

Early Childhood Environmental Education Rating Scale

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**In partnership with the
North American Association for Environmental Education
(NAAEE)**

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Purpose

The Early Childhood Environmental Education Rating Scale is designed as a formative evaluation tool to assist programs (private and public early childhood programs; and environmental education programs serving young children (infancy through age eight)) in improving its environmental education curriculum.

Based on the six key characteristics of high quality early childhood environmental education programs (North American Association for Environmental Education, 2010), the procedures for using the rating scale emphasize a collaborative approach in evaluation, through the sharing of differing perspectives (as represented by program board members, administrative officials, teaching staff, family members of the children participating in the program, and community partners), and the development of a consensus in the rating of each specific guideline or recommendation.

Benefits

While voluntary, the benefits of using this rating scale are numerous. The evaluation process in itself is an invaluable professional development activity. Professional development benefits include attaining knowledge about effective practices in both early childhood education and

environmental education; and developing skills in leading discussions, negotiating, articulating evidence, consensus building, writing action plans, and collaborating in the realization of the written plans. The findings of the rating scale, on the other hand, assist in the identification of priorities or facets of program practice that can be improved or made more effective, as well as the identification of program strengths and existing resources and talents, which can be leveraged as appropriate to bring about needed improvements or progress.

The rating scale is a self-assessment tool requiring open and honest conversations. The process can be personally satisfying for the individual team members involved and, with ongoing evaluation utilizing the rating scale, can lead to program success over time.

Content validity

Content validity refers to the appropriateness of the content and format of the data gathering measure (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The content's relationship with the stated purpose of the evaluation tool is a particularly important consideration, as is its comprehensiveness. The following describes the validation processes engaged in the development of this rating scale.

Level 1

The 32 items in the rating scale were derived from the recommended guidelines in the Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence (NAAEE, 2010). Developed by 13 experts representing multiple agencies, centers, foundations, institutes, and universities (see Appendix A for a list of the experts), and supported by funds from The United States Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Education Division, Northern Illinois University, the University of Oregon, and the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation, the following lists the key program areas (or characteristics) as well as the specific areas of practice (or guidelines), all of which correspond directly to the sections and items in this rating scale:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 1: PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Guideline 1.1—Focus on nature and the environment

Guideline 1.2—Focus on education of young children

Guideline 1.3—Culturally appropriate goals, objectives, and practices

Guideline 1.4—Environmental literacy: board, staff, and providers

Guideline 1.5—Health and safety

Guideline 1.6—Ongoing evaluation and assessment

Guideline 1.7—Partnerships

Guideline 1.8—Interpersonal and intergenerational relationships

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 2: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

Guideline 2.1—Based on research and theory

Guideline 2.2—Authentic experiences

Guideline 2.3—Child-directed and inquiry-based

Guideline 2.4—The whole child

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 3: PLAY AND EXPLORATION

Guideline 3.1—Use of the natural world and natural materials

Guideline 3.2—Play and the role of adults

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 4: CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

Guideline 4.1—Social and emotional growth

Guideline 4.2—Curiosity and questioning

Guideline 4.3—Development of environmental understandings

Guideline 4.4—Skills for understanding the environment

Guideline 4.5—A personal sense of responsibility and caring

Guideline 4.6—Physical health and development

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 5: PLACES AND SPACES

Guideline 5.1—Spaces and places to enhance development

Guideline 5.2—Natural components

Guideline 5.3—Comfortable for both children and adults

Guideline 5.4—Maintenance and usability

Guideline 5.5—Health, safety, and risk

Guideline 5.6—Environmental sustainability

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 6: EDUCATOR PREPARATION

Guideline 6.1—Foundations of early childhood environmental education

Guideline 6.2—Professional responsibilities of the educator

Guideline 6.3—Environmental literacy

Guideline 6.4—Planning and implementing environmental education

Guideline 6.5—Fostering learning

Guideline 6.6—Assessment and evaluation

Dr. Bora Simmons, Director of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education, was consulted about the focus on the 32 guidelines, as opposed to the 172 specific practices identified in guidelines for excellence. She concurred with the approach as the rating scale would otherwise be exceedingly long.

Level 2

Based on recommended practices in the development of effective numerical rating scales, a likert-type rating scale consisting of seven points was developed following the identification of the rating scale items in Level 1 (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). And, based on the author's experience as a Curriculum Consultant and Learning Coach on a national professional development project called the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program, procedures in the administration of a team-based evaluation were delineated next. Procedural ideas, as well as ideas in writing the descriptors for the points in the likert scale, were used with permission from officials of the training program. Please see www.specialquest.org for more information about the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program.

The author focused on the development of a formative assessment tool, rather than a summative tool, to emphasize the value of continuous improvement. In support of the focus on continuous improvement, the author developed two forms to assist in the evaluation. The *program profile* forms were developed to assist programs in delineating areas of strengths and areas needing attention or improvement, whereas the *action plan* form was constructed to assist programs in delineating steps that can be taken to make improvements in the early childhood environmental education curriculum.

The first draft of the rating scale was produced, after many formatting revisions, by incorporating all Level 1 and 2 components.

Level 3

Once the first draft was completed, the author solicited the assistance of several of his colleagues at universities in the U.S. and Canada to comment upon the format, readability, comprehension level, visual appearance, content appropriateness, and comprehensiveness of the rating scale. The purpose of this level was to include suggestions from researchers representing (a) multiple fields of study, (b) differing point-of-views, and (c) differing research experience. Typically not required, the author thought the multidisciplinary approach to validation was simply good practice in order to more fully represent the wider community's perspectives. Wider community perspectives ensure greater respect for a diverse set of views relating to children and the caregivers who affect them. Multidisciplinary feedback also entails benefits in collaboration, communication, understanding, and ownership among the members involved. A second draft was developed incorporating the wide range of improvements and feedback provided by this multidisciplinary group. Please see Appendix D for the list of this multidisciplinary group of researchers.

Level 4

The revised rating scale was then reviewed by individuals from five groups of subject matter experts. The groups were (a) members of the guidelines writing team; (b) environmental education faculty; (c) early childhood education faculty; (d) administrators and staff from local environmental education centers (offering programs for young children); and (3) administrators and staff from local early childhood development program. All subject matter experts reviewed the scale for its appropriateness, or provided comments, in the following areas:

Format (visual appearance, length of rating scale)

Ease in understanding the use of rating scale (including procedures)

Comprehension of questions (misinterpretations that may occur)

Ease in recording answers (writing examples, circling rating score)

A third draft of the rating scale, incorporating feedback from the subject matter experts, was produced before reliability assessments were conducted. The list of the subject matter experts is provided in Appendix D.

Rating scale reliability

The draft of the rating scale developed at Level 3 was field-tested next to establish its reliability. Several early childhood development centers, and several environmental education centers, were involved in providing feedback about the scale. The final draft of the rating scale was produced incorporating feedback received from the pilot study sites. Please see Appendix D for the list of the pilot study sites.

Helpful hints and procedures for using the rating scale

An annual evaluation of the program's early childhood environmental education curriculum is suggested. The same rating scale should be used every year in order to determine areas of strengths, identify practices needing improvement, and chart improvements made over time.

Represented on a scale from 1 to 7, a team of evaluators will meet, discuss, and rate a score for each specific guideline based on consensus. The following steps are suggested in the formation of the team of evaluators:

A. TEAM BUILDING

- 1. Any member of the program, the families served by the program, as well as its community partners may initiate a formative evaluation project to determine the program's quality of early childhood environmental education curriculum (identifying both areas of strengths and needs);**
- 2. The initiation should start with the formation of a team of interested individuals, ideally with representation from the program's board of directors, administration, teaching staff, parents or family members of children attending the program, and community partners; as some programs may not have a board of directors or community partners who have provided early childhood environmental education resources or support, it is alright that these perspectives might not be represented; there is no set recommendation for the size of the team, with the ultimate decision being something that the vested team members can themselves determine given their particular program circumstances and knowledge of the interest, commitment, and availability of other relevant stakeholders;**
- 3. Although the team membership may change each year, it is suggested that all be invited (board members, program staff and teachers, parents, community partners) to participate as the annual evaluation is being organized. In the invitation, it is important to describe the**

collaborative nature of the evaluation process, as well as the necessity of contributing about six to eight hours, which may be spread over two or three meetings, at the discretion of the organizer; and

- 4. Specific representatives may be invited, too, on different occasions should the need arise to hear about particular perspectives, or the team membership be too small or lacking a diversity of opinions; this can be a strategic decision made by the organizer or the team of existing members or evaluators.**

B. RATING SCALE DESCRIPTORS

As each guideline is reviewed and discussed, a rating score based on consensus is recorded. The following descriptors may be helpful to teams in the determination of the guideline rating scores:

Implementation Stage and Rating Score:	Description:
Not implemented: Rating Score of 1	No, or very little, discussions have been had about this practice.
Not implemented: Rating Score of 2	Discussions have been initiated, but there has been no impact on the practice.
Partially implemented: Rating Score of 3	There is recognition of the importance of the practice; changes are being discussed and are starting to be implemented.
Partially implemented: Rating Score of 4	There is recognition of the importance of the practice; changes are being made but it is not widespread.
Partially implemented: Rating Score of 5	The practice is widespread, although there may be gaps or issues that need to be resolved.
Fully implemented: Rating Score of 6	The practice has been in place for less than a year.
Fully implemented: Rating Score of 7	The practice has been in place for a year or more.

C. TEAM EVALUATION

- 1. The evaluation process should be a thoughtful process, where everyone feels free and safe to voice their perspectives, and where negotiation and consensus building leads to a common score for each specific guideline;**
- 2. A recorder should be designated to write down the main ideas derived from comments, examples, and perspectives of the team members, as well as record the rating score for each specific guideline; members should take turns as a recorder to allow everyone to more freely share their perspectives, instead of just recording during the entire process; the main ideas and the rating score should be recorded on the rating scale itself; copies of the original rating scale may be made for current and future use;**
- 3. A time-keeper may be designated based on the experience of the team's discussions; it may be helpful to set a time limit of three or four minutes for each specific guideline and, at the same time, maintain flexibility for questions that require lengthier discussions;**
- 4. It may be necessary to have a discussion about consensus building, depending on the team's experience and need; it may be useful to adopt conventions or rules that are**

agreeable to all, such as asking questions to clarify understanding of a perspective, determining level of concern or objection (minimal to great), and straw polling when specific situations arise;

5. It may be, and probably will be, necessary to consult the Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence (NAAEE, 2010) in order to more precisely determine the available evidence, or the lack of it, based on the examples provided in the guidelines; copies of the guidelines can be obtained for free on NAAEE's website; there is a limit of 100 copies that can be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes only; and
6. Comfort and needs, as well as psychological safety, of members must be met; psychological safety includes the freedom for team members to speak and have their perspectives heard and respected; a discussion about meeting these needs should be discussed and ground rules be determined, if it is helpful.

D. PROGRAM PROFILE

1. Once the rating scale has been completed, a program profile should be completed for review by the team of evaluators; a form for program profile is available in Appendix B; and

2. Based on the profile, areas of strengths, areas needing improvement, and possible priorities should be identified.

E. ACTION PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Based on the possible set of priorities, action plans should be written to address those priorities; it is suggested that teams work two to three plans at a time;
2. Typically, each action plan should clearly identify the outcome that needs to be achieved, along with a breakdown of the steps that need to be completed toward achieving the outcome, persons responsible for working on the plan, resources needed, and timeline for reaching the goal; it may also be necessary to collect documentation of the outcome;
3. A format for the action plan is suggested in Appendix C;
4. A quarterly meeting should be held to report progress and problem-solve issues that may have arisen;

- 5. Action plans may be revised or cancelled following the team's decision, and new action plans may be written to replace cancelled plans; and**
- 6. As priorities are met, celebrate accomplishments, recognize individual or collective contributions, and write new action plans.**

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 1: PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE, AND DEVELOPMENT

GUIDELINE 1.1—Focus on nature and the environment

The program's philosophy, goals, and objectives related to nature and the environment are established and clearly articulated. A coherent environmental philosophy and set of practices are articulated for all aspects of the program, including staff development, teaching, curriculum, evaluation, site design, indoor and outdoor classroom design, maintenance and materials.

Today's Date: _____ **Participating team evaluators:** _____

Not implemented **Partially implemented** **Fully implemented**

|-----|

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

GUIDELINE 1.2—Focus on education of young children

Program philosophy, goals, and objectives related to the education of young children are clearly articulated.

Today's Date:

Participating team evaluators:

Not implemented

Partially implemented

Fully implemented

|-----|

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

GUIDELINE 1.3—CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRACTICES

The program's philosophy, goals, and objectives reflect the need for the early childhood environmental education program to incorporate, mirror, and accommodate the cultural traditions of the audiences served.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 1.4—ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY: BOARD, STAFF, AND PROVIDERS

The program's philosophy, goals, and objectives promote the environmental literacy of board, staff, and providers.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 1.5—HEALTH AND SAFETY

The program's philosophy, goals, and objectives are designed to ensure the health and safety of the children served.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 1.6—ONGOING EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

The early childhood environmental education program has an evaluation and assessment plan that is instrumental to teaching and learning, program, and facility improvement.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 1.7—PARTNERSHIPS

Active communication is maintained with a variety of interested individuals and organizations to support networking, resource sharing, enhanced program development, and expanded audience outreach. Partnership activities strengthen their respective organizations.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 1.8—INTERPERSONAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Positive relationships among children and between children and adults are essential for developing a sense of personal responsibility, building a sense of being a community member, and promoting a feeling of personal worth.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 2: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

GUIDELINE 2.1—BASED ON RESEARCH AND THEORY

Early childhood environmental educators understand and apply appropriate research and learning theory.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 2.2—AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

The developmentally appropriate program responds to children’s needs to explore, discover, and discuss their experiences in the environment.

Today’s Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 2.3—CHILD-DIRECTED AND INQUIRY-BASED

The developmentally appropriate program is child-directed and inquiry-based.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 2.4—THE WHOLE CHILD

The developmentally appropriate program is planned with the whole child in mind.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 3: PLAY AND EXPLORATION

GUIDELINE 3.1—USE OF THE NATURAL WORLD AND NATURAL MATERIALS

The natural world provides unlimited potential for play and exploration activities that will benefit the child's development.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 3.2—PLAY AND THE ROLE OF ADULTS

Adults, including formal and non-formal educators, parents, and caregivers, provide the context and supervision that maximizes the learning and development possibilities from play and exploration.

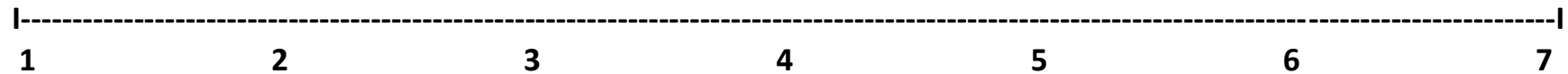
Today's Date:

Participating team evaluators:

Not implemented

Partially implemented

Fully implemented



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Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 4: CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

GUIDELINES 4.1—SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Young children build their knowledge of self and other people around them through active participation and experience. Early-learner programs provide opportunities for young children to participate in a variety of social interactions, including play and exploration in the outdoors that allow them to grow as contributing members of their community.

Today's Date: _____ Participating team evaluators: _____

Not implemented Partially implemented Fully implemented

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

GUIDELINE 4.2—CURIOSITY AND QUESTIONING

Young children learn about their environment in a mixture of ways. Much of this learning takes place through direct experiences, exploration, and discovery. Early learning program provides children with opportunities to develop curiosity, ask their own questions, and begin to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 4.3—DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL UNDERSTANDINGS

As children explore their environment, they begin to develop understandings of how the world works. Early learning programs provide children with opportunities to develop knowledge related to environmental and social systems, including the place where they live.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 4.4—SKILLS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE ENVIRONMENT

Young children increasingly develop their ability to investigate, analyze, and respond to environmental changes, situations, and concerns. Early learning programs provide opportunities for children to experience a variety of environmental conditions and encourage them to investigate topics of their own choosing. These investigations may, when appropriate, lead to the development of action strategies.

Today's Date: _____ **Participating team evaluators:** _____

Not implemented **Partially implemented** **Fully implemented**

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1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

GUIDELINE 4.5—A PERSONAL SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND CARING

As young children develop empathy and increased self-reliance, they demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility toward others and their environment. Early learning programs model environmentally responsible actions and provide opportunities for children to make decisions about their own activities.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 4.6—PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Young children connect to the world through their bodies, developing motor skills and healthy habits. Early learning programs provide young children with a wide variety of physically challenging experiences, including opportunities to run, jump, and climb in the natural environment. Early learning programs also provide young children with opportunities to explore ways they can improve their own health.

Today's Date: _____ **Participating team evaluators:** _____

Not implemented **Partially implemented** **Fully implemented**

|-----|

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 5: PLACES AND SPACES

GUIDELINE 5.1—SPACES AND PLACES TO ENHANCE DEVELOPMENT

Indoor and outdoor places and spaces provide opportunities for development across social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development domains.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 5.2—NATURAL COMPONENTS

Natural components are integrated throughout places and spaces for learning opportunities and development to be maximized.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 5.3—COMFORTABLE FOR BOTH CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Comfortable and inviting places and spaces are provided for learning and development to occur. Without a sense of comfort, it is very difficult for adults or children to benefit from the learning experience.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 5.4—MAINTENANCE AND USABILITY

Places and spaces must be well maintained to provide a safe, Americans with Disabilities Act–compliant, exemplary environment for the program. Maintenance should model best practices and should ensure that the children are protected from harmful situations that can be prevented through appropriate maintenance.

Today's Date: _____ **Participating team evaluators:** _____

Not implemented **Partially implemented** **Fully implemented**

|-----|

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

GUIDELINE 5.5—HEALTH, SAFETY, AND RISK

In order to ensure the safety and health of the children, adequate planning, inspection, and vigilance are practiced.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 5.6—ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Programs and facilities model environmental sustainability and provide positive examples.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 6: EDUCATOR PREPARATION

GUIDELINE 6.1—FOUNDATIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Early childhood environmental educators combine their understanding of child development and developmentally appropriate practice with a basic understanding of the goals, theory, practice, and history of the field of environmental education. This knowledge provides a solid foundation on which educators can build their own practice.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 6.2—PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATOR

High standards for instruction and professional conduct in environmental education are practiced.

Today's Date:

Participating team evaluators:

Not implemented

Partially implemented

Fully implemented

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

GUIDELINE 6.3—ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

Early childhood environmental educators possess the understandings, skills, and attitudes associated with environmental literacy and teaching.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 6.4—PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Educators provide interdisciplinary, investigative learning opportunities that are central to environmental education and developmentally appropriate for young children.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
<hr/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 6.5—FOSTERING LEARNING

Early childhood environmental educators create a climate in which children are motivated to learn about and explore the environment.

Today's Date:		Participating team evaluators:				
Not implemented		Partially implemented			Fully implemented	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:						

GUIDELINE 6.6—ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Environmental educators possess the knowledge and skills to assess learner progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their own programs. Through these assessment activities, educators identify children who may need additional assistance as well as evaluating progress toward meeting goals.

Today's Date: _____ **Participating team evaluators:** _____

Not implemented **Partially implemented** **Fully implemented**

|-----|

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

Write comments or list of evidence for the rating score here:

APPENDIX A
MEMBERS OF THE GUIDELINES WRITING TEAM

- **Bora Simmons, Director, National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education, Institute for a Sustainable Environment, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon**
- **Edward McCrea, President, Environmental Education and Conservation Global, Pennsylvania**
- **Matt Gay, Connecting People with Nature Coordinator, Division of Education Outreach, for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, West Virginia**
- **Lisa Herrmann, Education Coordinator, Riparian Institute, Gilbert, Arizona**
- **Linda Hutchinson, Early Childhood Coach, Rock Hill School District, Rock Hill, South Carolina; Part-time Faculty Member, Center for Child and Family Studies, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina**
- **Mary Beth Pistillo, Training Coordinator, Nebraska Department of Education's Early Childhood Training Center, Omaha, Nebraska**
- **Linda H. Plevyak, Associate Professor, College of Education, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio**
- **Mary Rivkin, Associate Professor and Co-coordinator, Early Childhood Teacher Education Program, College of Education, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Baltimore, Maryland**
- **Sheila Williams Ridge, Lead Teacher and Naturalist, Dodge Nature Center Preschool, West St. Paul, Minnesota**
- **Al Stenstrup, Director of Education Programs, Project Learning Tree, American Forest Foundation, Washington, D.C.**
- **Julia Torquati, Associate Professor, Department of Child, Youth, and Family Studies, University of Nebraska at Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska**
- **Brenda G. Weiser, Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Houston, Clear Lake, Houston, Texas**
- **Susie Wirth, Nature Explore Outreach Director, Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, Nebraska City, Nebraska**

Appendix B
Program Profile

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 1: PROFILE FOR PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE, AND DEVELOPMENT

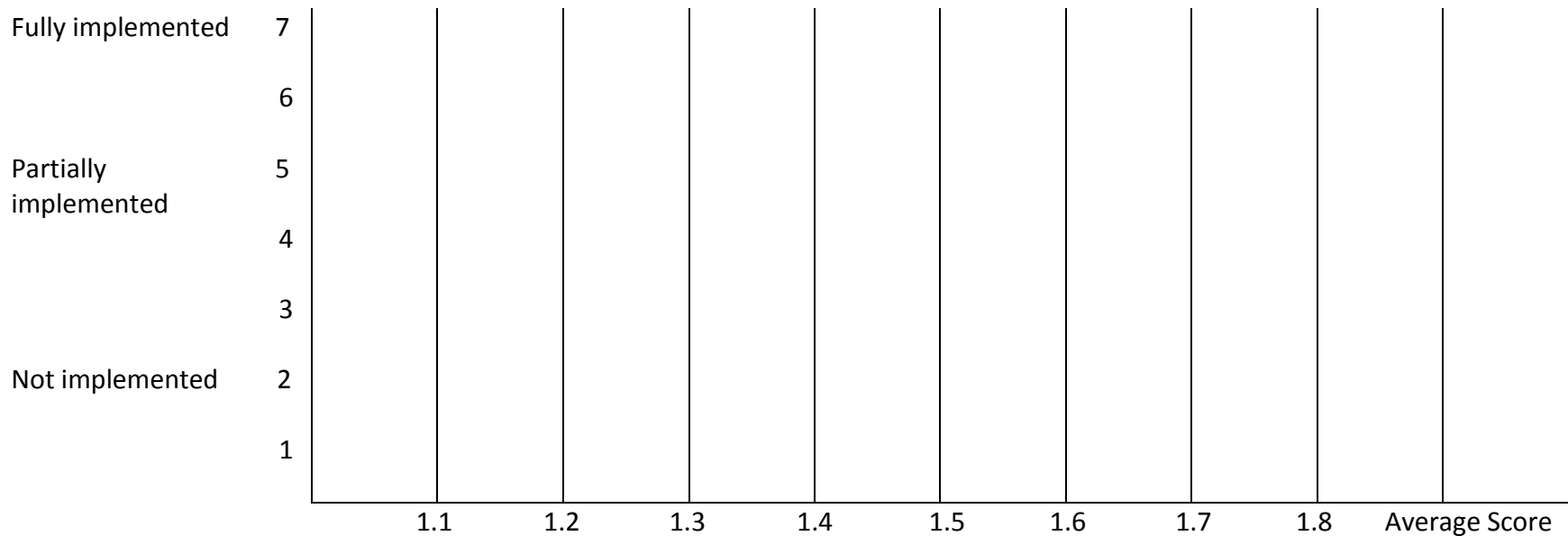
Complete the following table and calculate the percentage as instructed. This same form may be used over a period of three years:

Date/year:	Indicate the obtained rating score for the following guidelines:								Total of all scores:
	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	

Divide the total of all scores by 8 to obtain the average overall score for this key characteristic:

(Total of all scores)/8 = ____ [This is the average score]

Complete the line graph for each year (use a different color for each different year):



KEY CHARACTERISTIC 1: PROFILE FOR PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Possible priorities:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 2: PROFILE FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

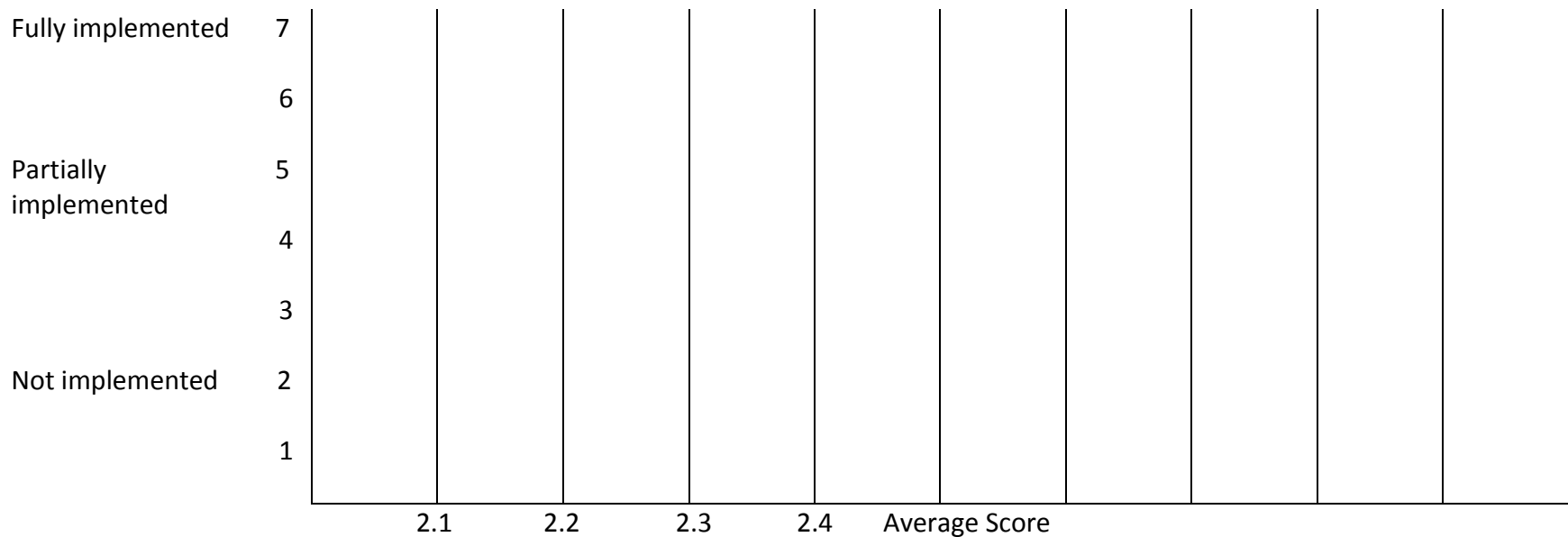
Complete the following table and calculate the percentage as instructed. This same form may be used over a period of three years:

Date/year:	Indicate the obtained rating score for the following guidelines:								Total of all scores:
	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4					

Divide the total of all scores by 4 to obtain the average overall score for this key characteristic:

(Total of all scores)/4 = ____ [This is the average score]

Complete a line graph for each year (use a different color for each different year):



KEY CHARACTERISTIC 2: PROFILE FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Possible priorities:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 3: PROFILE FOR PLAY AND EXPLORATION

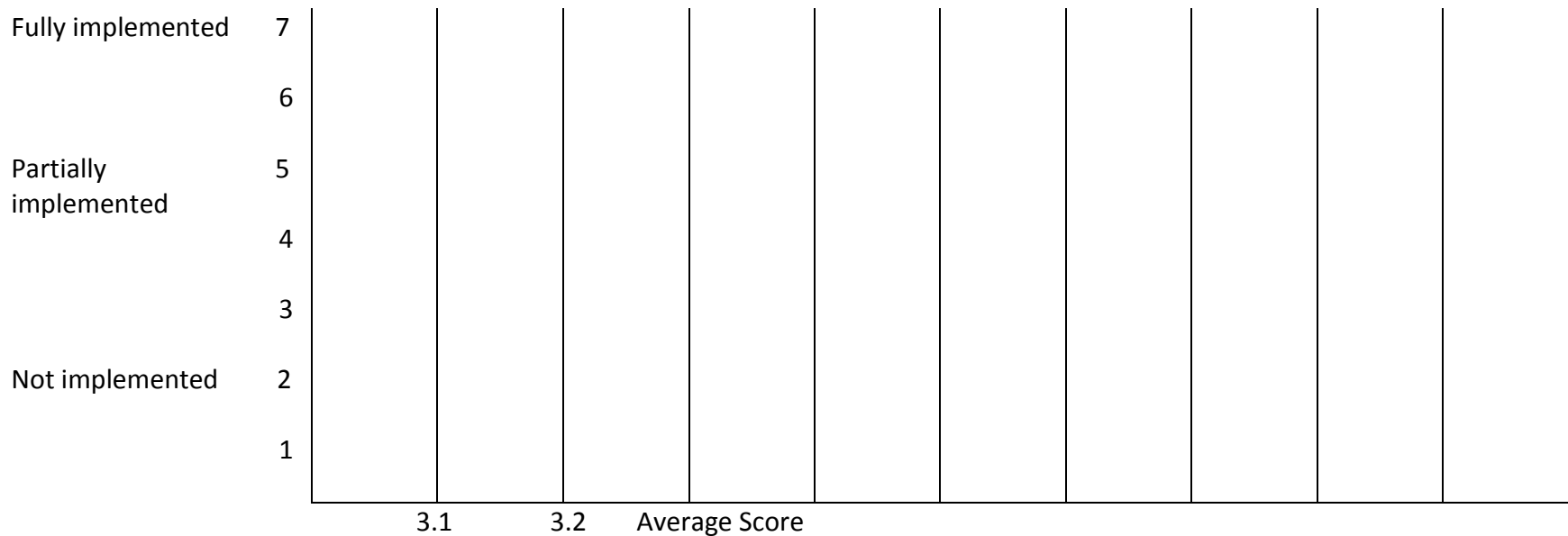
Complete the following table and calculate the percentage as instructed. This same form may be used over a period of three years:

Date/year:	Indicate the obtained rating score for the following guidelines:								Total of all scores:
	3.1	3.2							

Divide the total of all scores by 2 to obtain the average overall score for this key characteristic:

(Total of all scores)/2 = ____ [This is the average score]

Complete a line graph for each year (use a different color for each different year):



KEY CHARACTERISTIC 3: PROFILE FOR PLAY AND EXPLORATION

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Possible priorities:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 4: PROFILE FOR CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

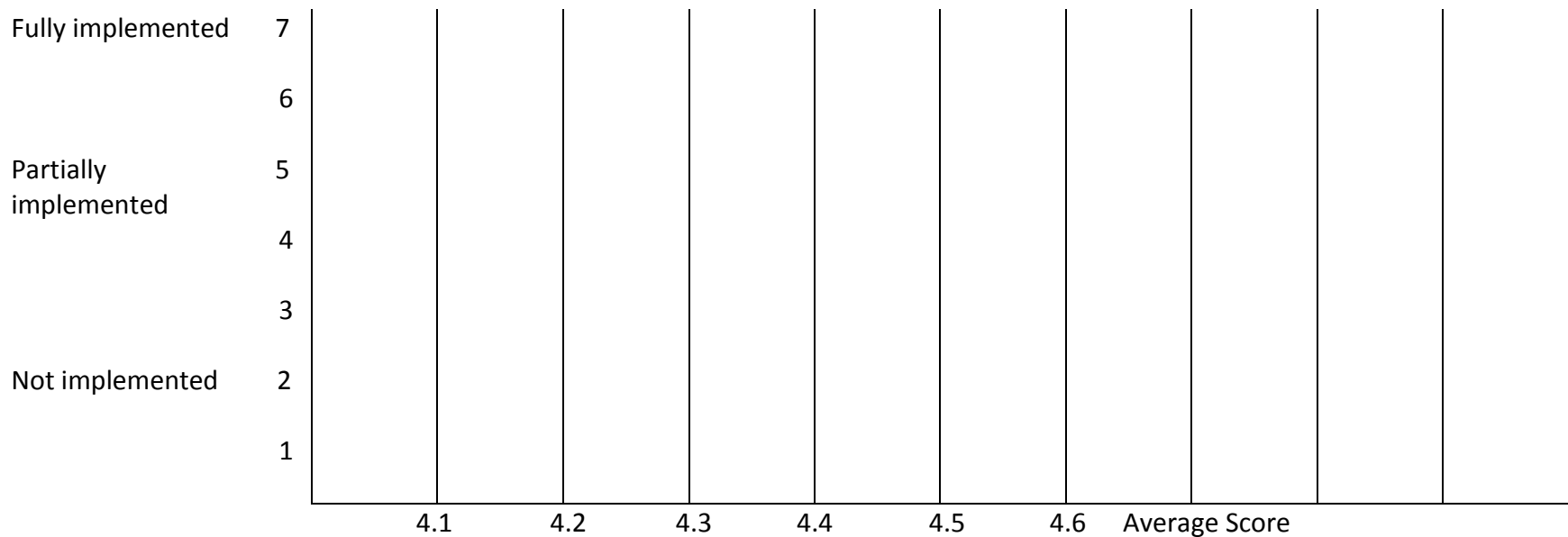
Complete the following table and calculate the percentage as instructed. This same form may be used over a period of three years:

Date/year:	Indicate the obtained rating score for the following guidelines:								Total of all scores:
	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6			

Divide the total of all scores by 6 to obtain the average overall score for this key characteristic:

(Total of all scores)/6 = ____ [This is the average score]

Complete a line graph for each year (use a different color for each different year):



KEY CHARACTERISTIC 4: PROFILE FOR CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Possible priorities:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 5: PROFILE FOR PLACE AND SPACES

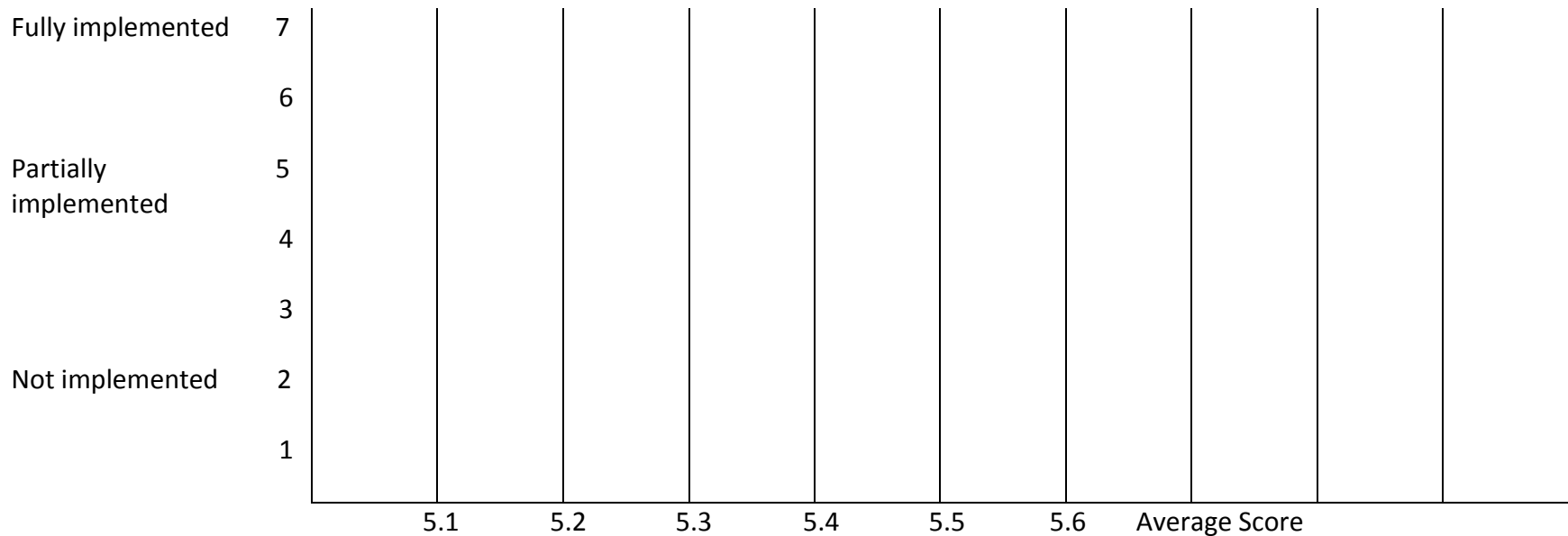
Complete the following table and calculate the percentage as instructed. This same form may be used over a period of three years:

Date/year:	Indicate the obtained rating score for the following guidelines:								Total of all scores:
	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6			

Divide the total of all scores by 6 to obtain the average overall score for this key characteristic:

(Total of all scores)/6 = ____ [This is the average score]

Complete the line graph for each year (use a different color for each different year):



KEY CHARACTERISTIC 5: PROFILE FOR PLACES AND SPACES

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Possible priorities:

KEY CHARACTERISTIC 6: PROFILE FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION

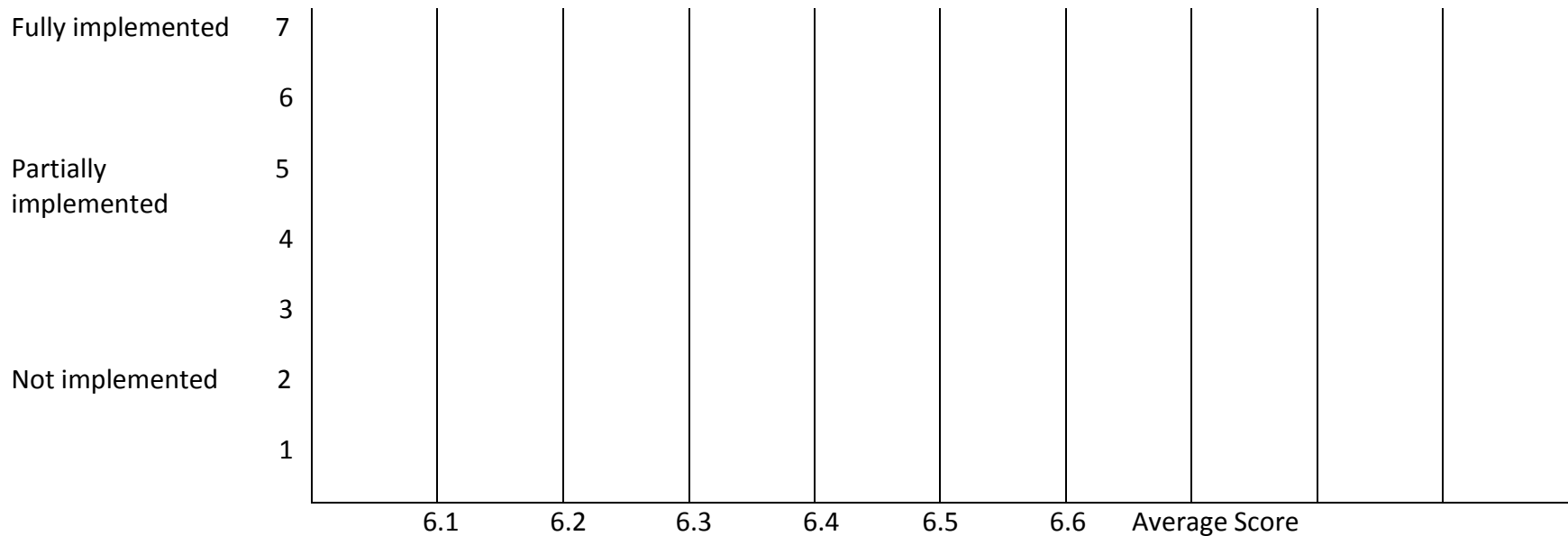
Complete the following table and calculate the percentage as instructed. This same form may be used over a period of three years:

Date/year:	Indicate the obtained rating score for the following guidelines:								Total of all scores:
	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6			

Divide the total of all scores by 6 to obtain the average overall score for this key characteristic:

(Total of all scores)/6 = ____ [This is the average score]

Complete a line graph for each year (use a different color for each different year):



KEY CHARACTERISTIC 6: PROFILE FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Possible priorities:

Appendix C
Suggested Action Plan Format

Program name:

Today's date:

Team members:

Priority area:

Our team's action plan will result in _____

Action steps:	Persons responsible:	Resources and supports needed:	Timeline for achieving step:	Documentation that will be needed:

Appendix D

List of Multidisciplinary Researchers
List of Subject Matter Experts
List of Pilot Study Sites

References

- Fraenkel, J., & Wallen, N. (2009). How to design and evaluate research in education. New York, NY: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
- Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program. (2011). Retrieved March 30, 2011, from <http://www.specialquest.org>.
- Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2012). Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- The North American Association for Environmental Education. (2010). Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence. Washington, DC: Author.