



## Unit 4 – The Role of the Administrator

### Key Topic 1: Overview and Rationale of the Chapter

#### Focus Statement

Students become familiar with the rationale for the importance of strong leadership and management skills and an overview of the administrator’s role in preschool programs.

#### Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Student Learning Outcomes

The Curriculum Alignment Project’s (CAP) lower division eight courses, CAP expansion courses, and student learning outcomes are mapped onto each instructional guide learning experience. See Appendix A for the specific student learning outcomes, objectives, and examples of course content and topics for the courses listed below.

- Practicum-Field Experience
- Administration I: Programs in Early Childhood Education
- Administration II: Personnel and Leadership in Early Childhood Education

#### Instructional Methodologies

- Categorizing
- Class discussion
- Notetaking outline or tool
- Pairs or small groups
- Personal reflection
- Reflective discussion

#### California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

These competency areas are from the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division’s *California Early Childhood Educator Competencies* (CDE 2011). The “Competency Areas to Consider” below are listed in this instructional



guide as a preliminary exploration of how particular competency areas might be addressed through these learning experiences.

- Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Professionalism
- Administration and Supervision



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#### Before You Start

Chapter 4 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* is focused on two categories of the administrator’s role: leadership and management. Leadership is addressed in Key Topic 2 and management in Key Topic 3 of Unit 4 in this instructional guide. Although these two categories are addressed separately in these key topics, they are not discrete characteristics of administrators. Effective management, as described in Chapter 4, provides leadership for a program and staff. Similarly, effective leadership, also described in Chapter 4, requires good management skills.

This first key topic is intended to familiarize students with a rationale for supporting strong administrative management and leadership skills and dispositions and then to briefly introduce students to further content of Chapter 4. Handout 1, “Administrative Practices and Components of High-Quality Programs,” is provided to guide students in thinking about the ways management and leadership relate to high-quality preschool programs.

The active learning experience can be done entirely as a classroom experience. Using this format, the handout could be completed by individuals or pairs and then shared with the whole class or worked through by the whole class together. Alternatively, the active learning could be done completely out of class, or the first segment could be done in class and students could then complete the handout out of class.

Note that the work required to complete the handout for this key topic might be more appropriate for students with professional experience. It asks students to relate functions, qualities, and outcomes that might be more readily recognized by students who have had some experience in a preschool setting. It is suggested that students do this handout in pairs so that students can talk through their thoughts and decisions.

An electronic version of the handout for this key topic will be available when this instructional guide is online at <http://facultyinitiative.wested.org/> (accessed January 20, 2016). If students do not have copies of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*, the Portable Document Format (PDF) version can be downloaded from the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/preschoolproggdlns2015.pdf> (accessed January 20, 2016).



## Information Delivery

Let students know that administrative practices are a significant focus of California’s Preschool Program Guidelines. Chapter 4 in Part One of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* is entirely devoted to administrative practices, and several of the guidelines themselves, which are in Part Three, relate directly to administrative practice.



Slides 2-4

Direct students to the following statement on page 51 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*: “Effective administrative practices are essential for ensuring high-quality outcomes for young children and their families.” This sentence presents a rationale for significant attention to administrative practices in the guidelines. Ask students to keep this in mind as they work through the following active learning sections and let them know that they will come back to this rationale later.

## Active Learning

### Getting it started

Also on page 51 is this statement: “Administrative responsibilities may be divided into two general categories: leadership and management.”



Slides 5-9

Let students know that they will be using these two categories to learn about the contents of Chapter 4. They will first look at management functions described in Chapter 4. Direct their attention to the management functions bulleted on page 51. Faculty can approach this in two ways.

- One way would be to read through these functions one by one as a whole group.
- Another way would be to organize students into pairs and ask them to read through them together.

In either case, ask students for examples or their experiences with these functions. Ask how they have done this function or seen it done. If students are doing this in pairs, ask them to be prepared to share their experiences when the whole group is reconvened.



Slide 10

### Keeping it going

At this point, organize students into pairs if that has not already been done. Ask them to read through page 52 together and develop a list of the qualities of effective leaders as they are found on page 52.



Slide 10

Return to the statement about effective administrative practices leading to quality programs. Ask the students to work in their pairs to review this statement and briefly consider how the leadership qualities on their list would relate to high-quality programs. At this point, students might start asking what is meant by high-quality programs.

There are some components of high-quality preschool programs for all children listed at the bottom of the first column on page 81 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. Although this is not an exhaustive list, the following items provide a way to think about the relationship between administrative practices and the components of high-quality programs:



Slides 11-13

- Intentional teaching
- Support of integrated learning
- Positive teacher–child relationships
- Positive home–school relationships
- Play as a context for learning
- Teacher planning time
- Qualified teachers
- Appropriate child–teacher ratios
- Individualized adult–child conversations that promote language and positive relationships
- Opportunities for children to learn and practice new vocabulary
- Frequent assessment that documents child progress and informs instructional planning
- Parent engagement



Slide 14

Now ask students to turn to Handout 1 for this key topic, “Administrative Practices and Components of High-Quality Programs.” Ask them to complete as much as they can using the list of management functions on page 51 and their list of qualities of effective leadership developed from the text on page 52.



Ask students to insert a few examples into each column. This is not meant to be an exhaustive crosswalk but a way to stimulate thinking about the importance of administrative practice to quality outcomes for children.

### Online Options

Students could post their completed handouts online for their classmates to review before an in-class discussion.

### Taking it further

When the students have had some time to work on the handout, ask them to consider the following questions:



Slides 15-16

- What is standing out for you?
- What is most interesting to you?
- Where do you have questions?
- Do you have ideas about management functions, leadership skills, or high-quality programs that are not represented here? What are those ideas?
- Anything else?

### Online Options

The students could discuss the questions in the “Taking it further” segment online if there is online-discussion capability.

### Reflection

These additional questions for students’ personal reflection also can be discussed:



Slides 17-18

- What did you learn about yourself in working with this information about management and leadership?
- Where did you feel challenged?
- Where did you feel confident?
- What would you like to know more about? How can you find that out?
- How will this influence your work with staff, families, or children?



This next set of more general reflective questions can be used in this and other key topics for additional class discussion or to guide individual student journaling.



Slides 19-21

- Which ideas or part of this class session stood out most for you?
- What seemed familiar or reinforced what you already know or have experienced? What gave you a new perspective or insight that causes you to think differently about teaching preschool children and/or engaging their families?
- Why do you think the content of this class session was presented the way it was? How did this approach help you understand the content? What else would have helped? What does this tell you about how you learn?
- How will you decide what to apply from this class session in your work with preschool children and families? What will you do to ensure you will implement what you have decided to use?



### Administrative Practices and Components of High-Quality Programs

Using the management functions listed on page 51 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* and a list of qualities of effective leaders derived from page 52, consider which of these would support the features of high-quality programs as described on page 81. Some matches might be more obvious than others, and there will not be matches for all features. This crosswalk is not meant to be exhaustive but to stimulate thinking about these relationships.



**Unit 4: The Role of the Administrator**  
 Key Topic 1 – Overview and Rationale of the Chapter  
 Handout 1: Administrative Practices and Components of High-Quality Programs

Features of High-Quality Programs ( <i>California Preschool Program Guidelines</i> , p. 81)	Management Functions	Qualities of Effective Leaders
Intentional teaching		
Support of integrated learning		
Positive teacher-child relationships		
Positive home-school relationships		
Play as a context for learning		
Teacher planning time		
Qualified teachers		
Appropriate child-teacher ratios		
Individualized adult-child conversations that promote language and positive relationships		
Opportunities for children to learn and practice new vocabulary		
Frequent assessment that documents child progress and informs instructional planning		
Parent engagement		