The ***StrongStart Professional Development System***is a web-based "one stop center" for early educators that will provide resources for their career growth. It will include a credentialing system, professional registry, and a Learning Management System (LMS) where educators can take courses on their computer or mobile device.

The LMS is the first part of the system to be activated, along with the required trainings for practitioners in the field.

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# StrongStart System and Technical Questions

**Q. What is a Learning Management System (LMS)?**

Learning Management Systems are used to deliver, track and report online training activities. Training may be self-directed, facilitated by an instructor or a combination of the two.

The required *EEC Essentials* course are all self-directed.

**Q. How do I register for an account and log into the system?**

Here are the steps for you to access the LMS, create your account:

* Go to the URL: <https://strongstart.eoe.mass.gov>
* Click the **Login** button in the top left corner to create your account
  + Click to Accept Release Statement
  + Complete the registration process

**Q. How do I Enroll in a course?**

Here are the steps for you to access the LMS, create your account and enroll in the course:

* Click the **Course Catalog** button in the left menu
* Click on the title of the course you are taking
* Click to **Get Item**
* Click **Finish** to enroll
* Click the course title to open the course
* Click on the **Module title** to launch the course

**Q. What is a Professional Qualifications Registry (PQR) Number?**

A PQR number is the unique identifying number received after registering in EEC’s Professional Qualification Registry. PQR registration is required for all program staff annually.

**Q. How to I find my PQR number?**

Users can log into EEC’s Single Sign In at <https://www.eec.state.ma.us/SSI_V2/ProfileSetup/LoginUN.aspx> and click on the “Professional Qualifications Registry” application. The PQR number is listed next to your name in the upper left corner.

If located in a center-based program, the director should have the PQR summary sheet on file.

A brief video tutorial can be viewed at <https://360.articulate.com/review/content/5c4329ac-3455-450e-88f4-b6f606dd65c6/review>

\*\*Contact Center Staff can use the PQR Lookup utility to find the person’s PQR number\*\*\*\*

**Q. I have more than one PQR number. Which one should I use?**

Staff should not have more than one PQR number or Single Sign In account. If a user has more than one account, please put in a helpdesk ticket to merge accounts before proceeding at <https://massgov.service-now.com/eec>.

**Q. Do I still need to keep my PQR active?**

Yes. All Staff working directly with children must register in the PQR and continue to keep their PQR in an “active” status.

**Q. Is there sound/audio in the courses?**

Yes. You will need your speakers or headphones to listen to the narration.

**Q. I forgot my StrongStart login/username. How can I get into the system?**

On the login page users can reset their passwords.

* <https://strongstart.eoe.mass.gov>
* Select “Login” on top left corner
* Select “Reset Password” located under the login field
* On next screen, enter email addressed that was used to register
* Users will receive instructions on resetting their password in their email

**Q. What is the difference between the Course Catalog, Dashboard and My Courses?**

The “Course Catalog” is a list of all the trainings currently offered by EEC via the LMS.

“My Dashboard” and “My Courses” show trainings that you have signed up for through the system.

From the Dashboard, you also have access to “My Transcript” and other tools that will enable you to plan and track your Professional Development.

**Q. Can I take the *EEC Essentials* training modules on my phone or tablet?**

Yes, the StrongStart Online Professional Development System is compatible with Android and iOS mobile devices (Smart Phone, iPad or Tablet) as well as desktop and laptop computers.

All you need is a stable connection to the Internet and a current version of a commonly used internet browser. Supported browsers include: Internet Explorer (IE), Chrome, Firefox, and Safari.

**Q. How do I print a certificate after I have completed an *EEC Essentials* module?**

Training modules will present you with the option to view and print a certificate of completion after you complete the training. You can print a certificate for each of the training modules and you can also print a certificate for the entire *EEC Essentials* course.

When you complete the course and exit, you will see this message:

**Congratulations! You have completed all required sections of this course.**

**To get your certificate click this link**

Click the link and then click to View as PDF at the top of the next pop-up window. After a few seconds, the full image of your certificate will appear in a new window. Click on the Printer Icon in the top right corner. If you are using an iPhone or iPad, click on the "share" icon to save, send or print.

**Q. Does each module have its own certificate?**

Yes. Once complete, the system also issues a certificate as proof of completion of the entire EEC Essentials package.  The EEC Essentials package certificate does not award specific credit (as the individual course certificates do); rather it is intended to serve as proof of completion and can be placed in the personnel folders.

**Q. Can I print my certificate later or reprint my certificate?**

Yes, the certificates of completion are available to view and print from your Transcript. Here’s how:

* Login to the LMS
* Click on “My Dashboard”
* Click on “My Transcript”
* Find the course from the list of completed courses
* Click the click to “View Certificate”
* Click to “View as PDF”
* Click on the **Printer Icon** in the top right corner. If you are using an iPhone or iPad, click on the "share" icon to save, send or print.

**Q. I enrolled in the wrong training in the LMS. Is it possible to drop a training after enrolling?**

Yes, it is possible to drop a course from your Dashboard or My Course Area. To do this, click the link to the course in Your Dashboard or Courses and then click on the Drop this Course link in the upper right corner. When you click on this link, you will get a message that reads "Dropping this cannot be undone and will be reflected on your student record. Are you sure you want to drop this course?" Click OK. The student record will indicate an "incomplete" for the specific course that was dropped.

**Q. Can I go back to review a training module that I already completed?**

Yes, you can go back to review a training module that you have completed. Here's how:

* Go to My Dashboard
* Click on My Transcript
* Scroll through your list to the course you'd like to reopen
* Under the title of the course you will see these options:
  + View Completion Details
  + View Certificate
* Click the link to View Completion Details
* This brings you to the page where the course was launched in the first place
* Click on the Module title you wish to review

Most courses will reopen exactly where you left off. Others will ask "Would you like to resume where you left off?" Click YES! Then use the course menu on the left to navigate.

**Q. I got to the end of the training module, but the system still says IN PROGRESS. What am I supposed to do now?**

Some modules require passing grades on quizzes and others require that you view every screen in the program. Some courses will tell you "Congratulations for completing this course" when you reach the end of the formal content. In fact, there may still be one or two screens of information still to view.

If you think you finished a module, and when you exit you see "IN PROGRESS" - go back into the course and scroll down or check the menu on the left to see if there are remaining lessons for you to view. If there are additional screens, click though to the end and then exit.

# Training – Required Participants

**Q. Why do I need to take these new trainings?**

These trainings are a federal requirement of The Child Care and Development Block Grant of 2014 (or CCDBG), the primary federal source of early childhood funding. Their purpose is to support early childhood educators in key content areas to protect a child’s health and safety while in care.

**Q. What trainings do I need to take?**

* **Drivers** need to take “Transporting Children”, a one-hour training module.
* **Individuals who only work periodically** with children in the programs, including volunteers, interns and substitutes and that do not count toward the programs’ required staffing ratios need to take “Emergency Response”, a one-hour training module.
* **All Staff working directly with children** need to complete the new *EEC Essentials* course.

**Q. Do Program Administrators need to take the training?**

Yes, as all staff working directly with children need to complete the new *EEC Essentials* course.

**Q. Do substitutes who work occasionally (but *are* counted in ratio when they work) need to take the training?**

Yes.

**Q. Do volunteers need to take the training?**

Volunteers who only work periodically with children in programs and do not count toward the program’s required staffing ratios, need to take “Emergency Response”, a one-hour training module.

**Q. Do bus monitors (not drivers) need to take the Transportation course?**

Yes.

**Q. Drivers do not have a PQR number. What should they use in place of the PQR number for registration?**

Drivers may use the code “1111” in place of the PQR number when registering in the online StrongStart system.

**Q. Some OST programs do not run during the summer months but start up again in September. Will new and returning staff need to complete required login and trainings by 9/30?**

Yes. Please review the section of the policy that outlines EEC’s plans for the provision of technical assistance and monitoring of programs.

**Q. Do Family Child Care (FCC) Licensees need to take the training?**

Yes, as all staff working directly with children need to complete the new *EEC Essentials* course.

**Q. Do FCC Certified Assistants and Regular Assistants need to take the training?**

Yes, as all staff working directly with children need to complete the new *EEC Essentials* course.

**Q. Do FCC System staff need to take the training?**

No, FCC System staff (Home Visitors, PD/QRIS support staff, etc.) do not need to take the training. It is, however, highly recommended that they take the training so they can support their FCC educators.

**Q. In Head Start, where there are also family service and support staff, do they all need to take the training, or just the education department?**

Per the policy, anyone who works directly with children must take the training.

**Q. How long will it take to complete the *EEC Essentials* course?**

The course is made up of 12 modules should take approximately 11.5 hours to complete. The modules can be started, stopped and then restarted if the learner needs to take a break or complete a training at another time.

**Q. Can new staff start work in a program before completing the new *EEC Essentials* course?**

While all educators are required to complete all 12 modules of the *EEC Essentials* training, ***educators may not work in an unsupervised capacity until the following modules are completed:*** First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Overview; Infectious Diseases and Immunizations; and Hazardous Materials. If caring for infants, Infant Safe Sleep Practices and Shaken Baby Syndrome must also be completed prior to working in an unsupervised capacity.

For Family Child Care providers and assistants, certification of current training in CPR and first aid is required prior to licensure.

The remaining trainings must be taken within 60 days of hire.

**Q: I will be completing the training in-person at a group meeting. Do I need to register in the system?**

Yes. All program staff need to register for a StrongStart PDS account by September 30, 2019.

# Training Policy Questions

**Q. Where is the policy?**

The training policy can be found on EEC’s website at <https://www.mass.gov/SSPDS>.

**Q. What if I took an EEC-approved course on any of these topics already?**

**All Staff working directly with children** need to complete the *EEC Essentials* course. This includes staff that may have taken training on one or more of these topics in the past. These are new requirements from the Federal Government.

**Q. I notice some trainings need to be completed by September 30, 2019 and must be completed again for licensing renewal. Does this mean I need to take a training twice?**

Some trainings need to be completed annually. There will be an *EEC Essentials Renewal* course with the required trainings on the LMS early next year. Trainings that need to be taken annually include:

* Child Abuse and Neglect;
* Emergency Response Planning;
* Food Related Risk and Response;
* Infectious Disease and Immunizations;
* Medication Administration;
* Transporting Children;
* Safe Sleeping Practices; (for all educators working in FCC programs and center-based programs serving infants and toddlers); and
* Shaken Baby Syndrome; (for all educators working in FCC programs and center-based programs serving infants and toddlers).

**Q. I don’t work with infants. OR I work in a program which serves infant children, but I don’t work in an infant classroom. Do I need to take “Infant Safe Sleep Practices” and “Shaken Baby Syndrome”?**

**Yes. All program staff** must complete all of the *EEC Essentials* training modules, including the “Infant Safe Sleep Practices” and “Shaken Baby Syndrome”.

**Q. Do the *EEC Essentials* training modules replace EEC’s current trainings?**

Yes, Several of the *EEC Essentials* training modules will replace EEC’s current training offering in that area. These include:

* Nutrition and Choking
* Safe Sleep Practices
* Look before You Lock
* Drivers Transportation Training, and
* Medication.

**Q. Does the training count towards EEC licensing training hour requirements?**

Yes, completion of the *EEC Essentials* trainings via EEC’s LMS will count toward the required professional development training hours.

**Q. Can any of the trainings count towards EEC licensing training requirements in diverse learners?**

No, none of these trainings count towards EEC licensing training requirements in diverse learners.

**Q. If we contract with an outside bus company who is responsible for making sure bus drivers do the transportation training?**

The program is responsible for making sure that their contracted transportation has completed the training.

**Q. The driver we have is from the public-school system for a child who receives services.  Do we need to have him/her take the transportation module? What if the bus company won’t comply?**

The transportation module must be completed by any contractors for transportation on behalf of the program. Although EEC does not have direct oversight of transportation companies, if they do not comply, EEC may take action against the program.

**Q. Can a program conduct the training to educators as a group?**

Yes, the preferred method for group training is to have each individual participant register and login to the system and complete the trainings under their individual accounts during the meeting. This can be achieved by individuals using a tablet or smart phone to log in and follow along to the group session. In this way, each individual will be able to print out their certificates of completion at any time in the future.

If it is not possible to have groups of educators log on individually, one staff member may direct the training for the entire group and must document the training provided and participants involved. The program must ensure that documentation of training completion is entered into the personnel record for each staff. Documentation should include:

* Training module name
* Training date
* Trainer/Leader
* Participant list

**Note:** All program staff need to register for a StrongStart PDS account by September 30, 2019, even if attending in-person group training.

**Q. When watching as a staff, can you print one certificate can you white out the name to put everyone else names?**

No, staff who take the training as a group will not have a certificate from the StrongStart system and will not be tracked in the online system.  It is not appropriate to print and copy an official certificate from the online StrongStart PDS for multiple staff. Each staff member must have documentation in their file, provided by the leader of the training.  Documentation must include the following:

* 1. Training module name
  2. Training date
  3. Trainer/Leader
  4. Participant list

**Q. Can a program use staff meeting time to complete a module with a group of staff?**

Yes, staff meeting time may be utilized to complete the *EEC Essentials* training modules. Training must be documented and recorded in each file as described above.

# Training Content Questions

**Q. What training topics are included in the *EEC Essentials* Course?**

The *EEC Essentials* course includes a module on each of the following topics:

* Child Abuse and Neglect;
* Emergency Response Planning;
* First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Overview;
* Food Related Risk and Response;
* Hazardous Materials;
* Infant Safe Sleeping Practices;
* Infectious Diseases and Immunizations;
* Introduction to Child Development;
* Medication Administration;
* Physical Premises Safety;
* Shaken Baby Syndrome; and
* Transporting Children.

**Q. How long does each *EEC Essentials* training module take to complete?**

Each module (except the 30-minute First Aid and CPR Overview) will take approximately 45 -60 minutes to complete. The actual time to complete depends on how much time the learner devotes to reviewing the resources available as part of the module.

**Q. I completed the Child Development online module in the LMS; will that certify me as a teacher?**

No, the Child Growth and Development course that teachers are required to complete for certification is a college level course of 3 credits or more.

**Q. Does this training count towards teach certification?**

No, the EEC Essentials training awards 11.5 EEC hours that count towards yearly licensing requirements.  It does not count towards EEC Certification.  For more information on EEC certification requirements, please see [**https://www.mass.gov/eec-professional-qualifications-certification**](https://www.mass.gov/eec-professional-qualifications-certification)**.**

**Q. Does this replace the mandatory 51A training?**

No, for more information see: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/reporting-alleged-child-abuse-or-neglect-filing-a-51a-report>

**Q. Does it replace the CPR renewal which is required once a year even if certified for two years?**

No. There has been no change to current CPR and 1st Aid certification requirements.

**Q. Is the “First Aid and CPR Overview” training different than obtaining a First Aid or CPR certification?**

Yes, the “First Aid and CPR Overview” is a new federally required training that provides an overview of the topic but does not result in certification. EEC’s regulatory requirements regarding CPR and First Aid certification have not changed. First Aid and CPR certifications must still be completed in-person and according to license-required timeframes.

# Monitoring and Compliance

**Q. How will EEC be monitoring my compliance with completing these trainings?**

Program Director(s)/FCC Licensees must maintain a personnel record for each program staff member/FCC Assistant showing proof of completion of the required trainings. Starting October 1, 2019, EEC licensing staff will begin monitoring to determine if the *EEC Essentials* training requirements have been completed.

**Q. How do I prove I have taken the courses?**

Upon completion of the *EEC Essentials* course, please print your certificate and submit the printed certificate to your program administrator or director, who needs to add your certificate to their program file/personnel record, for monitoring purposes.

**Q. Do we still need to record these trainings in the PQR portal for each staff or do the two portals communicate with each other?**

These trainings do not need to be listed in the Professional Qualification Registry (PQR).  The trainings will be captured on each person’s StrongStart transcript. Over the course of the next year, the information from the PQR will be merged with this system and this will replace the PQR.

**Q. Will the staff record checklist be changing as the EEC essentials has the look before you lock and 5 rights of medication etc.?**

Yes, it will be updated.

**Q. If staff don’t complete the *EEC Essentials* training requirements by September 30, 2019, what does that mean for our program?**

When EEC begins monitoring in October of 2019, EEC’s initial action to finding that a program’s staff have not completed the *EEC Essentials* course will be to provide Technical Assistance. The program will also be informed that they have a three-month window from that visit date for all staff to complete the training. If the program is still not in compliance at the program’s next regular visit, a citation may be issued.