



Cognia's Performance Standards for Early Learning Institutions

Exploring the Early Learning Standards

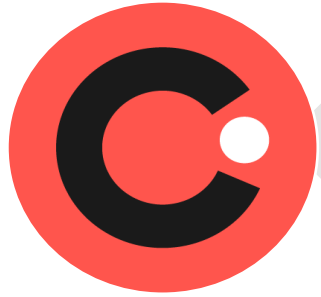
Knowledge is Opportunity



Cognia is a global nonprofit that has the knowledge to help schools improve outcomes for all learners.



Learning targets



Key Characteristic Framework



The Early Learning Standards



Interpreting Themes and Setting Priorities

Continuous Improvement System

Reflect, evaluate, and adjust

- Determine action effectiveness
- Hold collaborative discussions to discuss results
- Make decisions to continue or change action

Imagine the possibilities

- Gather data to understand current reality
- Identify trends to imagine the future
- Determine the connections between current reality and future trends

Build momentum and capacity

- Implement the strategies
- Monitor and adjust action
- Ensure stakeholder participation

Communicate with stakeholders

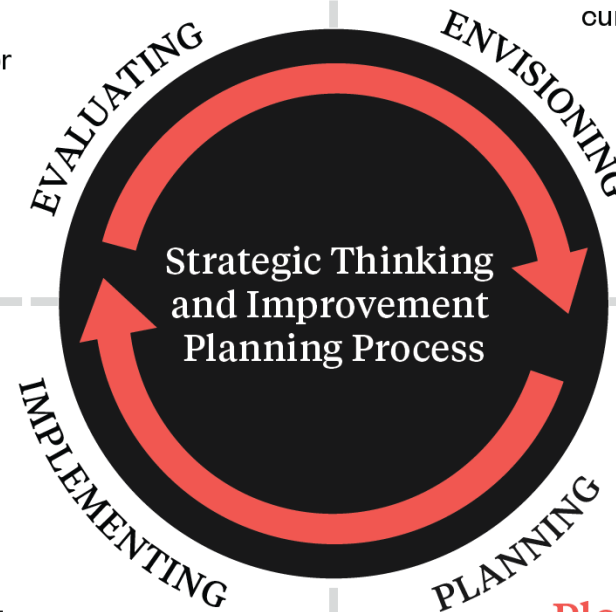
- Share what you've learned with your stakeholders
- Collaborate to determine priorities
- Ensure the vision aligns to priorities

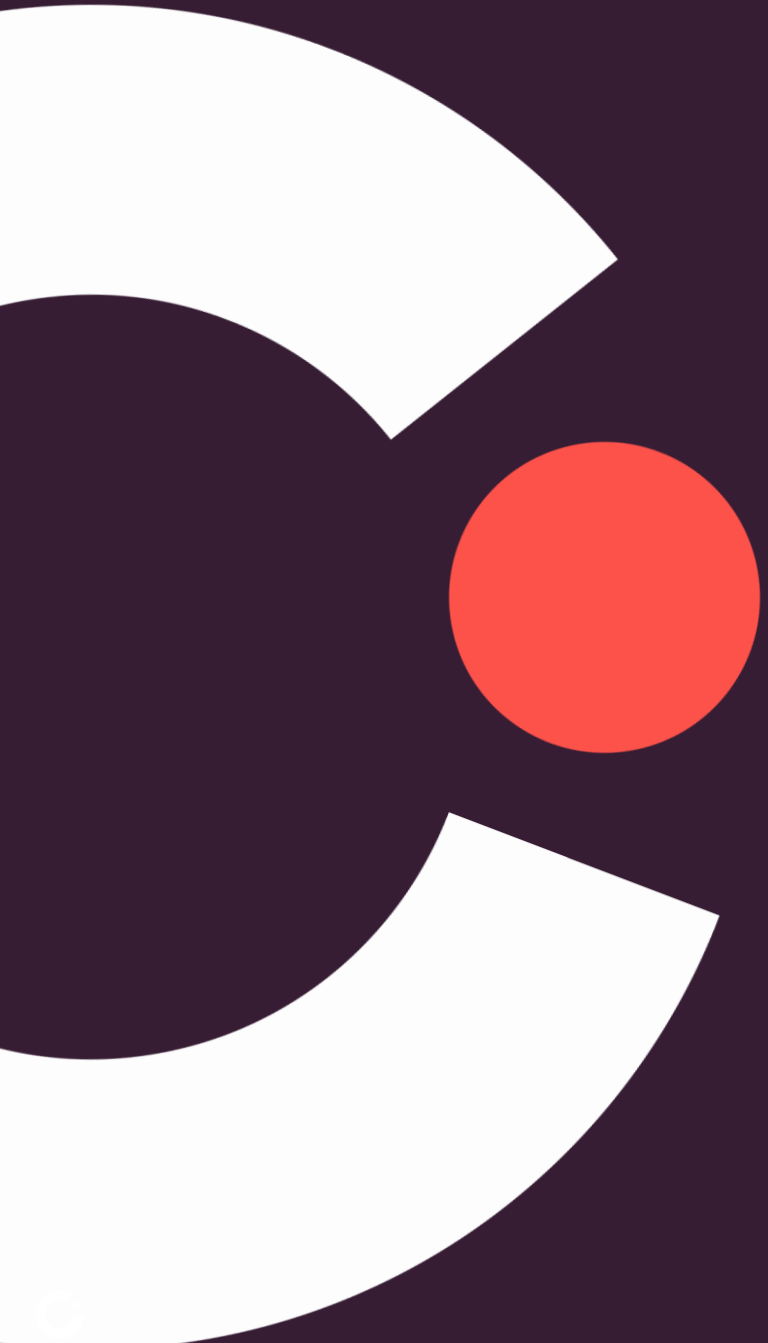
Initiate the journey

- Engage in training
- Build acceptance and stakeholder buy-in
- Deploy the plan

Plot the journey

- Align priorities with goals
- Develop a plan to improve and sustain practices
- Identify strategies to fulfill the priorities





Cognia Performance Standards

New concepts



New Performance Standards



- 32 standards
- Developed by the Standards Task Force
- Build on previous standards and support ongoing improvement

Increased focus

- Focus on the learner
- Role clarity
- Learning environment
- Learning process
- Action research



Key Characteristics

Culture of Learning

Standards 1-6

Engagement of Learning

Standards 18-25

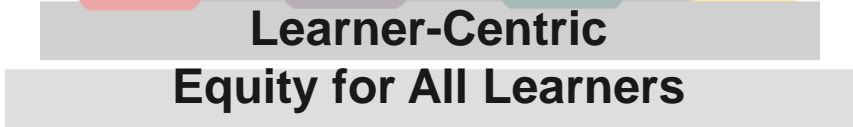
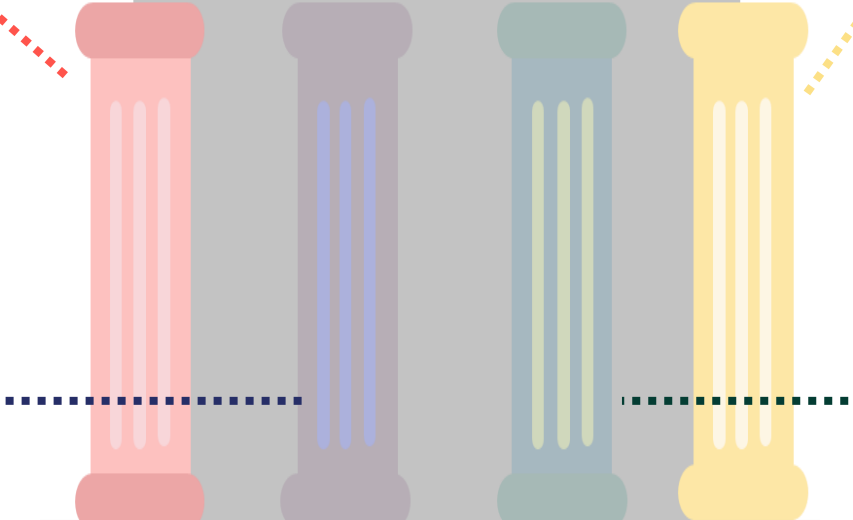


Leadership for Learning

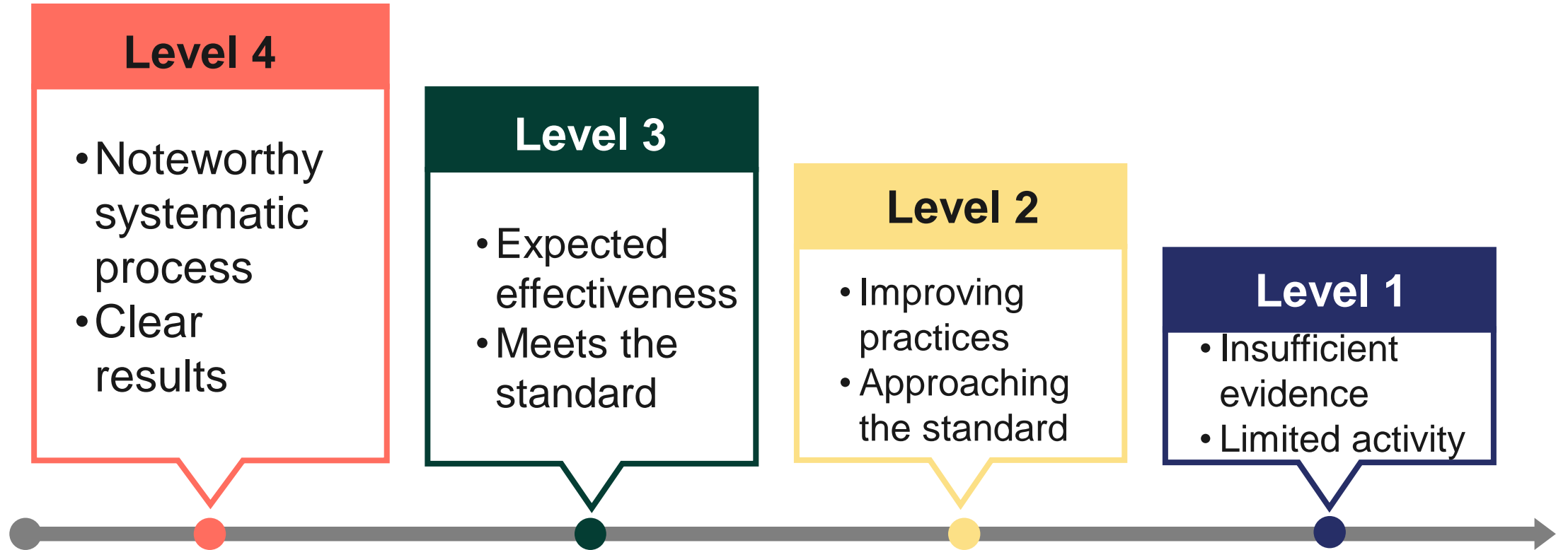
Standards 7-17

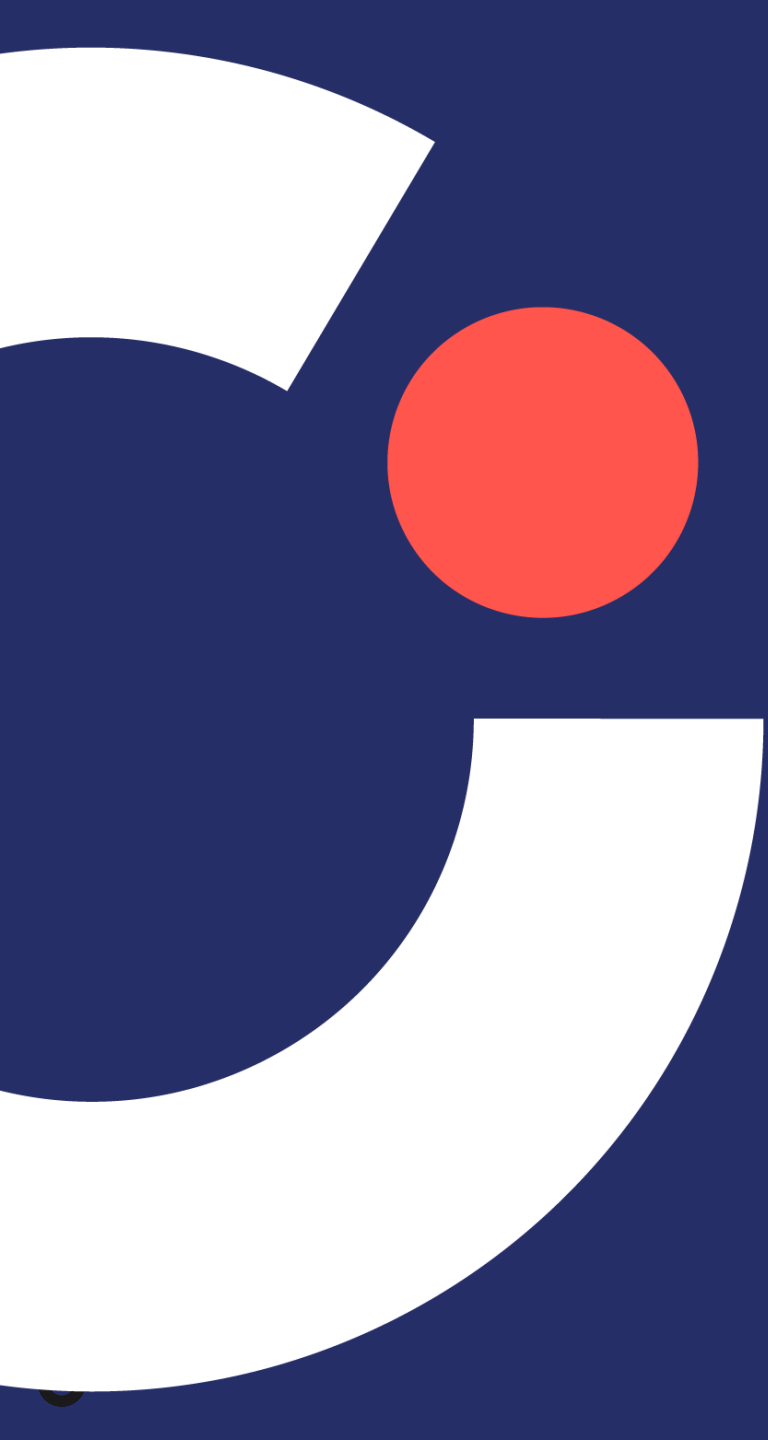
Growth in Learning

Standards 26-32

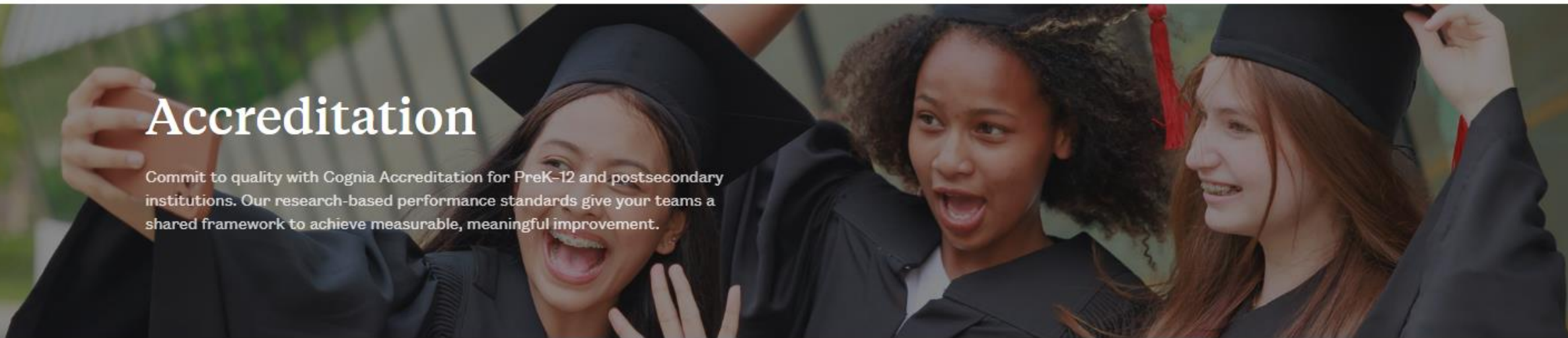


General rubric guideline





Cognia Performance Standards and Key Characteristics



Accreditation

Commit to quality with Cognia Accreditation for PreK-12 and postsecondary institutions. Our research-based performance standards give your teams a shared framework to achieve measurable, meaningful improvement.

Pursue excellence with Cognia Accreditation

For more than 125 years, schools have been inviting Cognia and our legacy agencies, **NCA CASI**, **NWAC**, and **SACS CASI**, into their classrooms. Why? Because we go beyond evaluating school quality. We provide trusted expertise and actionable ideas that help schools continuously improve.

Accreditation is the launchpad for **school improvement**. Based on rigorous research-based **standards** and evidence-based criteria, the process probes the whole institution—from policies to learning conditions and cultural context—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of every learner.

Accreditation isn't about passing a one-time inspection—it helps education providers meet improvement goals and sustain commitments to better learner outcomes.

The institution types we serve include:

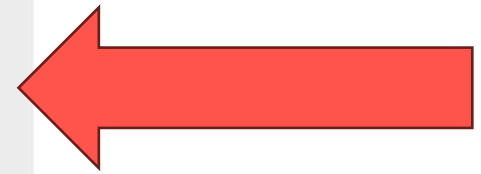
- Charter schools and charter school authorizers
- Corporations
- Digital learning
- DoDEA
- Early learning
- Education service agencies
- Non-Public including Catholic schools, dioceses, and other faith-based affiliates
- Postsecondary
- Schools
- Special purpose

The Standards

- Performance Standards for K-12 and Postsecondary Institutions
- Performance Standards for Early Learning Schools
- Performance Standards for State Education Agencies
- Quality Standards for Extended Learning Programs

Resources to guide you

- Performance Accreditation overview
- Cognia System Accreditation overview
- School Board Training overview
- Research Brief: Cognia Accreditation
- Educational Practices Reference Guide
- Policies and Procedures



Key Characteristic: Culture of Learning

Stakeholders are actively engaged and supportive of the institution's mission

Young Learners well being are the focal point



Formal structures foster positive adult interactions and relationships

For Instance

- Standard One: Leaders *cultivate and sustain* a culture that builds community, demonstrates respect, fairness, equity, and inclusion, and is free from bias.
- Standard Three: Leaders *actively engage* stakeholders to support the institution's priorities and guiding principles that promote young learners' development, learning, and well-being.

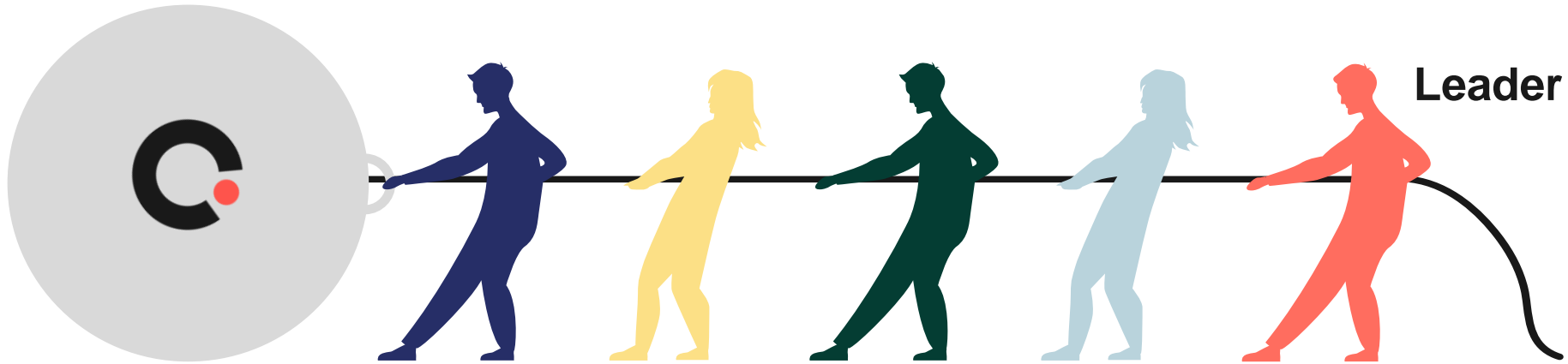
Culture of Learning

Standards alignment:
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Questions to consider:

- What evidence illustrates that the learners, families, and educators feel connected to the purpose of the institution?
- What evidence illustrates that learners, families, and educators consistently behave in alignment with the stated values and norms of the institution?
- What activities and other engagements reflect the mission, beliefs, and expectations of the institution?

Key Characteristics: Leadership for Learning



**Standards
7- 17**

Leader		
Learners cultivate effective individual & collective leadership	Developmentally appropriate materials and resources	All staff demonstrate commitment to young learners' health and safety

For Instance

- Standard 7: Leaders guide educators and support staff in the continuous improvement process focused on young learners' experiences and needs.
- Standard 11: Leaders create and maintain institutional structures and processes that support young learners, families, educators, and support staff in both stable and changing environments.

Leadership for Learning

Standard
alignment:
7, 8, 9, 10, 11,
12, 13, 14, 15, 16,
17

Questions to consider:

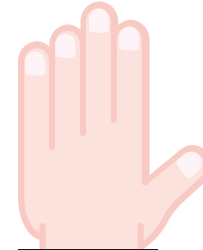
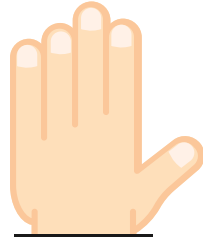
- How do leaders communicate expectations for learning and monitor progress toward meeting such expectations?
- What examples of behaviors and actions by leaders influence and have a positive impact on the culture of the institution?
- How do leaders model and engage in learning?

Key Characteristic: Engagement of Learning



**Standards
18-25**

Young Learners
are included in
the learning
process



Instruction is
monitored &
adjusted to
advance &
deepen for
learners

Young
Learners have
equitable
opportunities



For Instance

- Standard 22: Young learners engage in experiences that promote and develop their self-confidence and love of learning.
- Standard 24: Instruction is monitored and adjusted to advance and deepen individual young learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

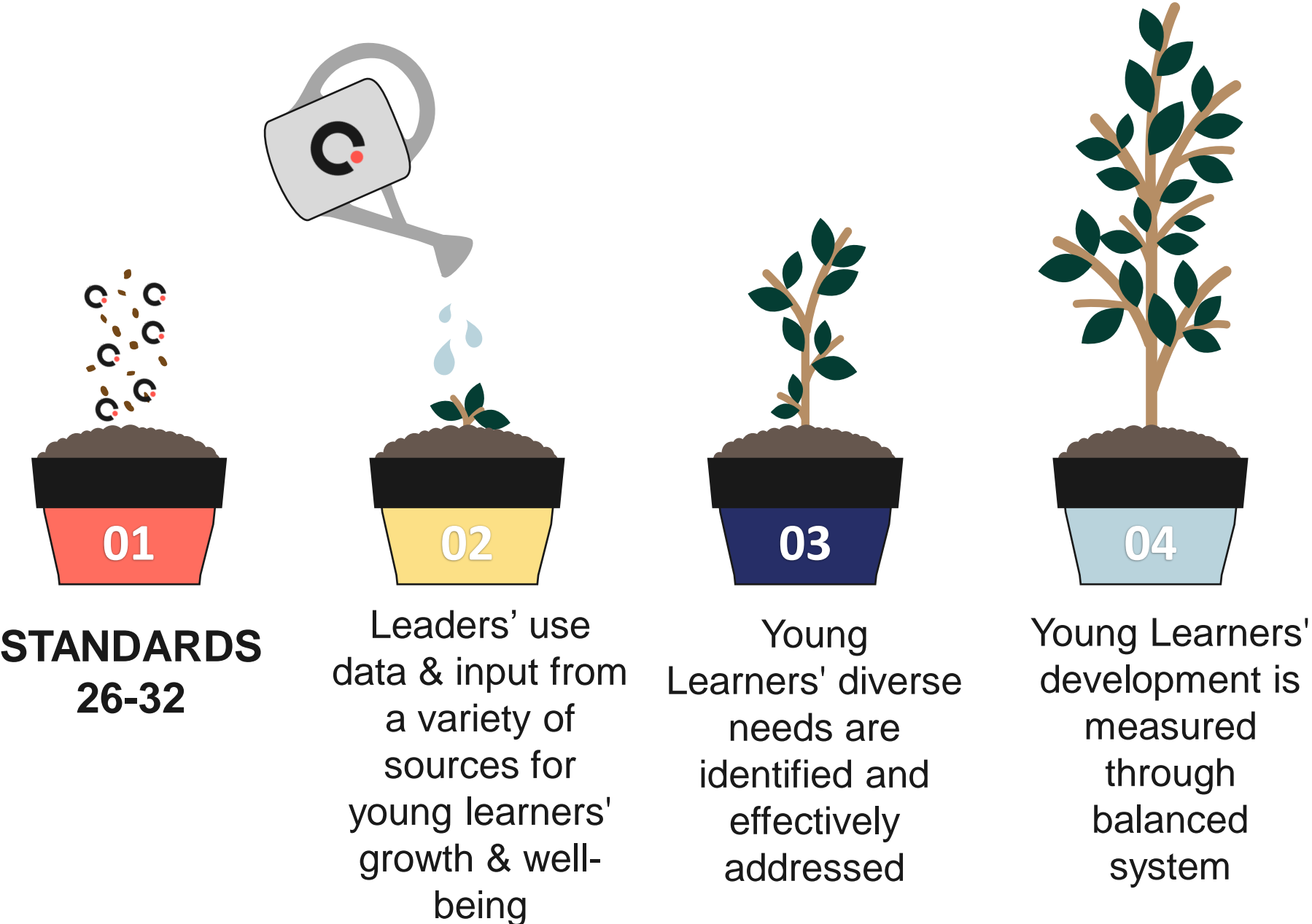
Engagement of Learning

Standards
alignment:
18, 19, 20, 21, 22,
23, 24, 25

Questions to consider:

- What evidence illustrates that learners are included in all aspects of the learning process?
- How is learner confidence measured throughout the learning process?
- What examples do you have that show learners love of learning?

Key Characteristics: Growth of Learning



**STANDARDS
26-32**

Leaders' use data & input from a variety of sources for young learners' growth & well-being

Young Learners' diverse needs are identified and effectively addressed

Young Learners' development is measured through balanced system

For Instance

- Standard 26: Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions for young learners' and educators' growth and well-being.
- Standard 31: Understanding of child development, curriculum learning objectives, and developmentally appropriate instructional strategies drive the design, delivery, application, and evaluation of professional learning.

How might
your school
demonstrate
this practice?

STANDARD # 26

Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions for young learners' and educators' growth and well-being.

Quality Elements *(required)*

- Leaders work with stakeholders to create a school improvement plan that is informed by child progress monitoring data, classroom observation data, educator professional development needs, program efficacy data, and stakeholder feedback.
- Leaders make decisions by taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on young learners, families, and educators such as school history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
- Leaders demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data.

Rubric

Level 4: Leaders consistently demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make intentional decisions by consistently taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on young learners and educators such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

Level 3: Leaders regularly demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions by routinely taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on young learners and educators such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

Level 2: Leaders sometimes demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that occasionally take into account data and additional factors that have an impact on young learners and educators such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities

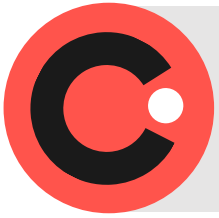
Level 1: Leaders rarely demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing

Growth in Learning

Standards alignment:
26, 27, 28, 29,
30, 31, 32

Questions to consider:

- What evidence illustrates learners' growth in your institution?
- How do you know the learner is ready to transition to the next level of learning?
- What evidence illustrates that readiness is incorporated in your processes?



Interpreting Findings, Developing Theories of Action, and Prioritizing

Analyzing and Synthesizing:
Looking for Themes

Interpreting Findings

Developing Theories of
Action

Prioritizing





Thank you!

Questions?

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