OUR MISSION

The Association for Early Learning Leaders is a 501(c)3 organization committed to excellence in the field of early care and education by promoting leadership development and enhancing program quality. Our goal is to strengthen the knowledge, skills and abilities of owners, directors, emerging leaders, and other early learning professionals to enhance the quality of early care and education programs.

Over 1500 Programs Participating in the National Accreditation Commission

LEARN MORE

Discover how the National Accreditation Commission can improve program quality. Register for a free introductory webinar held monthly. Visit the events calendar at earlylearningleaders.org.

Contact us:
accreditation@earlylearningleaders.org
www.earlylearningleaders.org
1.800.537.1118
Why Choose the National Accreditation Commission?

The National Accreditation Commission provides a systematic process of program assessment that examines all aspects of quality care and education for young children, including curriculum, interactions between teachers and children, health and safety, administration, family engagement and professional development of staff. The National Accreditation Commission is:

- Based on sound early childhood research and best practices
- Field tested and peer reviewed for accuracy and age appropriateness
- Respectful of program diversity, autonomy and philosophies
- Aligned with state early learning outcomes and national rating scales
- Recognized and included in multiple state Quality Rating Systems and tiered reimbursement programs
- Designed to be integrated into program operations establishing an achievable and comprehensive quality improvement system
- An opportunity for program director, staff and families to work collaboratively to improve and enhance the quality of care and learning for young children
- Administrator friendly providing exceptional customer service and support

Early Learning Matters:
FOUNDATION AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

Experiences children have from birth to kindergarten create the foundation for school success. Research has consistently demonstrated that quality early learning programs promote positive outcomes for children. The National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs offers programs the opportunity to demonstrate and document quality performance using research-based criteria and evidence-based practices. The process focuses on approach and the integration of the Accreditation Standards into user-friendly instruments to create a comprehensive system that validates program excellence.

In a Florida Gold Seal study examining eleven accreditation systems, the National Accreditation Commission was a strong predictor of observable quality and the only accreditation system to show significant positive associations on all six measured subscales of the Environmental Rating Scale.

Similarly, a student success study conducted by University of Texas at Dallas found that children who participated in Early Childhood Development First Steps programs that were nationally accredited, scored higher in math and reading in their early grades. Additionally, these children were also less likely to be retained or classified as LEP and missed fewer school days than their peers.

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

Early Care and Education Programs accredited through the National Accreditation Commission demonstrate EXCELLENCE by building partnerships between staff and families, planning engaging curriculum activities, and supporting and encouraging children’s healthy growth and development.

Administrators of accredited programs implement effective management practices that build bridges between the program, families and the community. They recognize and honor the importance of ongoing professional development and work diligently to identify new and useful resources to support teachers and families—most importantly, administrators of accredited programs provide children the foundation for success.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The National Accreditation Commission provides a continuous quality improvement process that offers user-friendly tools to evaluate every aspect of the program.

ACCREDITATION DECISION

A decision to award, defer or deny accreditation is made approximately three months following the Validation Visit. The National Accreditation Commission awards accreditation for three years, subject to annual review.

MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION COMPLIANCE

Accreditation is not a "one time" event; it is an ongoing commitment to continuous quality improvement. After a program is awarded, the program director is responsible for ensuring that Commission Standards are consistently implemented and incorporated into the program’s day-to-day operations.

ACREDITATION REPORTS

Reports are submitted to the National Accreditation Commission annually. Failure to submit an annual report results in grounds for withdrawal of accreditation. Upon receipt of the second Annual Report, programs are automatically enrolled in Self-Study and receive the current Accreditation Manual. If a program wishes to maintain accreditation, a submission of the Request for Validation Visit and the fee must be received prior to the award expiration.

2. Scotty, R., Sutter, K. (2013) The Impact of Educational First Steps on Student Success in Dallas ISD, University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, Texas.

earlylearningleaders.org • accreditation@earlylearningleaders.org