program, especially relating to classroom management.

Read each learning objective aloud.

Candidates who actively participate in this session will be able to identify and understand:
- **That classroom planning, record keeping, and reporting rely on the use of well-constructed systems**
- **That listening and feedback are important communication tools**
- **The role of a coach**
- **How to write a staff development plan**
- **How to use systems, policies, and procedures**
- **That systems only work when communicated and used**
- **The importance of quality staff interaction and the effects of a positive working environment**
- **The importance of staff meetings and how to conduct them**
- **That teacher training necessitates planning and research**

Are there any additional points we should add to our list of objectives for today?

Record responses on chart paper.
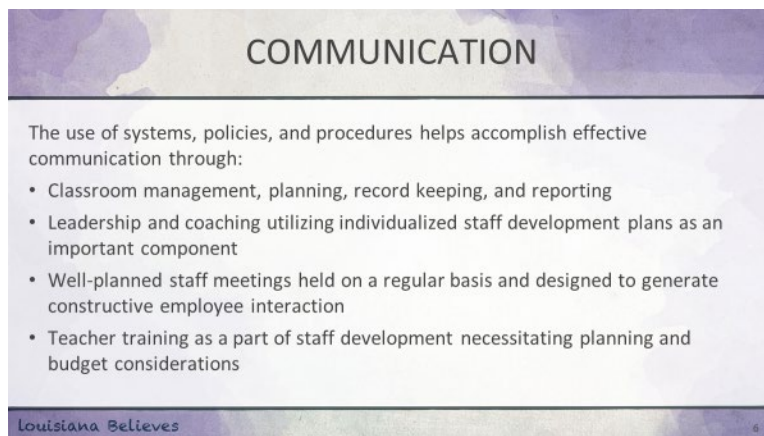
Effective communication with staff regarding classroom management, planning, record keeping, and reporting makes programs run smoothly and enhances the goal of creating an environment that is conducive to high-quality early learning programs.

Effective communication is a key component to the operations of early learning programs. Without good communication, programs do not run smoothly. Good communication enhances the goal of creating an environment that is conducive to high-quality early learning programs. The **use of systems, policies, and procedures** helps accomplish this through:

- **Classroom management, planning, record keeping, and reporting,**
- **Leadership and coaching utilizing individualized staff development plans as an important component,**
- **Well-planned staff meetings held on a regular basis and designed to generate constructive employee interaction,** and
- **Teacher training as a part of staff development necessitating planning and budget considerations.**
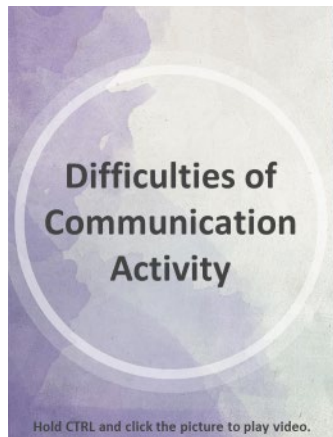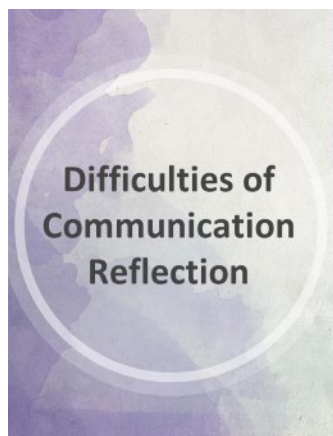
The difficulties of communication:
- Listen, think, and observe, but don't give up.

Play the video linked on the slide. (Duration: 6:45)

Video link: https://youtu.be/dBT6u0FyKnc

Expand to full screen view so all participants can easily view the content.

- Why didn't the clerk understand the requests?
- Why was the clerk frustrated with the customer?
- How do you feel when you are asked to do something and you don't understand the directions?
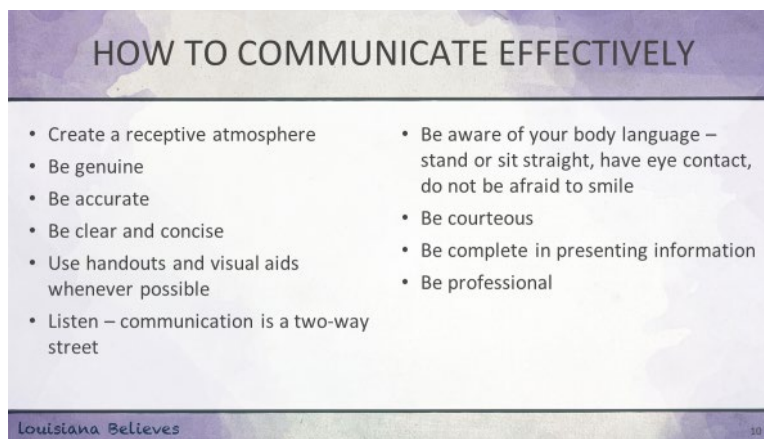- How can you help employees understand what you want from them?

After watching the video, ask the following questions to the group for discussion and reflection.

- **Why didn't the clerk understand the requests?**
  - *Words sounded alike*
- **Why was the clerk frustrated with the customer?**
  - *He didn't understand what was being asked of him*
- **How do you feel when you are asked to do something, and you don't understand the directions?**
- **How can you help employees understand what you want from them?**
  - *Demonstrate or show, ask for questions, have them explain the task for you*

How to Communicate Effectively

How do you communicate effectively with employees?

How do you communicate effectively with employees? *Brainstorm as a group and chart answers. Then, compare and contrast participants' ideas with the strategies on the next slide.*

HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

- Create a receptive atmosphere
- Be genuine
- Be accurate
- Be clear and concise
- Use handouts and visual aids whenever possible
- Listen – communication is a two-way street

- Be aware of your body language – stand or sit straight, have eye contact, do not be afraid to smile
- Be courteous
- Be complete in presenting information
- Be professional

Louisiana Believes

To communicate effectively, we need to:
- **Create a receptive atmosphere.** Do not communicate in an overly intense manner. See employees as respected members of your team.
- **Be genuine.** Sincerity and authenticity go a long way.
- **Be accurate.** Know your stuff
- **Be clear and concise.** Use understandable language. Refrain from using jargon unless it is understood by all.
- **Use handouts and visual aids whenever possible.**
- **Listen – communication is a two-way street.** Encourage questions so that you know that you are being understood. Reflect on questions and comments.
- **Be aware of your body language – stand or sit straight, have eye contact, do not be afraid to smile.**
- **Be courteous.** Manners and consideration go a long way.
- **Be complete in presenting information.** Time is valuable – use it wisely.
- **Be professional.** Remember you are a model for what you want employees to do. Some characteristics that contribute to being professional include: appearance, demeanor, reliability, competence, poise, and communication abilities.

Is there a difference between hearing and listening? *Allow participants time to respond.*

Play the video linked on the slide. (Duration: 1:41)

Video link: https://youtu.be/-4EDhdAHrOg

Expand to full screen view so all participants can easily view the content.

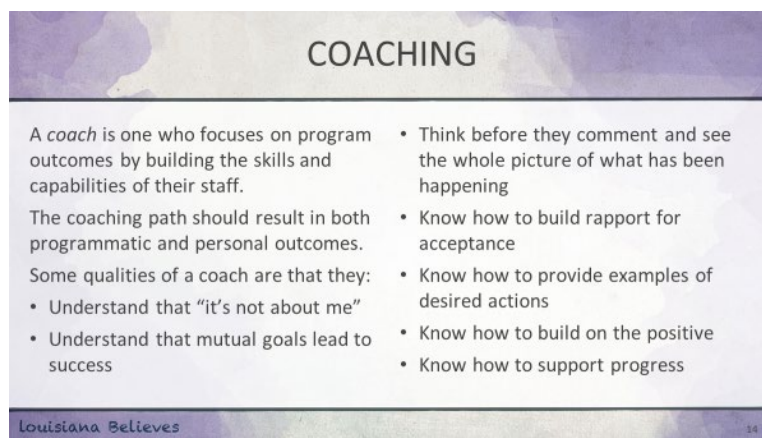**Do you listen to hear, or do you listen to understand?** *Allow participants time to respond.*

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand, they listen with the intent to reply. **Do you listen to understand, or do you listen with the intent to reply?** *Allow participants time to respond.*

What is your definition of a coach? What are the qualities of a coach? *Brainstorm as a group and chart answers. Then, compare and contrast participants' ideas with the qualities listed on the next slide.*

A coach is one who focuses on program outcomes by building the skills and capabilities of their staff. The coaching path should result in both programmatic and personal outcomes.
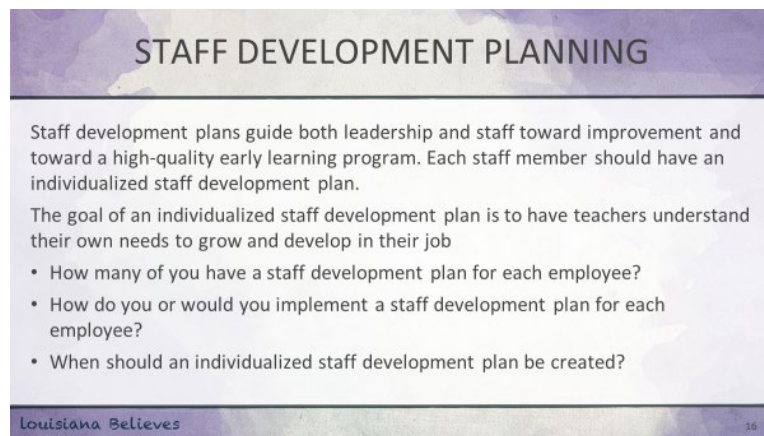
Some qualities of a coach are that they:
- **Understand that "it's not about me."**
- **Understand that mutual goals lead to success.**
- **Think before they comment and see the whole picture of what has been happening.**
- **Know how to build rapport for acceptance.**
- **Know how to provide examples of desired actions.**
- **Know how to build on the positive.**
- **Know how to support progress.**

Staff Development Planning

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Staff development plans guide both leadership and staff toward improvement and toward a high-quality early learning program. Each staff member should have an individualized staff development plan.

The goal of an individualized staff development plan is to have teachers understand their own needs to grow and develop in their job

- How many of you have a staff development plan for each employee?
- How do you or would you implement a staff development plan for each employee?
- When should an individualized staff development plan be created?

Staff development plans guide both leadership and staff toward improvement and toward a high-quality early learning program. Each staff member should have an individualized staff development plan.

The goal of an individualized staff development plan is to have teachers understand their own needs to grow and develop in their job.

How many of you have a staff development plan for each employee? *Pause for participants to respond.*

How do you or would you implement a staff development plan for each employee? When should an individualized staff development plan be created? *Brainstorm as a group and chart answers.*

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Keys to implementing an individualized model for staff development are:
- Gathering data
- Compiling a profile
- Conducting a planning conference
- Setting goals
- Writing an action plan
- Implementing the plan
- Evaluating progress

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Keys to implementing an individualized model for staff development are:
- **Gathering data** – begins from the first day of hire. Think about doing brief but frequent visits to their classrooms, this may be less intimidating than one formal observation.
- **Compiling a profile** – a profile consists of noting education and training, experience, special interests, special talents, energy level, flexibility, needs, self-confidence, and so on.
- **Conducting a planning conference** – this should be a trusting situation in which information and concerns are shared.
- **Setting goals** – teachers should be allowed to express their own training needs. Directors need to ensure that goals set are achievable and will lead to improvement and growth.
- **Writing an action plan** – the staff development action plan should be acceptable to both administration and the teacher. The plan should break the goals into activities, resources needed, and a timeline for achievement.
- **Implementing the plan** – action plans need monitoring and may need revision.
- **Evaluating progress** – have the goals been obtained? How well is the teacher doing in his or her job?
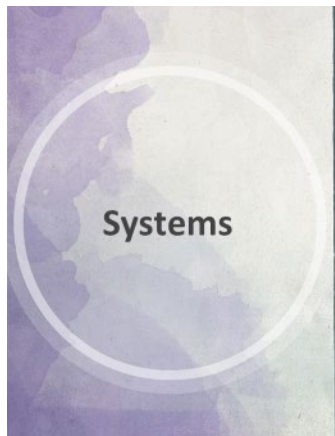

Systems, Policies, and Procedures
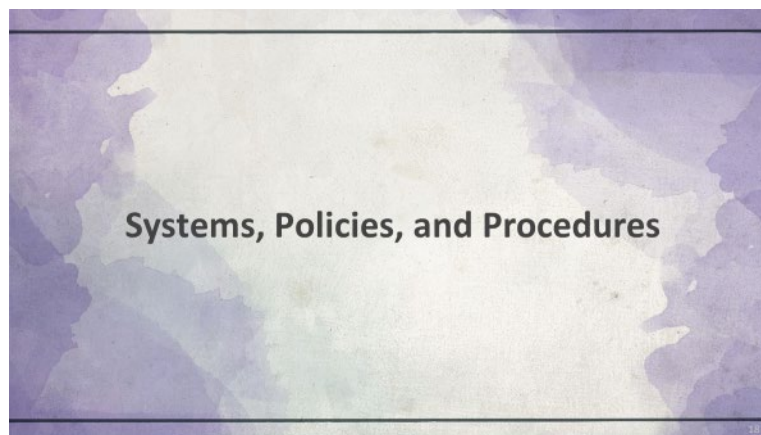
The use of **systems, policies, and procedures** is part of the process that makes communication effective, and the program run effectively.
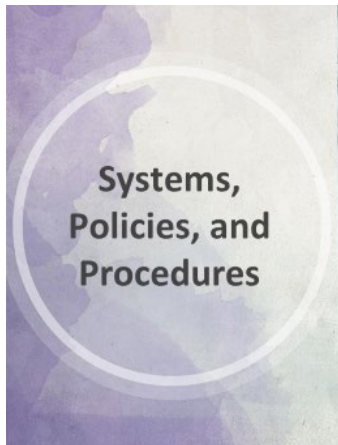
Why are planning, record-keeping, and reporting important to the classroom? *Allow time for participants to respond.*

What are systems? *Brainstorm as a group and chart answers.*

A system is an organized collection of parts related to a whole. So, there are subsystems that assist us in reaching the goals of the whole.

Can you give any examples of systems and subsystems? *Pause for participants' responses.*

SYSTEMS AND SUB-SYSTEMS

A successful restaurant has to have systems in place. The example given here demonstrates that everyone has a role. For example:

- A person greets you when you walk in the door and takes you to a table and gives you a menu
- Then someone comes and asks if you would like something to drink
- Then someone comes and takes your order
- To be able to serve what you have ordered, there has been behind the scenes work – a cook prepared your food, someone ordered the food into the restaurant, a food vendor had a delivery person, etc.

Louisiana Believes — 21

One example is a restaurant. **A successful restaurant has to have systems in place. The example given here demonstrates that everyone has a role.**

For example:
- **A person greets you when you walk in the door and takes you to a table and gives you a menu.**
- **Someone comes and asks if you would like something to drink.**
- **Then, someone comes and takes your order.**
- **To be able to serve what you have ordered, there has been behind the scenes work.**
  - **A cook prepared you food,**
  - **Someone ordered the food into the restaurants,**
  - **A food vendor has a delivery person, etc.**

SYSTEMS FOR AN EARLY LEARNING CENTER

One system that an early learning center must have is how to schedule staff and when they should arrive at the center. For example:

- There is the person who opens the center
- There is the second person who comes in when the first child arrives
- There is a schedule worked out for the arrival of additional teachers
- There is a schedule for when staff leave for the day in an organized manner related to the number of children present and their ages
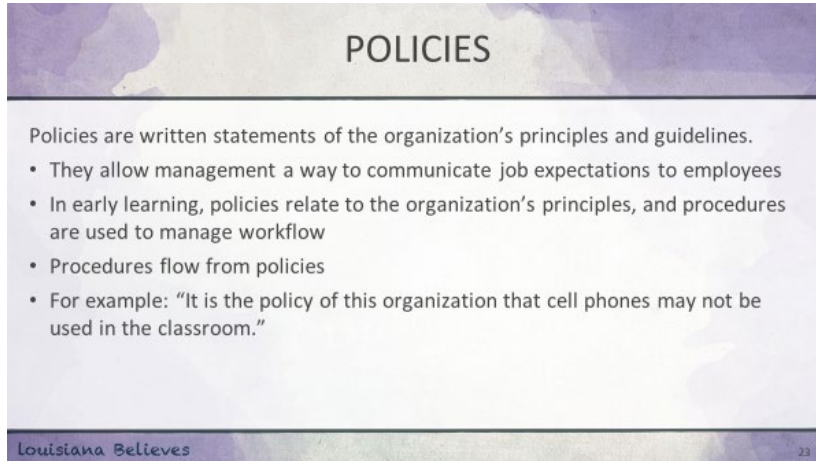
Louisiana Believes — 22

When it comes to systems for an early learning center, **one center that an early learning center must have is how to schedule staff and when they should arrive the center.**

For example:
- **There is the person who opens the center.**
- **There is a second person who comes in when the first child arrives.**
- **There is a schedule worked out for the arrival of additional teachers.**
- **There is a schedule for when staff leave for the day in an organized manner related to the number of children present and their ages.**

What are policies? *Brainstorm as a group and chart answers.*

POLICIES

Policies are written statements of the organization's principles and guidelines.
- They allow management a way to communicate job expectations to employees
- In early learning, policies relate to the organization's principles, and procedures are used to manage workflow
- Procedures flow from policies
- For example: "It is the policy of this organization that cell phones may not be used in the classroom."

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Policies are written statements of the organization's principles and guidelines. They allow management a way to communicate job expectations to employees.

In early learning, policies relate to the organization's principles, and procedures are used to manage workflow.

Procedures flow from policies.

For example: "It is the policy of this organization that cell phones may not be used in the classroom."

Lead the group in a discussion about various policies center must have. Some examples:
- *Discipline policy*
- *Biting policy*
- *Payment policy*
- *Leave policies*
- *Playground supervision policy*

What are procedures? *Brainstorm as a group and chart answers.*

PROCEDURES

Procedures are designed to help one carry out the policies of the organization.
- They state specifically how a task will be done
- For example: "In order to accomplish the cell phone policy of the organization, cell phones must be left in their cars or checked into the director's office before work is begun."

louisiana Believes   24

Procedures are designed to help one carry out the policies of the organization. They state specifically how a task will be done.

For example: "In order to accomplish the cell phone policy of the organization, cell phones must be left in their cars or checked into the director's office before work is begun."

Have participants share examples of procedures followed regularly, such as:
- *Diapering*
- *Handwashing*
- *Cleaning*
- *Medication dispensing*

Have participants brainstorm classroom use of the terms systems, policies, and procedures, and chart responses.

CLASSROOM SYSTEMS

Classroom systems are part of the many systems needed to make the center run smoothly and provide accountability.
- For example: Morning attendance, daily playground checks, lunch and meal service, closing checklists, fire drill

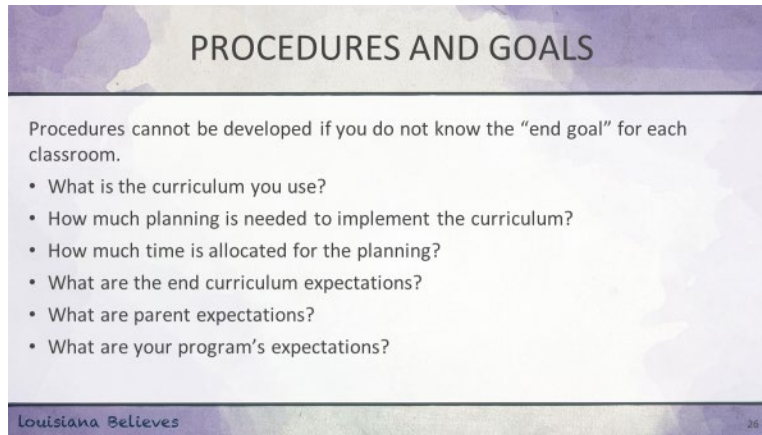louisiana Believes   25

Classroom systems are part of the many systems needed to make the center run smoothly and provide accountability.

Some examples include:
- **Morning attendance**
- **Daily playground checks**
- **Lunch and meal service**

- **Closing checklists**
- **Fire drills**

Have participants brainstorm additional examples of classroom systems.

PROCEDURES AND GOALS

Procedures cannot be developed if you do not know the "end goal" for each classroom.
- What is the curriculum you use?
- How much planning is needed to implement the curriculum?
- How much time is allocated for the planning?
- What are the end curriculum expectations?
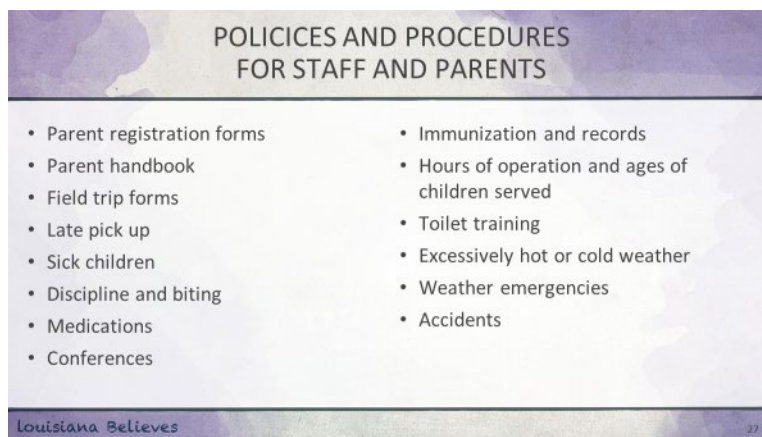- What are parent expectations?
- What are your program's expectations?

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Procedures cannot be developed if you do not know the "end goal" for each classroom.

Some questions to ask to understand the goal of each classroom include:
- **What is the curriculum you use?**
- **How much planning is needed to implement the curriculum?**
- **How much time is allocated for the planning?**
- **What are the end curriculum expectations?**
- **What are parent expectations?**
- **What are your program's expectations?**

Have participants brainstorm policies and procedures used with parents and staff, and chart responses.

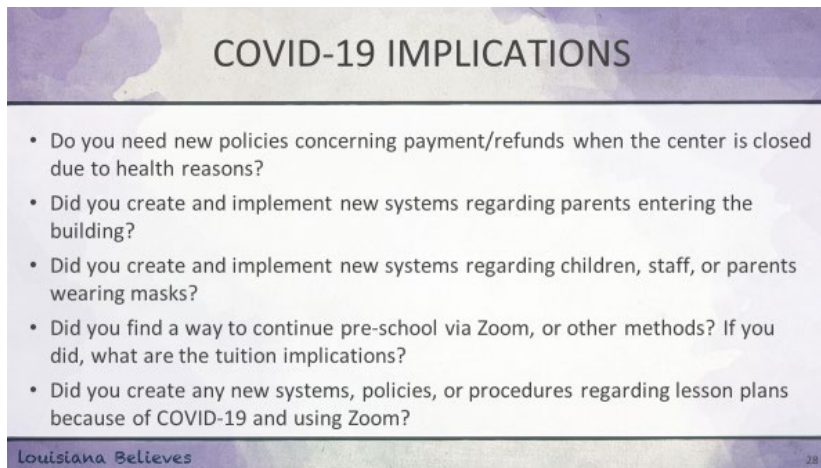## POLICICES AND PROCEDURES FOR STAFF AND PARENTS

- Parent registration forms
- Parent handbook
- Field trip forms
- Late pick up
- Sick children
- Discipline and biting
- Medications
- Conferences

- Immunization and records
- Hours of operation and ages of children served
- Toilet training
- Excessively hot or cold weather
- Weather emergencies
- Accidents

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Some examples of policies and procedures for staff and parents include:
- **Parent registration forms**
- **Parent handbook**

- **Field trip forms**
- **Late pick up**
- **Sick children**
- **Discipline and biting**
- **Medications**
- **Conferences**
- **Immunization and records**
- **Hours of operation and ages of children served**
- **Toilet training**
- **Excessively hot or cold weather**
- **Weather emergencies**
- **Accidents**

COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

- Do you need new policies concerning payment/refunds when the center is closed due to health reasons?
- Did you create and implement new systems regarding parents entering the building?
- Did you create and implement new systems regarding children, staff, or parents wearing masks?
- Did you find a way to continue pre-school via Zoom, or other methods? If you did, what are the tuition implications?
- Did you create any new systems, policies, or procedures regarding lesson plans because of COVID-19 and using Zoom?

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When emergencies, such as COVID-19, occur, they create a need for new systems. Some questions to consider in emergency situations, specifically COVID-19, include:

- **Do you need new policies concerning payment/refunds when the center is closed due to health reasons?**
- **Did you create and implement new systems regarding parents entering the building?**
- **Did you create and implement new systems regarding children, staff, or parents wearing masks?**
- **Did you find a way to continue preschool via Zoom, or other methods? If you did, what are the tuition implications?**
- **Did you create any new systems, policies, or procedures regarding lesson plans because of COVID-19 and using Zoom?**
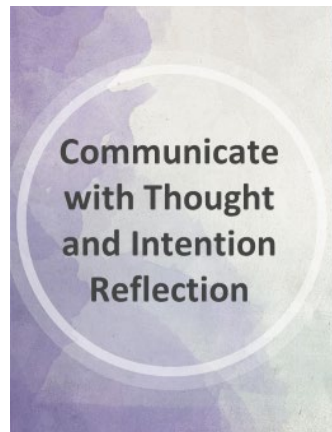
Program systems, policies, and procedures demonstrate that directors have a vast array of responsibilities – their jobs are not easy.
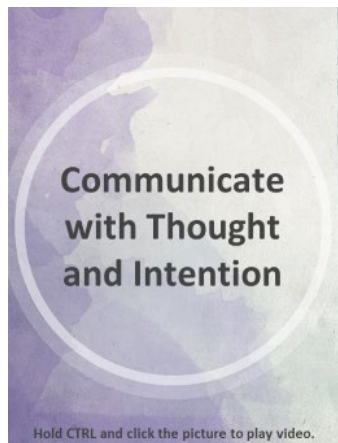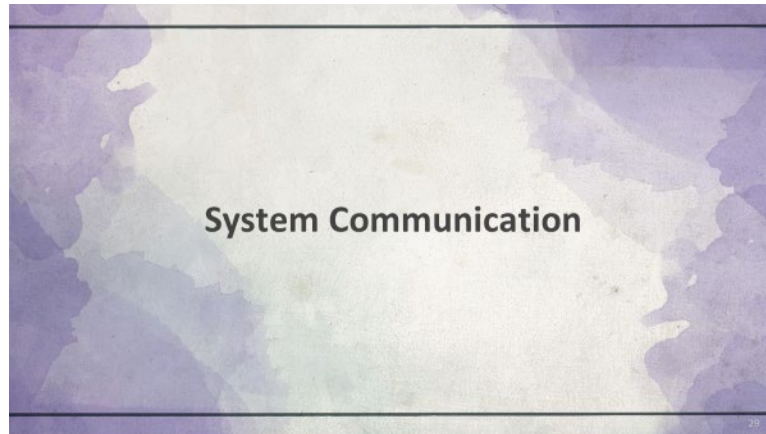
Play the video linked on the slide. (Duration: 1:17)

Video link: https://youtu.be/ixSUBl1WNxk

Expand to full screen view so all participants can easily view the content.

Facilitate a group discussion using the following questions.
- **How do you help employees understand what you want from them?**
  - ○ *Demonstrate or show, ask for questions, have them explain the task to you*
- **How do you support employees in asking for what they need?**
  - ○ *Work with them to find a solution to their problem, purchase what they need or offer a substitute*
- **Was there a system in place that the animals could have used or benefitted from?**
- **Was the rabbit's initial communication to the deer and coyote clear and precise and well-planned?**
- **If they worked as a group, could there have been different outcomes for the deer and the coyote?**
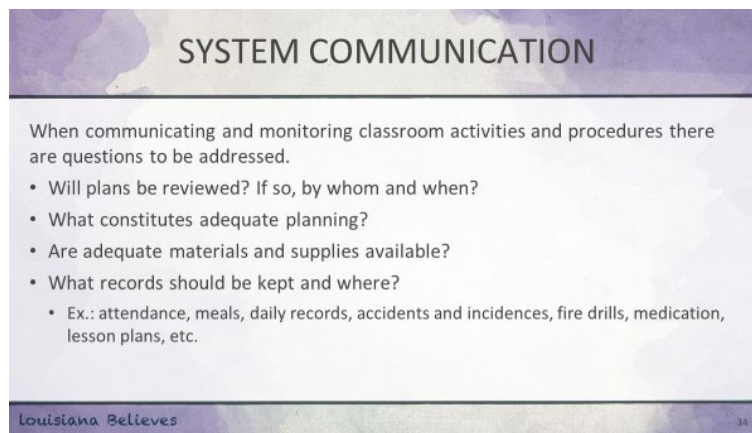

Communication and implementing systems, policies, and procedures with staff requires the following:
- **Demonstration – show the steps in a process, let someone do it while you watch and provide scaffolding if needed**
- **Written information – memos, email, policy manuals, social media, etc.**
- **Supervision – check on the process regularly, check ore frequently at the beginning, ask for questions, acknowledge progress**
- **Documentation – keep a log, note on calendar, review at staff meeting, and keep minutes**
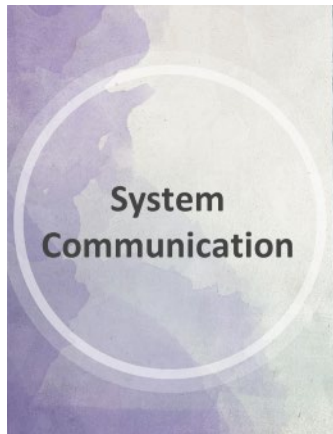
System Communication

What are the best ways to establish and support planning, record keeping, and reporting center-wide?

What are the best ways to establish and support planning, record keeping, and reporting center-wide? *Allow participants time to respond, and chart responses.*

SYSTEM COMMUNICATION

When communicating and monitoring classroom activities and procedures there are questions to be addressed.
- Will plans be reviewed? If so, by whom and when?
- What constitutes adequate planning?
- Are adequate materials and supplies available?
- What records should be kept and where?
  - Ex.: attendance, meals, daily records, accidents and incidences, fire drills, medication, lesson plans, etc.

louisiana Believes

When communicating and monitoring classroom activities and procedures there are questions to be addressed.

Some of those questions include:
- **Will plans be reviewed? If so, by whom and when?**
- **What constitutes adequate planning?**
- **Are adequate materials and supplies available?**
- **What records should be kept and where?**
  - **For example: attendance, meals, daily records, accidents and incidences, fire drills, medication, lesson plans**

The Effects of Leadership and Environment

LEADERSHIP, ENVIRONMENT, AND STAFF INTERACTION

- Leadership and a respectful and supportive environment help create teamwork and involve various types of communication and positive social interactions with staff and between staff
- Disengaged employees are lost opportunity
- Just a smile can stimulate the brain and release endorphins that make us feel good

louisiana Believes

Leadership and a respectful and supportive environment help create teamwork and involve various types of communication and positive social interactions with staff and between staff.
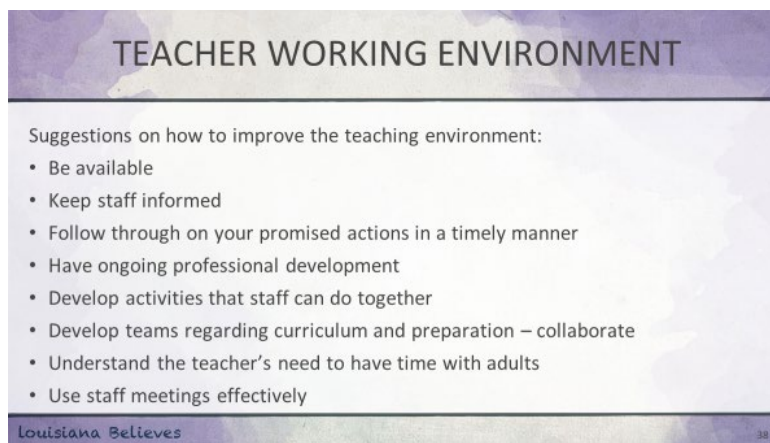
Disengaged employees are a lost opportunity. Just a smile can stimulate the brain and release endorphins that make us feel good.

TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS/ENVIRONMENT

- Is the working environment of preschool teachers a paradox?
- Are preschool teachers isolate or do they work in an autonomous setting?
- Do preschool teachers need support and encouragement on a daily basis? If so, from where does this come? If not, why not?
- Are there negatives in a teacher's working environment? If so, what are they?
- How do positive or negatives in the working environment impact staff, children, and the early learning program?
- What is administration/management's role in creating a positive working environment?

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Divide participants into small groups to discuss the following questions, and then share with the larger group. You could assign two questions to each small group.

- ***Is the working environment of preschool teachers a paradox?***
- ***Are preschool teachers isolated or do they work in an autonomous setting?***
- ***Do preschool teachers need support and encouragement on a daily basis? If so, from where does this come? If not, why not?***
- ***Are there negatives in a teacher's working environment? If so, what are they?***
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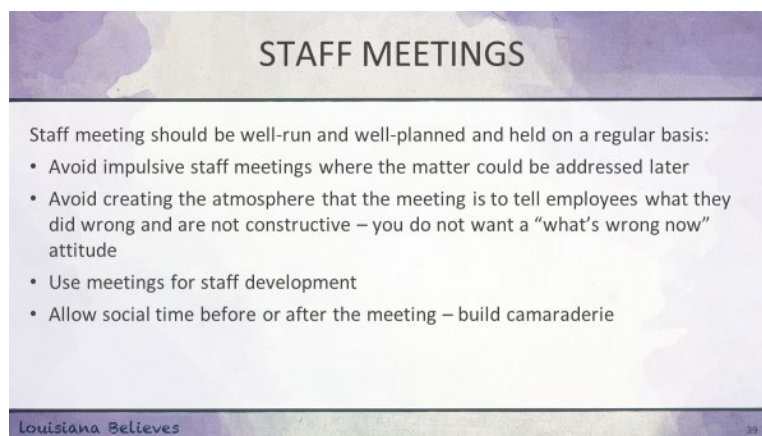
TEACHER WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Suggestions on how to improve the teaching environment:

- Be available
- Keep staff informed
- Follow through on your promised actions in a timely manner
- Have ongoing professional development
- Develop activities that staff can do together
- Develop teams regarding curriculum and preparation – collaborate
- Understand the teacher's need to have time with adults
- Use staff meetings effectively

Louisiana Believes   38

Suggestions on how to improve the teaching environment include:

- **Be available**
- **Keep staff informed**
- **Follow through on your promised actions in a timely manner**
- **Have ongoing professional development**
- **Develop activities that staff can do together**
- **Develop teams regarding curriculum and preparation – collaborate**
- **Understand the teacher's need to have time with adults**
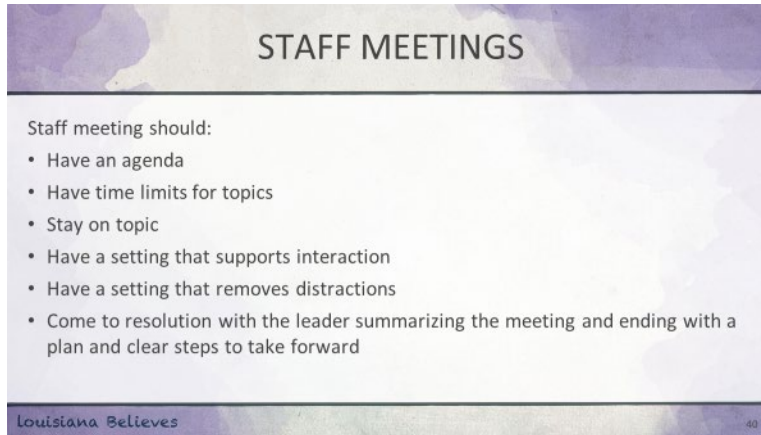- **Use staff meetings effectively**

STAFF MEETINGS

Staff meeting should be well-run and well-planned and held on a regular basis:

- Avoid impulsive staff meetings where the matter could be addressed later
- Avoid creating the atmosphere that the meeting is to tell employees what they did wrong and are not constructive – you do not want a "what's wrong now" attitude
- Use meetings for staff development
- Allow social time before or after the meeting – build camaraderie

Louisiana Believes   39

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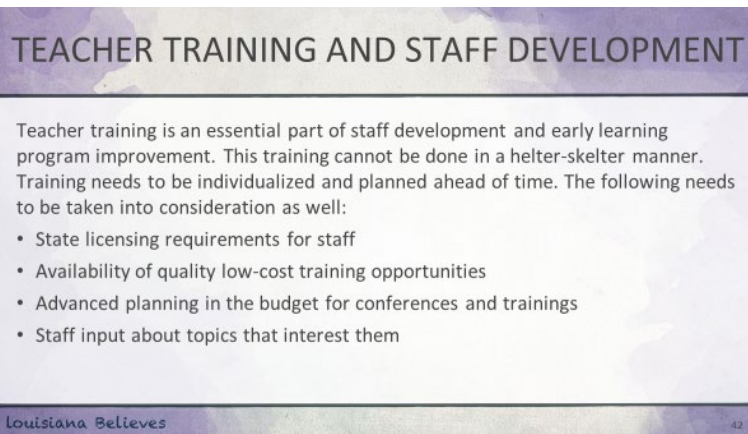

Staff meetings should include the following:
- **Have an agenda**
- **Have time limits for topics**
- **Stay on topic**
- **Have a setting that supports interaction**
- **Have a setting that removes distractions**
- **Come to resolution with the leader summarizing the meeting and ending with a plan and clear steps to take forward**

TEACHER TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Teacher training is an essential part of staff development and early learning program improvement. This training cannot be done in a helter-skelter manner. Training needs to be individualized and planned ahead of time. The following needs to be taken into consideration as well:
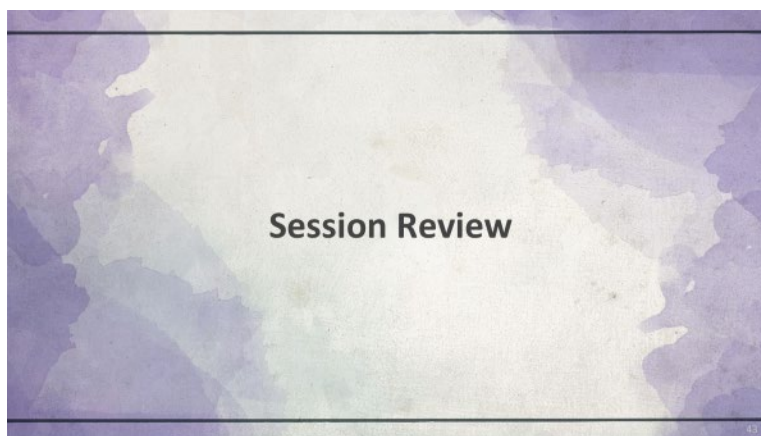- State licensing requirements for staff
- Availability of quality low-cost training opportunities
- Advanced planning in the budget for conferences and trainings
- Staff input about topics that interest them

Louisiana Believes   42

Teacher training is an essential part of staff development and early learning program improvement. This training cannot be done in a "helter-skelter" manner.

Training needs to be individualized and planned ahead of time. The following needs to be taken into consideration as well:
- **Staff licensing requirements for staff**
- **Availability of quality low-cost training opportunities**
- **Advance planning in the budget for conferences and trainings**
- **Staff input about topics that interest them**

Session Review

How does communication, coaching, knowing how to write a staff development plan, and teacher training relate to systems, policies, and procedures in the classroom setting? *Allow time for participatns to reflect and respond.*

All lead to the development of a rapport between administration and staff leading to a better understanding of classroom management and the necessary functions of running a safe and effective early learning center that complements curriculum.

REVIEW LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand that classroom planning, record keeping, and reporting rely on the use of well-constructed systems
- Understand that listening and feedback are important communication tools
- Understand the role of a coach
- Know how to write a staff development plan
- Know how to use systems, policies, and procedures effectively
- Understand that systems only work when communicated and used
- Improve staff interaction
- Know the importance of staffing meetings and how to conduct them
- Identify that teacher training necessitates planning and research

Louisiana Believes   44

Explain that for each phrase, they will show a "thumbs up" if they think we covered the objective, a "thumbs down" if we did not cover the objective, and a "sideways thumb" if we partially covered the objective.

Review Learning Objectives.

- **Understand that classroom planning, record keeping, and reporting rely on the use of well-constructed systems**
- **Understand that listening and feedback are important communication tools**
- **Understand the role of a coach**
- **Know how to write a staff development plan**
- **Know how to use systems, policies, and procedures effectively**
- **Understand that systems only work when communicated and used**
- **Improve staff interactions**
- **Know the importance of staffing meetings and how to conduct them**
- **Identify that teacher training necessitates planning and research**

Reflections, Questions, & Comments

Open the floor for participants' comments and questions.

That brings us to the end of our time. Thank you so much for your attention and hard work today. Before you go, please complete the Post-Assessment Evaluation.

Distribute the Post-Assessment Evaluation.

When you have completed the evaluation, please fold it and leave it in the center of your table before you leave. I hope this has been valuable! If you have any additional questions, I will be available to talk further.

Thank you.

Post-Assessment Evaluation Guidance
- *Review the forms to identify the group's responses*
- *Compare the results and identify the areas in which participants expressed greatest growth and the areas in which participants might still need support*
- *Share results with Louisiana DOE representative to inform local continuing professional development efforts*