Assessment and the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards
An Alignment Review Tool
Rev. July 20, 2021

Purpose and Background: This tool is designed to help your program determine how well an assessment aligns with the domains and performance standards identified in the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards.

In YoungStar, programs can earn an indicator when every classroom has their curriculum/programming and assessments aligned with WMELS. This alignment is meant to ensure child care programming is not narrowly focused on certain domains, or that lesser attention is paid to some domains. For the assessment process, programs must be able to demonstrate that they assess individual children, use what is learned from the assessment process to establish lesson plans and program areas where they aim to improve child outcomes, and refine how they plan and implement activities based upon child assessments.

The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards addresses all areas of child development and early learning. Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are intended to guide decisions on all aspects of program development and implementation, including curriculum and assessment. The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards is not a checklist to evaluate a child's development and learning. Rather, they guide the choice of assessment instruments and serves as a way to organize the data collected from those instruments. Similarly, the WMELS is not a curriculum describing what and how to teach. They describe the developmental building blocks that are important for a child's school and long-term success. Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards: Curriculum and Assessment Resources used in WMELS Training are available on the Collaborating Partners website located at: http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/curriculum-assessment-curriculum.php

Suggestions for Use: The Alignment Review Tool does not yield a score. It is designed to help the program team analyze an assessment and make informed decisions about their use. This tool can be used in at least two ways. First, a decision-making team will consider how an assessment reflects **COVERAGE** and **BALANCE** of the various domains and performance standards in the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. **COVERAGE** refers to how the assessment addresses each of the WMELS domains and performance standards. **BALANCE** refers to a relatively even representation of all the domains and performance standards in the assessment.

Secondly, a deeper analysis and look at whether the assessment provides sufficient **DEPTH** and **DIFFICULTY** for the range of skills and developmental levels of the children served. **DEPTH** is the degree to which the assessment provides a sequence of developmentally important skills that lay the foundation for later development and learning. **DIFFICULTY** is the degree to which the assessment identified skills and expectations that are intellectually challenging for children at developmentally appropriate levels.

The following is a five step process to use for reviewing and assessing the assessment tool(s) that are being used by the child care program. Items 1 - 3 are the first steps of the alignment process. Items 4 - 5 are the second steps of the alignment process.

1. Identify the assessment to be reviewed and make it available for review. The team will gather other appropriate resources on child development.
2. For each domain, read and discuss the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards description and rationale of the domain. Read and discuss the domain elements.
   a. Do all team members have a shared understanding of the knowledge and skills included within that domain? If not use the additional child development resources to understand what is meant by each performance standard. The examples given for each performance standard in the continuum examples can help with this discussion. Remember, these are examples and are not meant to be comprehensive.
   b. Review the selected assessment. Does the review of all domains answer these questions:
   c. Coverage: Does this assessment cover all or most of the domains?
   d. Balance: Does this assessment provide balanced coverage within and across each of the domains?
3. Review the selected assessment. Within each performance standard, consider:
   a. Does the sequencing of assessment make sense? Is it ordered developmentally or in a way that makes instructional sense, i.e., from easy to more difficult?
   b. Will the sequences help teachers make good decisions about what a child needs to learn?
   c. Are there enough items, objectives, or activities the group of children?
   d. Does the assessment cover an appropriate range of developmental and cognitive challenge? Do items, objectives, or activities represent greater complexity or difficulty for developmentally older children?
4. Does the review of depth and difficulty of all the domains answer these questions:
   a. Depth – Does this assessment provide a sequence of items? Is it a useful sequence? Does it provide enough items?
   b. Difficulty – Does this assessment provide appropriate challenge or complexity?

Upon completion of the alignment review, if a program finds that there are areas of concern about the assessment tool then the program should consider other assessment tools or additional assessment tools. Multiple assessment tools may be needed to assist with the ongoing – authentic assessment. Assessments are designed for a specific purpose and should be used only for the purpose for which they have been demonstrated to produce reliable, valid information. When using

(Sample Review of Section of a Hypothetical Assessment)

Domain: Health and Physical	INFANTS	ONE YEAR OLDS	TWO YEAR OLDS	THREE YEAR OLDS	FOUR YEAR OLDS	FIVE YEAR OLDS
B. Motor Development Performance Standards:						
B.EL.1a Moving with strength, control, balance, coordination, locomotion, and endurance – PURPOSE	**Objectives include:** Moves to explore includes rolling over, crawling, few steps, and crawl to sit	**Objectives include:** Experimenting with different ways of moving – walking forward or backward,	**Objectives include:** Continued experimentation of different ways of moving – speed of	**Objectives include:** Moving purposefully with developing control – running, walking up and down	**Objectives include:** Moving purposefully with more control, running, climbing on playground	**Objectives include:** Running smoothly, jumps, spins, gallops, skips, uses a variety of

and COORDINATION		pushing riding toy while walking, marching	walking, marching, and pushing riding toy while walking	steps w/alternating feet, climbing, beginning galloping	equipment, riding tricycle using pedals, galloping	traveling movements
B.EL. 1b Moving with strength, control, balance, coordination, locomotion, and endurance – BALANCE and STRENGTH	Sitting propped up, rocking back and forth on hands and knees, sitting and reaching for toys	Squatting, standing on tiptoes, getting in and out of chair, kneels while playing	Standing on tiptoes, getting in and out of chair, kneels while playing, straddles a line on floor, sidesteps across balance beam	Sustaining balance during simple tasks – ease in standing on tiptoes, kneeling while playing, jumping off low step, basic jump	Sustained balance during movement experiences – walking on edge of material, jump over objects	Hopping, hopping on one foot, attempts to jump rope
B.EL.2 Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation	Reaching, grasping and releasing objects	Manipulating object with stiff body movements	Carrying large ball while moving, throwing, catching and kicking with stiff body movements	Manipulating objects with flexible body movement – throwing, striding, kicking by stepping up	Manipulation of objects – throwing, trapping ball, striking an object, kicking by running up to object	Manipulation of object through full range of motion

(Example of Hypothetical Assessment Summary/Notes)
Summary/Notes
Level 1: Coverage and Balance – does the curriculum appropriately cover the domain elements and are they evenly balanced?

The assessment covers all the physical development Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards domains/performance standards. Most of the important skills are evenly addressed across the performance standards.

Level 2: Depth and Difficulty – does the curriculum provide for a sequence of increasingly complex skills and are the activities intellectually challenging at a developmentally appropriate level?

Skills are organized according to a clear instructional sequence. Some objectives are extended between each age year. Skills and activities are cognitively challenging and address a range of age expectations.

There are no areas of concern.
___X___ This assessment does align in Health and Physical Development as it provides appropriate coverage, balance, depth and difficulty.
_____ This assessment does not align in Health and Physical Development. The team recommends considering supplemental or other
          assessment to address these concerns.

Name of Assessment _Developmental Checklist – ABC Center_____   Reviewer(s) ___Program Director – Lead Teachers 5 classrooms _____
Date(s) _____1.1.2021_____

Name of Assessment _____ Reviewer(s) _____
Date(s) _____

Domain: Health and Physical	INFANTS	ONE YEAR OLDS	TWO YEAR OLDS	THREE YEAR OLDS	FOUR YEAR OLDS	FIVE YEAR OLDS
A. Physical Health and Development Performance Standards:						
A.EL.1a The behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – SLEEP						
A.EL.1b The behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – DRESSING						
A.EL.1c The behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – TOILETING						
A.EL.1d The behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – EATING						
A.EL.2 The behaviors to meet safety needs						
A.EL.3 Demonstrates a healthy lifestyle						
B. Motor Development Performance Standards:						
B.EL.1a Moving with strength, control, balance, coordination,						

locomotion, and endurance – PURPOSE and COORDINATION					
B.EL. 1b Moving with strength, control, balance, coordination, locomotion, and endurance – BALANCE and STRENGTH					
B.EL.2 Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation					
C. Sensory Organization Performance Standards:					
C.EL.1 Using senses to take in, experience, integrate, and regulate responses to the environment					

Summary/Notes:

Coverage and Balance – how does this assessment appropriately cover the domain performance standards and are they evenly balanced?

Depth and Difficulty – how does this assessment provide for a sequence of increasingly complex skills and are the activities intellectually challenging at a developmentally appropriate level?

Are there Areas of Concern:

_____ This assessment does align in Health and Physical Development as it provides appropriate coverage, balance, depth and difficulty.
_____ This assessment does not align in Health and Physical Development. The team recommends considering supplemental or other assessment to address these concerns.

DOMAIN: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL	INFANTS	ONE YEAR OLDS	TWO YEAR OLDS	THREE YEAR OLDS	FOUR YEAR OLDS	FIVE YEAR OLDS
A. Emotional Development Performance Standards:						
A.EL.1 Expression of a wide range of emotions						
A.EL.1 Understands and responds to others' emotions						
B. Self-Concept Performance Standards:						
B.EL. 1 Developing positive self-esteem						
B.EL.2 Demonstrating self-awareness						
C. Social Competence Performance Standards:						
C.EL.1 Demonstrating attachment, trust, and autonomy						
C.EL.2 Engages in social interaction and plays with others						
C.EL.3 Demonstrates understanding of rules and social expectations						
C.EL.4 Engages in social problem solving behavior and learns to resolve conflict						

Summary/Notes:

Coverage and Balance – how does this assessment appropriately cover the domain performance standards and are they evenly balanced?

Depth and Difficulty – how does this assessment provide for a sequence of increasingly complex skills and are the activities intellectually challenging at a developmentally appropriate level?

Are there Areas of Concern:

_____ This assessment does align in Social and Emotional Development as it provides appropriate coverage, balance, depth and difficulty.
_____ This assessment does not align in Social and Emotional Development. The team recommends considering supplemental or other
 assessment to address these concerns.

DOMAIN: Language Development and Communication	INFANTS	ONE YEAR OLDS	TWO YEAR OLDS	THREE YEAR OLDS	FOUR YEAR OLDS	FIVE YEAR OLDS
A. Listening and Understanding Performance Standards:						
A.EL.1 Deriving meaning through listening to communications of others and sounds in the environment						
A.EL.2 Listens and responds to communications with others						
A.EL.3 Follows directions of increasing complexity						
B. Speaking and Communicating Performance Standards:						
B.EL. 1 Using gestures and movements (non-verbal) to communicate						
B.EL.2a Using vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Form – Syntax: rule system for combining words, phrases, and sentences, includes parts of speech, word order, and sentence structure)						
B.EL.2b Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Content –						

(semantics: rule system for establishing meaning of words, individually and in combination)					
B.EL.2c Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate (Language Function – Pragmatics: rules governing the use of language in context)					
C. Early Literacy Performance Standards:					
C.EL.1 Develops ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory parts of spoken language (Ability to segment oral language into words, syllables, or phonemes independent of meaning)					
C.EL.2 Understanding concept that the alphabet represents the sounds of spoken language and the letters of written language (Utilizing this concept as an emerging reading strategy)					
C.EL.3 Shows appreciation of books and understand how print works					
C.EL.4 Uses writing to represent thoughts or ideas					

Summary/Notes:

Coverage and Balance – how does this assessment appropriately cover the domain performance standards and are they evenly balanced?

Depth and Difficulty – how does this assessment provide for a sequence of increasingly complex skills and are the activities intellectually challenging at a developmentally appropriate level?

Are there Areas of Concern:

_____ This assessment does align in Language Development and Communication as it provides appropriate coverage, balance, depth and difficulty.
_____ This assessment does not align in Language Development and Communication. The team recommends considering supplemental or other assessment to address these concerns.

DOMAIN: Approaches to Learning	INFANTS	ONE YEAR OLDS	TWO YEAR OLDS	THREE YEAR OLDS	FOUR YEAR OLDS	FIVE YEAR OLDS
A. Curiosity, Engagement, and Persistence Performance Standards:						
A.EL.1 Displays curiosity, rick-taking and willingness to engage in new experiences						
A.EL.2 Engages in meaningful learning through attempting, repeating, experimenting, refining and elaborating on experiences and activities						
A.EL.3 Exhibits persistence and flexibility						
B. Creativity and Imagination Performance Standards:						
B.EL. 1 Engages in imaginative play and inventive thinking through interactions with people, materials and the environment						
B.EL.2 Expresses self creatively through music, movement and art						
C. Diversity in Learning Performance Standards:						
C.EL.1 Experiences a variety of routines, practices and languages						
C.EL.2 Learns within the context of his/her family and culture						

C.EL.3 Uses various styles of learning including verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal					

Summary/Notes:
Coverage and Balance – how does this assessment appropriately cover the domain performance standards and are they evenly balanced?

Depth and Difficulty – how does this assessment provide for a sequence of increasingly complex skills and are the activities intellectually challenging at a
                  developmentally appropriate level?

Are there Areas of Concern:

_____ This assessment does align in Approaches to Learning as it provides appropriate coverage, balance, depth and difficulty.
_____ This assessment does not align in Approaches to Learning. The team recommends considering supplemental or other
             assessment to address these concerns.

DOMAIN: Cognition and General Knowledge	INFANTS	ONE YEAR OLDS	TWO YEAR OLDS	THREE YEAR OLDS	FOUR YEAR OLDS	FIVE YEAR OLDS
A. Exploration, Discovery, and Problem Solving Performance Standards:						
A.EL.1 Uses multi-sensory abilities to process information						
A.EL.2 Understands new meanings as memory increases						
A.EL.3 Applies problem solving skills						
B. Mathematical Thinking Performance Standards:						
B.EL. 1 Demonstrates an understanding of numbers and counting						
B.EL.2 Understands number operations and relationships						
B.EL.3 Explores, recognizes and describes, shapes and spatial relationships						
B.EL.4 Uses the attributes of objects for comparison and patterning						
B.EL.5 Understands the concept of measurement						
B.EL.6 Collects, describes and records information using all senses						

C. Scientific Thinking Performance Standards:						
C.EL.1 Uses observation to gather information						
C.EL.2 Uses tools to gather information, compare observed objects, and seek answers to questions through active investigation						
C.EL.3 Hypothesizes and makes predictions						
C.EL.4 Forms explanations based on trial and error, observations, and explorations						

Summary/Notes:
Coverage and Balance – how does this assessment appropriately cover the domain performance standards and are they evenly balanced?

Depth and Difficulty – how does this assessment provide for a sequence of increasingly complex skills and are the activities intellectually challenging at a developmentally appropriate level?

Are there Areas of Concern:

_____ This assessment does align in Cognition and General Knowledge as it provides appropriate coverage, balance, depth and difficulty.
_____ This assessment does not align in Cognition and General Knowledge. The team recommends considering supplemental or other assessment to address these concerns.