

# 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial & Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs

For use by Associate, Baccalaureate and Graduate  
Degree Programs

NAEYC / National Association for the Education of Young Children

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## INTRODUCTION: THE PURPOSE AND USE OF THE NAEYC PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION STANDARDS

### *STANDARDS AS A VISION OF EXCELLENCE*

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*With good reason, many educators have become wary of standards. At times, standards have constricted learning and have encouraged a one-size-fits-all mentality. But standards can also be visionary and empowering, for children and professionals alike. NAEYC hopes its standards for professional preparation can provide something more valuable than a list of rules for programs to follow.*

*[The] brief standards statements in this document offer a shared vision of early childhood professional preparation. But to make the vision real, the details must be constructed uniquely and personally, within particular communities of learners. Good early childhood settings may look very different from one another. In the same way, good professional preparation programs may find many pathways to help candidates meet high standards, so that they can effectively support young children and their families.*

-Hyson, 2003, p. 28

Research shows that when early childhood professionals have specialized training and education, children benefit. These standards describe what early childhood professionals are expected to know and do, defining essential learning outcomes in professional preparation programs and presenting a shared vision of excellence.

These standards offer practitioners a framework for applying new knowledge to critical issues. They support important *early learning* goals across settings serving children from birth through age 8. They support critical *early childhood policy* structures including professional credentialing, accreditation of professional preparation programs, state approval of teacher education programs, and state early childhood professional development systems. They apply across degree levels, varying in depth and breadth.

### **Unifying themes for the field across preparation levels, roles and settings**

These standards express a national vision of excellence for early childhood professionals. They are deliberately written as statements of core knowledge, understanding and methods used across multiple settings and in multiple professional roles. The key elements of each standard progress from a theoretical knowledge base, to more complex understanding, and then to the application of knowledge in professional practice. The standards are the same across degree levels. The key elements of Initial Standards describe expectations for beginning early childhood teachers. The key elements of Advanced Standards describe expectations for advanced roles in the early childhood profession: including accomplished or mentor teacher, program administrator, teacher educator, researcher and policy maker. Initial standards for beginning early childhood teachers are designed to be comparable to INTASC, while the Advanced standards for accomplished teachers are designed to be comparable to NBPTS.

*These 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs* continue to promote the unifying themes that define the early childhood profession.

These standards are designed for the early childhood education profession as a whole, to be relevant across a range of roles and settings. These core NAEYC standards are used across degree levels, from associate to baccalaureate to graduate programs. They are used in higher education accreditation systems, in state policy development, and by professional development programs both inside and outside institutions of higher education.

These core standards can provide a solid, commonly held foundation of unifying themes from which diverse programs may arise, incorporating the wisdom of local communities, families, and practitioners. These unifying themes include

- Shared professional values including a commitment to diversity and inclusion; respect for family, community and cultural contexts; respect for evidence as a guide to professional decisions; and reliance on guiding principles of child development and learning.
- Inclusion of the broad range of ages and settings encompassed in early childhood professional preparation. NAEYC defines early childhood as the years from birth through age 8. These standards are meant to support professional preparation across diverse work settings including infants and toddlers, primary grades, family child care, early intervention, government and private agencies, higher education institutions, and organizations that advocate on behalf of young children and their families.
- A shared set of outcomes for early childhood professional preparation. These core standards outline a set of common expectations for professional knowledge, skills and dispositions in six core areas. They express what tomorrow's early childhood professionals should know and be able to do.
- A multidisciplinary approach with an emphasis on assessment of outcomes and balanced attention to knowledge, skills and dispositions.

Over time, NAEYC has organized and published these standards in a variety of ways. In the 1980s they were organized into two position statements, one for associate degree programs and the other for four- and five-year degree programs. In 1991 one document outlined standards for basic and advanced degree programs. In 1999-2003 three documents outlined standards for associate, initial licensure, and advanced degree programs.

In this revision, the six core standards and field experience expectations were first developed as a 2009 NAEYC position statement that emphasizes the unifying essentials of professional preparation for careers in early childhood education, regardless of role, setting or degree level.

### **Use in NAEYC Recognition and Accreditation of Higher Education Programs**

Many higher education institutions choose to seek accreditation from the NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation or NAEYC recognition of baccalaureate and graduate programs as part of National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation for programs leading to initial or advanced teacher licensure. Both accreditation processes use the six core candidate performance standards presented here.

In the NCATE accreditation process, both baccalaureate and graduate level programs use the six core standards, with additional expectations for Advanced programs. In the NAEYC Commission accreditation process, associate degree programs use the six core standards presented here. NAEYC accredited associate degree programs are expected to be of high enough quality to transfer into NAEYC recognized baccalaureate degree programs, although there is great variation in the depth and breadth of both associate and baccalaureate early childhood programs across states.

**Six core standards** describe expected candidate performance. Meeting these standards requires evidence that programs 1) offer learning opportunities aligned with the key elements of the standards, 2) design key assessments that measure candidates' performance on key elements of the standards, 3) collect and aggregate data on candidate performance related to the standards, and 4) use that data in intentional, responsive ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the program. These core standards are used across both NCATE and NAEYC accreditation systems and across associate, baccalaureate and graduate degree levels.

The **Initial** Standards are used in programs preparing candidates for first-time early childhood licensure and for positions in early learning settings that do not currently require licensure. Notice that Initial programs may be offered at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation uses these core standards to review associate degree programs, along with a set of five Supportive Skills that are integrated into candidate assessments.

The **Advanced** Standards are used in graduate programs preparing candidates for leadership roles in the field as accomplished teachers, administrators, state early childhood specialists, child and family advocates, professional development specialists, teacher educators, and researchers. In some of the core standards, key elements are expanded at the Advanced level. Examples of expanded depth and breadth for different advanced specializations are included in the Supporting Explanation for each Advanced Standard.

**Field experience expectations** expressed in the 2009 NAEYC *Position Statement on Standards for Programs to Prepare Early Childhood Professionals* are written here in the form of a new Initial and Advanced Standard 7 and aligned with the language of NCATE Unit Standard 3. In the NAEYC Associate Degree Standards affirmed by the Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation, the field experience expectations are written as accreditation Eligibility Requirement 3 and as Program Context Criterion 5.

**Rubrics** used by NAEYC program reviewers are included here for each NAEYC Standard and indicate differences in expectations of Initial and Advanced programs.

## ***DEFINING PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION***

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NAEYC continues to use the child development research and evidence base to define the early childhood period as spanning the years from birth through age 8. As in past editions of its standards, NAEYC recognizes that within that range, early childhood professionals—and the programs that prepare them—may choose to specialize in a specific early childhood age group (infants/toddlers, preschool/pre-kindergarten, or early primary grades). While specialization is supported, all programs should prepare graduates for a lifelong career with options in more than one setting and age group. These standards require that programs provide content across the early childhood developmental period and assign field experiences in at least two age groups and at least two early education settings.

### **Multiple professional roles and pathways**

Specialization can be valuable, but NAEYC believes that all early childhood professionals should have a broad knowledge of development and learning across the birth–age 8 range; that they should be familiar with appropriate curriculum and assessment approaches across that age span; and that they should have in-depth knowledge and skills in at least two of the three sub-periods

listed above. The reason is clear: Without knowing about the *past* and the *future* (the precursors to children’s current development and learning, and the trajectory they will follow in later years), teachers cannot design effective learning opportunities within their specific professional assignment.

In addition, today’s inclusive early childhood settings – those that include young children with developmental delays and disabilities as well as gifted children – require knowledge of an even wider range of development and learning than was needed in many classrooms of the past. Without understanding a variety of professional setting and roles, as well as current and historical issues and trends that shape those settings and roles, individual careers and leadership opportunities in the field will be limited.

Many early childhood candidates enter college with a limited view of professional options. While all early childhood professionals should be well-grounded in best practice in direct care and education, Initial early childhood degree programs might also prepare candidates for work the following roles and settings:

*Early childhood educator roles* such as early childhood classroom teacher, family child care provider, Head Start teacher, or paraprofessional in the public schools;

*Home-family support roles* such as home visitor, family advocate, child protective services worker, or parent educator; or

*Professional support roles* such as early childhood administrator in a child care or Head Start program, staff trainer, peer/program mentor, or advocate at the community, state, or national level.

### **Core values in professional preparation**

NAEYC’s core standards for professional preparation are derived from the developmental and educational research base found in the resources at the end of this document and in related position statements including *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*; *Early Learning Standards*; *Early Childhood Mathematics*; *Learning to Read and Write*; *Screening and Assessment of Young English-Language Learners*; *Promoting Positive Outcomes for Children with Disabilities*; *Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity*; *Still Unacceptable Trends in Kindergarten Entry and Placement*; and *Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation* – among others. (<http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements> )

In addition to the common research base and common emphasis on the centrality of field experiences, these NAEYC standards for associate degree programs, initial licensure and advanced programs share a core set of values that cannot be easily quantified but are critically important. These affirm the value of, for example, play in children’s lives; reciprocal relationships with families; child development knowledge as a foundation for professional practice; practices and curricula that are respectful and responsive to the child’s home culture; unique issues in professional ethics and advocacy; and in-depth field experiences in and beyond traditional school settings.

### **To be an excellent teacher: Professional preparation as meaning making**

Young children benefit from well-planned, intentionally implemented, culturally relevant curriculum that both supports and challenges them. Research indicates the kinds of experiences that are essential to building later competence in such critical areas as language and literacy, mathematics and other academic disciplines, as well as in social skills, emotional understanding and self-regulation. The knowledge base also emphasizes the need for close relationships

between young children and adults and between teachers and children's families. Such relationships, and the secure base that they create, are investments in children's later social, emotional, and academic competence.

Just as curriculum for young children is more than a list of skills to be mastered, professional preparation for early childhood teachers is more than a list of competencies to be assessed or a course list to complete. Early childhood candidates in well-designed programs develop professional knowledge, skills and dispositions in a community of learners, making sense of readings, observations, field experiences, and group projects through their interactions with others. They make connections between life experiences and new learning. They apply foundational concepts from general education coursework to early childhood practice. They learn to self-assess and to advocate for themselves as students and as professionals. They strengthen skills in written and verbal communication, learn to identify and use professional resources, and make connections between these "college skills" and lifelong professional practice.

Just as children learn best from teachers who use responsive and intentional strategies, adult students learn from instructors who model NAEYC's guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice: create a caring community of learners, teach to enhance development and learning, plan curriculum aligned with important learning outcomes, assess candidate growth and development related to those outcomes, and build positive relationships with students and other stakeholders in the program. (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009, p. 16)

## ***RESPONDING TO CURRENT CHALLENGES, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES***

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### **Diversity, inclusion and inequity**

Every sector of the early childhood education community, including professional preparation programs, faces new challenges. Among them is the increased *diversity* of children and families in early childhood programs, from infant/toddler child care through the primary grades. That increased diversity is seen in the greater numbers of children from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, as well as in the growing numbers of children with disabilities, children whose development indicates advanced or gifted needs, and other special learning needs who are served in early childhood programs. A related challenge is the need to grow a more diverse teaching workforce and a more diverse leadership for the profession as a whole.

Another current challenge is the need to address the *inequities* and gaps in early learning that increase over time, developing into persistent achievement gaps in subgroups of American school children. Differences in academic achievement among ethnic groups, explained largely by socioeconomic differences, is central to the current standards/accountability movement in education. From infancy through the early primary grades – and again as instructors of adults in early childhood preparation programs – early childhood professionals must "apply new knowledge to critical issues" facing the field in order to implement developmentally appropriate practices. (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009)

One strategy to address these learning gaps and support children is the growth of publicly funded pre-kindergarten programs. Along with this strategy has come a new focus on preK-3 curriculum alignment; more high quality and more specialized professional development for early childhood teachers; partnerships between states, universities, community colleges, quality rating systems and schools; and more highly qualified teachers in pre-kindergarten and early primary grades – teachers who have completed higher education degree programs with specialized early childhood preparation. (Haynes, 2009; Bueno, Darling-Hammond & Gonzales, 2010)

A 2006 study of baccalaureate early childhood programs looked for the presence of 11 categories of child and family diversity in program websites, course descriptions and syllabi. The authors found that most programs included very limited number of semester hours (approximately 8.7) explicitly dedicated to diversity. Categories of diversity that were most often referred to included special needs, culture, diversity, language and learner characteristics. Diversity categories least often referred to included minorities, immigration status, race and social class. There was no significant difference between programs in NCATE and non-NCATE accredited institutions. The authors recommend that early childhood programs “convey an unambiguous message to future teachers [and strengthen teacher knowledge and practice for education of] children who have special needs, children of color, children who are low-income, and second language/dialect speakers.” (Ray, Bowman & Robbins, 2006)

### **Preparation across the birth-through-age 8 age range**

Professional preparation programs must make difficult decisions as they work with limited resources to design curriculum, field experiences, and assessment systems to prepare for work across *the early childhood age range*. Teacher licensure complicates the picture, since states’ definitions of the early childhood age span and its subdivisions vary greatly and are changed frequently. Even programs that emphasize the upper end of the age range may not adequately prepare candidates in the critical content or subject matter areas needed to build children’s academic success. Literacy is only one example: National reports (e.g., National Institute of Child Health and Human Development 2000) repeatedly fault teacher education for failing to provide candidates with research-based knowledge about reading and in-depth practical experience. An equally important concern is the tendency for teacher education programs to give inadequate attention to children’s critical early years, especially the birth–age 3 period. Teachers who take positions in infant-toddler care but whose preparation has slighted that period may fail to support children’s learning and development because the curriculum and teaching strategies they were taught to use are more effective with older children.

Programs also make difficult decisions related to *inclusion, diversity and inequities in adult education and in the early childhood field*. Calls for greater formal education have not been matched by public investments in salaries and working conditions for early childhood staff, especially in the community child care programs that serve the vast majority of children under age 5.

Across all degree levels, NAEYC cautions programs against the superficial “mile wide and inch deep” model of professional preparation. Looking at the standards in this document, program faculty will be challenged to weigh breadth versus depth (standard by standard and element by element) within the context of their own program, candidate needs (including the need to acquire concepts and skills in general education), and the realities of a degree completion time frame. Every degree program that specializes in early childhood education has a responsibility to address all of the standards, each in its own way and with its own best decisions on breadth and depth. Like houses that start out with the same foundation and framework but look entirely different as rooms are added, combined, altered, and personalized, each professional preparation program may implement these standards in distinctive ways — as long as what is implemented is of uniformly high quality.

### **Faculty development**

Strong professional preparation programs ensure that faculty members demonstrate the qualifications and characteristics needed to promote candidates’ learning in relation to the NAEYC standards. Both full- and part-time faculty should have the academic and practical expertise to guide candidates toward mastery of the competencies reflected in NAEYC standards.

In many programs, current faculty are aging and do not reflect the ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of children or of adult college students served.

In 2008, NAEYC and the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) convened a meeting to develop recommendations that would advance the field of early childhood, focused especially on improving outcomes for young children, especially those living in the most vulnerable circumstances. Final recommendations included, “Create and evaluate a sustainable system of faculty professional development that incorporates adult learning principals and evidence-based practices for improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children” and “Convene teacher preparation associations (e.g., AACTE) to brainstorm strategies that will increase the total number of future teacher educators, faculty, and researchers, especially from ethnically diverse backgrounds.” (NAEYC & SRCD, 2008, p. 593)

While strong programs put together a team of full and part time faculty members who each make an individual contribution, programs will be best prepared to meet the NAEYC standards when:

- All faculty are academically qualified for their specific professional roles, have had direct, substantial, professional experience, and continue to enhance their expertise in the early childhood profession.
- Faculty hold graduate degrees in early childhood education / child development or substantive early childhood coursework at a graduate level and have demonstrated competence in each field of specialization that they teach, e.g. early literacy, reading, and language arts.
- Faculty members know about and implement the principles in NAEYC’s Code of Ethical Conduct, including its Supplement for Teacher Educators.
- The program uses a variety of strategies to recruit, hire, mentor, and retain a diverse faculty.

### **Diversity in the teaching workforce and the growing role of community colleges in teacher education**

The early childhood field is increasingly committed to identifying and supporting a more diverse group of talented leaders. High-quality community college degree programs offer a promising route toward closing that gap. These programs play a critical role in providing access to higher education – and to the positions that require such education – for many groups, especially those currently underrepresented in professional leadership roles.

Cost, location, scheduling, or candidates’ previous educational experiences can impede access to postsecondary education. Community colleges have the explicit mission of increasing access to higher education programs. Consequently, most community colleges offer courses in English as a second language and developmental courses in reading, writing, and mathematics for adult students who need that additional support.

Almost half of all higher education students in the United States – including 43% of African American and the majority of Native American and Hispanic undergraduates - are enrolled in community colleges. Two-thirds of community college students attend part-time. More than 80 percent of community college students work either full- or part-time, and 39% are the first in their families to attend college. (AACC 2008, 2009)

As part of their effort to be responsive to adult students’ varied needs, community colleges offer a variety of educational or degree options. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) recommends the following terminology: The Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree generally

emphasizes the arts, humanities, and social sciences; typically, three quarters of the work required is general education course work. The Associate of Sciences (A.S.) degree generally requires one half general education course work, with substantial mathematics and science. The Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree prepares the candidate for direct employment, with one third of the course work in general education. While many A.A.S. degree candidates do not intend to transfer, these degrees are not intended to create barriers to transfer. “The [A.A.S.] degree programs must be designed to recognize this dual possibility and to encourage students to recognize the long-term career possibilities that continued academic study will create” (AACC, 1998).

According to estimates from Early and Winton’s (2001) national sample, more than 700 institutions of higher education offer associate degree programs in early childhood education. The majority of these are in community colleges. Many of the students enrolled in those programs represent cultural and linguistic minorities; as in the general community college population, early childhood candidates in two-year programs are proportionately more diverse than in four-year programs.

Increasing numbers of candidates entering early childhood associate degree programs have been working – most in child care or Head Start programs (Early & Winton 2001). Many of those candidates continue to work while attending college part-time. These adult students are taking the lead in their own education, developing long-term career goals as they improve the quality of their current work with young children and families.

The career goals of candidates in these programs vary. For some, the degree may enhance their current position, build on a prior Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, and perhaps lead to greater responsibilities in the setting where they work. Although these work settings vary widely, Early and Winton’s (2001) data suggest that proportionately more associate degree candidates work, or plan to work, with infants and toddlers than do candidates in four-year programs, and that many have been working in family child care or child care administrative positions.

Current efforts to increase the percentages of child care, Head Start, preschool, and prekindergarten teachers who hold associate and baccalaureate degrees mean that all early childhood preparation programs need to be responsive to candidates who enter degree programs with years of work experience in the field and need to complete programs while maintaining current jobs.

### **Transfer and articulation: meeting immediate needs while keeping doors open**

Most early childhood associate degree programs prepare candidates for direct entry into positions that do not require baccalaureate degrees or early childhood teacher certification. However, many of these students are planning to transfer into a baccalaureate program, heading either toward teacher certification or toward other roles in the early childhood field. A strong general education foundation together with substantial development of early childhood professional knowledge and skills is often the combination these candidates seek during their first years of professional preparation.

Still other students enter an associate degree program with a relatively limited set of objectives (e.g., to take one course that meets a child care licensing requirement or to receive college credit for work toward the CDA) but find unexpected pleasure and challenge in higher education. With support, such students often continue through the associate degree toward a baccalaureate degree and beyond. With time and support, they may succeed in developmental reading, writing, and mathematics courses and develop confidence, skills, and career goals. Early tracking of



associate degree candidates into non-transfer programs can perpetuate the idea that little education is needed to teach our youngest children. In addition, premature tracking may create unnecessary barriers to candidates' future options – a serious concern given the higher proportions of students of color in community college programs. Tracking these candidates into non-transfer programs deprives the field of opportunities for these students to become part of a more diverse leadership.

The strongest associate and baccalaureate degree programs serving candidates already in the field are attempting to keep transfer doors open through high-quality professional course work offered early in the program, concurrently with early field experiences and strong general education. NAEYC encourages faculty to collaborate across degree programs and across institutions to design programs that simultaneously enhance one's current practice while maintaining transfer options – from associate to baccalaureate to graduate degree programs. Many early childhood preparation programs are offering distance learning, noncredit training aligned with credit course work, nontraditional course schedules and locations, and specialized courses that support particular settings and roles such as center director, family child care provider, or infant-toddler teacher.

### **Institutional and policy supports**

Two recent surveys indicate some of the challenges facing early childhood degree programs as they strive to deliver high quality birth-8 preparation. A 2006 study found only one-third (266) of accredited early childhood baccalaureate degree programs were designed as four-year programs, were housed in regionally accredited institutions of higher education, and offered both preschool and K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade preparation. The study examined explicit and embedded preparation for diverse, multicultural or inclusive classrooms and recommends a more comprehensive developmental theory and pedagogy, “transformation” of faculty, and attention to developing new leaders. The capacity of institutions and faculty to undertake these deep quality improvements is unclear, as are the market constraints posed by competition from alternative certification programs – and from teacher specializations that are in more demand in the job market. (Ray, Bowman & Robbins, 2006)

Hyson et al (2009) surveyed 231 of an estimated 1,200 higher education institutions that offer a degree in early childhood education. A majority of programs at all degree levels (72-77%) relied heavily on NAEYC standards to guide program quality and improvement work. Most frequently, improvement efforts were focused on developing new candidate assessments, improving field experiences and redesigning coursework. Across degree levels, programs were focused on improvements related to preparation for linguistic and cultural diversity and to appropriate assessment of young children. The study makes a number of recommendations including: 1) invest in more full time faculty with early childhood backgrounds, 2) expand faculty knowledge about research and evidence-based practices, 3) promote and support accreditation for higher education programs, and 4) strengthen connections between associate, baccalaureate and graduate programs.

The *NAEYC Public Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems* offers guiding principles for states as they develop policy related to professional standards, career pathways, articulation, advisory structures, data and financing. These guiding principles promote stronger integration across early childhood systems (teacher licensing, Head Start, pre-kindergarten, child care); quality improvement beyond minimum requirements; attention to diversity, inclusion and access issues; and building in compensation parity with rising qualifications. (LeMoine, 2008)

High-quality early childhood programs develop intentional responses to these current challenges. While a number of programs are engaged in quality improvements and innovative initiatives, there is a pressing need for faculty *leadership* – from both current and new faculty - as well as for *institutional and policy supports* for efforts to improve early childhood professional preparation and access to that preparation for a *diverse population of teacher candidates*. (e.g. Bowman, 2000; Zaslow, 2005; Chang, 2006; Washington, 2008; Lutton, 2009)

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE NAEYC STANDARDS

### *NAEYC'S DEVELOPMENT AND REVISION PROCESS*

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#### **NAEYC Position Statements**

NAEYC's 2009 Position Statement *Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Preparation Programs* represents a sustained vision for the early childhood field and more specifically, for the programs that prepare the professionals who work in the field. It is responsive to new knowledge, research and conditions, while holding true to core values and principles of founders of the profession. It is designed to be used in a variety of ways by different sectors of the field while also designed to support specific and critical policy structures including state and national early childhood teacher credentialing, national accreditation of professional early childhood preparation programs, state approval of early childhood teacher education programs, and articulation agreements between various levels and types of professional development programs.

This 2010 revision of the NCATE Initial and Advanced program standards is an expression of the 2009 NAEYC position statement, reorganized and expanded to support NCATE's SASB guidelines. All NAEYC position statements are published on our website <http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements>

#### **History**

NAEYC has a long-standing commitment to the development and support of strong early childhood degree programs in institutions of higher education. NAEYC standard setting for degree programs in institutions of higher education began more than twenty-five years ago. This document is the third revision to NAEYC's *Early Childhood Teacher Education Guidelines for Four- and Five-Year Programs* (1982) and *Guidelines for Early Childhood Education Programs in Associate Degree Granting Institutions* (1985).

Development and publication of those first standards documents was made possible through the contributions of family and friends of Rose H. Alschuler, a founding member and first Secretary-Treasurer of NAEYC from 1929-1931. During the 1920s, Ms. Alschuler was an early proponent and director of the first public nursery schools in the United States. During the 1930's she directed Works Progress Administration (WPA) public nursery schools in Chicago. During World War II she chaired the National Commission for Young Children. Her life and legacy continue today as our field continues its work to improve both programs for young children and programs that prepare early childhood professionals.

## The Revisions process

The 1985 guidelines were revised in 1996, in 2001-2003, and again with this revision in 2009. Each of these sets of guidelines and standards was developed with input from hundreds of early childhood professionals who participated in conference sessions, advisory committees, and workgroups. While these are position statements of NAEYC, each was developed with invited input from colleagues in related professional associations, including ACCESS – early childhood educators in associate degree granting institutions, the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE), the Council for Exceptional Children Division of Early Childhood (CEC/DEC), and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

**Input from the field** into the 2007-09 standards revision process was gathered during facilitated sessions at the 2007 NAEYC Annual Conference, the 2008 NAEYC Public Policy Forum, and the 2008 NAEYC Institute for Professional Development. In fall 2008 the draft revisions were announced in NAEYC’s journal *Young Children* and posted on the NAEYC website for public comment. The draft was also distributed to a number of individual and organizational stakeholders for feedback.

In January 2008 NAEYC’s Governing Board appointed a **working group to advise staff** on the preparation of a revision of the current *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs*. This workgroup was composed of early childhood faculty members from associate, baccalaureate and graduate degree programs; representatives of NAEYC, ACCESS (an association of early childhood faculty in associate degree-granting institutions) and the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE); and faculty who currently use the standards in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation systems.

Final revisions to the core standards were completed in spring 2009. NAEYC’s Governing Board approved the position statement *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs* in July 2009. That NAEYC position statement guides the development of these Initial and Advanced Standards.

The position statement of core standards and supporting explanations was voluntarily submitted to the SASB for review in October 2009. SASB feedback recommended listing content areas in Standard 5, more explicit mention of technology in key elements of the standards and organizing the NAEYC Standards under the four new SASB Principles. These refinements were developed through input from sessions at 2009 NAEYC conferences, the NAEYC Standards Workgroup, and the NAEYC-NCATE audit team. Like all NAEYC position statements, the standards for early childhood professional preparation are “living documents” that are regularly updated and revised.

## Potential overlap with other SPA standards

NAEYC’s early childhood standards have potential overlap with other generalist standards including ACEI, CEC and NAGC. NAEYC Standards may also overlap with the standards of specific academic disciplines.

NAEYC defines early childhood using the developmental knowledge base that identifies the years from birth through age 8 as a unique period in the human lifespan, with implications for the teachers of young children. This developmental period overlaps with the early primary grades included in ACEI’s Elementary Standards and with CEC’s Division of Early Childhood standards. NAEYC developed its standards for professionals working with children in the early childhood developmental period, across various early educational settings serving children from

birth through age 8. These settings can include early intervention programs, child care, Head Start, preschool, prekindergarten, and primary grades.

NAEYC and CEC encourage the development of “blended programs” – Initial programs that blend early childhood and special education licensure. These programs must meet both sets of SPA standards in order to earn recognition as a blended program. NAEYC and CEC accept one blended program report, assign a blended review team, and collaborate to write blended recognition reports.

Because NAEYC’s standards are generalist standards that cross academic disciplines, they may overlap with the standards of those disciplines such as language and literacy, math, science, social studies, visual arts, music, movement, dance and physical education. NAEYC turns to these specialists in developing the knowledge base for the standards. In some cases, NAEYC has developed joint position statements with these specialists that describe how these academic content areas can best be taught and learned in the early childhood years. Examples include “*Early Childhood Mathematics: Promoting Good Beginnings*” a joint position of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and NAEYC and “*Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*” a joint position statement of the International Reading Association and NAEYC that is also endorsed by the following SPAs: Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), Division for Early Childhood/Council for Exceptional Children (DEC/CEC), Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

Institutions that prepare candidates for early grades should consider carefully whether programs should submit reports to NAEYC or ACEI. That consideration should include the focus age range for which candidates are being prepared; the state context, especially state teacher certification categories; the institution and program philosophy and mission; and the extent to which the program intends to meet the selected specialty area standards. In states with dual early childhood and elementary licensure, programs may choose to submit to both NAEYC and ACEI.

### **WHAT IS DIFFERENT IN THE 2010 NAEYC INITIAL AND ADVANCED STANDARDS**

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Revisions to NAEYC’s Initial standards (2001), Advanced standards (2002) and Associate standards (2003) made major shifts in terminology and format. Standards were worded more strongly in performance-based language. Key elements and supporting explanations were written for each standard. Rubrics were developed that described expectations from programs. Extensive references and resources provided the evidence base for each standard.

All of the input and perspectives solicited during the revision process indicated that the 2001 - 2003 NAEYC standards remain strong. 2010 revisions are primarily organizational and reflect input from those who are actively implementing the standards in the field. They are summarized here.

#### **A strengthened emphasis on academic content, diversity, inclusion, technology and early childhood focus**

1) 2002 Standard 4 has been separated into two standards, one focused on early childhood methods and the other on early childhood content. This increases the total number of standards from five to six. The separation ensures that both pedagogy and content receive focused attention in program reports and in SPA reviews. Content areas previously listed only in the Supporting Explanation are now listed in 2010 Standard 5 Key Element a.

2) The language *all children* is revised to either *each child* or *every child*, to strengthen the integration of inclusion and diversity that is a thread across all standards. In some cases, the phrase each child has been added to a key element of a standard. This revision clarifies the intent that early childhood teachers should differentiate instruction to meet the needs of each child and that diversity and inclusion should be addressed in program reports across each standard. *Cultural competence* has been added or emphasized in the standards. *Family and child diversity* - including race, ethnicity, language, culture, social class, immigrant status, special needs, and learner characteristics - is explicitly listed as one of the multiple influences on children's development and learning.

3) The thoughtful use of technology is more explicitly integrated into the standards and highlighted in the supporting explanations of each standard. It is recognized as one of the multiple influences on young children's development and learning in the Supporting explanation for Standard 1 Child Development. Using conferencing technology is one of the ways to engage families in reciprocal relationships described in the Supporting explanation for Standard 2. Technology has been explicitly integrated into the key elements of Standard 3 Assessment adding the language, "including the use of technology in documentation, assessment and data collection" to 3c and "including the use of assistive technology for children with disabilities" to 3d. The language, "including appropriate uses of classroom technology" has been added to 4b. Finally, the language, "using technology effectively with children, with peers, and as a professional resource" was added to 6c. It was already present in the Supporting explanation.

4) The language of the NAEYC standards and key elements as submitted here puts a stronger emphasis on the expectation that programs are preparing candidates for specialized work with young children, in the early childhood period of development. The words *early, young, and birth through age 8* are added to some standards and key elements to make this expectation clear and to distinguish the potential overlap between NAEYC early childhood and ACEI elementary standards.

### **Alignment with the 2009 SASB Principles**

The following revisions were made to the NAEYC Standards in order to make the alignment between NAEYC Standards and SASB Principles more explicit.

1. The standards were explicitly aligned with the 2009 the SASB Principles. The 2003 alignment matrix indicating NAEYC alignment with NBPTS Core Propositions and INTASC Principles has been revised to develop the new matrix included here.
2. The use of assessment to improve teaching and learning was made more explicit in the NAEYC Standard on Assessment by adding the phrase "as part of the development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children" to Standard 3a. The phrase "to build effective learning environments" was added to 3d. This strengthens the alignment between NAEYC's standard on Assessment of children and environments and the SASB Principle on Learning Environments.
3. Academic content areas previously listed only in the Supporting Explanation are now listed in Standard 5 Key Element a, to bring them to the structural level that will prompt closer attention and evaluation in program reports and reviews.

### **Strengthened early childhood professional preparation across the full developmental age range, from birth through age 8**

1. While it is understood that programs may focus on one sub-group in the developmental period of early childhood, the standards promote a general knowledge base that is

inclusive of the full early childhood period. In some standards the words young, early, or birth through age 8 have been added to key elements. For example, the child development knowledge base for all early childhood professionals includes birth through age 8. NAEYC Standard 1a has been revised to be more explicit and now reads, “1a. Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs, *from birth through age 8.*”

2. The October 2009 submission included the request for a new standard for field and clinical experiences to ensure that candidates are prepared for more than a narrow band of the early childhood age range and have exposure to more than one early educational setting. This submission includes a request for a new standard for field and clinical experiences. The case for this new standard is below.

### **Reorganization of the 2002 Advanced “Essential Professional Tools”**

The 2002 revised Advanced Standards introduced a new set of “essential professional tools” for all advanced program candidates. These described expanded or higher level performance expectations for candidates in Advanced Programs and unique competencies for particular specializations, such as understanding of the legislative process for Early Childhood Public Policy and Advocacy Specialists.

In response to the 2009 SASB Guideline that limits SPAs to no more than seven standards and 28 elements, the nine Essential Professional Tools (EPT) have been woven into the following Advanced Standard Key Elements.

- EPT 1 Cultural competence -Advanced Standard 4c
- EPT 2 Knowledge and application of Ethical Principles - Advanced Standard 6b
- EPT 3 Communication Skills - a new element in Advanced Standard 6f
- EPT 4 Mastery of Relevant Theory and Research - Advanced Standard 6d
- EPT 5 Skills in Identifying and Using Professional Resources - Advanced Standard 6c
- EPT 6 Inquiry Skills and Knowledge of Research Methods - Advanced Standard 6c
- EPT 7 Skills in Collaborating, Teaching and Mentoring - Advanced Standards 3b, 2c, 6a
- EPT 8 Advocacy Skills - Advanced Standard 6e
- EPT 9 Leadership Skills - Advanced Standard 6a

### **Required field experiences in at least two age groups and at least two early educational settings**

**A new Initial and Advanced Programmatic Standard for Field Experiences** addresses current challenges and opportunities in the field. The new standard requires that early childhood teacher education programs prepare candidates for a career of work with young children from birth through age 8, in a variety of early education settings. The new standard requires field placements in

- At least two different early education settings (elementary/primary schools, child care centers and homes, Head Start agencies) *and*
- At least two different early childhood age groups (birth-3, 3-5, 5-8).

NAEYC believes that this programmatic standard is necessary to ensure that early childhood teachers and other professionals develop the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to promote learning in all young children.

*A key component of each of NAEYC's standards is hands-on field or clinical experiences, whether this is immersion in applied research for the doctoral candidate, systematic inquiry into their own classroom practices for the candidate already working in the field, or field observations for the adult student considering an early childhood career. At both Initial and Advanced levels, each NAEYC standard includes a key element focused on application or use of knowledge and skills related to the standard. These key elements are best learned, practiced and assessed in field experiences.*

*Each NAEYC standard expects candidates to develop knowledge, skills and dispositions in the key elements of the standard across the early childhood developmental age range, birth through age 8. Developmental research and theory has long been the foundation of early childhood education theory and practice. Field experiences should be well planned and sequenced to prepare candidates to understand the unique qualities of the early childhood developmental period and the trajectory of development and learning in infants, toddlers, preschoolers and the early grades.*

*The field of early education is in a period of growth and change with career options in multiple roles, multiple early education settings and age groups across the early childhood developmental age span. Current research and policy leaders hope to build a more integrated and aligned PreK-3 system for young children, for early childhood teacher preparation and for early childhood professional careers. Although the current early education system is fragmented, many of the teachers currently working in Head Start, preschool and child care settings are enrolled in early childhood baccalaureate degree programs in order to meet the requirements of the federal Head Start program, to meet the requirements of NAEYC accreditation for early learning programs for young children, or to increase their career options. Although state policies and professional credentials may focus on one age group or setting in a particular context, over the course of a career, an early childhood teacher may move from an infant toddler setting, to a third grade classroom, and then to a community Head Start or prekindergarten program. In the current context, a sequence of field experiences should ensure that graduates of baccalaureate programs in early childhood are qualified for a career with options across the entire early childhood age range and in multiple early education settings.*

The full standard, supporting explanation and rubrics are found in the Initial and Advanced Standards.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE STANDARDS

### *STUDYING THE STANDARDS*

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#### **Components of the standards**

The standards that follow include a number of interconnected components. Those components, and their organization, are outlined below:

### *The standards*

There are six core standards. Each standard describes in a few sentences what well-prepared teachers should know and be able to do. It is important to note, then, that the standard is not just that candidates know something “about” child development and learning – the expectations are more specific and complex than that.

A seventh programmatic standard describes requirements for early childhood field experience and clinical practice.

### *Key elements*

Three to six “key elements” within each standard clarify its most important features. These key elements break out components of each standard, highlighting what candidates should know, understand and be able to do. In the programmatic standard, the key elements describe the kinds of field experience and clinical practice that programs must provide.

### *Supporting explanations*

Each standard includes a rationale or “supporting explanation” which offers a general description of why that standard is important not just for all teacher education programs, but for early childhood professional preparation in particular.

### *Examples of opportunities to learn and practice and assessment of learning*

Final publication of the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs will include guidance for programs seeking ECADA and NCATE accreditation with examples of how early childhood preparation programs might help candidates learn and practice the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions within that aspect of that standard. Accreditation guidance materials will also include examples of ways that faculty might assess or document candidate growth and development at each level.

### **Terminology**

**Assessment** – In these standards the term “assessment” refers primarily to the methods through which early childhood professionals gain understanding of children’s development and learning. Systematic observations and other informal and formal assessments enable candidates to appreciate children’s unique qualities, to develop appropriate goals, and to plan, implement, and evaluate effective curriculum. (See Standard 3) Secondly, assessment here refers to the formal and informal assessments of adult students required for degree completion. In higher education accreditation systems these are referred to as “key assessments” and provide evidence that the degree program and its graduates meet the NAEYC standards.

**Candidates** – refers to college students who are candidates for completion in an early childhood professional preparation programs. In some cases, these students are also candidates for professional licensure or certification. Although NAEYC supports early childhood licensure for all teachers of young children, birth through age 8, early childhood licensure is not required in every state or in every early learning setting.

**Children** – is used throughout the standards rather than “students” to refer to the young children in early childhood classrooms, child care homes, and other early childhood settings. In this document, child/children refers to **young children** in the period of early childhood development, from birth through approximately age 8.



**Culture** - includes ethnicity, racial identity, economic class, family structure, language, and religious and political beliefs, which profoundly influence each child's development and relationship to the world.

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice** – refers to the NAEYC Position Statement first developed in 1985 and most recently revised in 2009. The term developmentally appropriate practice, or DAP for short, refers to a framework of principles and guidelines for practice that promotes young children's optimal learning and development. DAP is a way of framing a teacher's intentional decision making. It begins with three Core Considerations: 1) what is known about age-related characteristics of child development and learning, 2) what is known about the child as an individual, and 3) what is known about the social and cultural contexts in which the child lives. DAP is a way of framing “**differentiation**” for teachers of young children from birth through age 8.

**Field experiences and clinical practice** - includes field observations, field work, practica, student teaching and other “clinical” practice experiences such as home visiting. A planned sequence of these experiences supports candidate development of understanding, competence and dispositions in a specialized area of practice.

**Inclusion and diversity** – is not a separate standard, but is integrated into each standard. The phrase “each child” or “all children” is used to emphasize that every standard is meant to include all children: children with developmental delays or disabilities, children who are gifted and talented, children whose families are culturally and linguistically diverse, children from diverse socioeconomic groups, and other children with individual learning styles, strengths and needs. *Family and child diversity* includes race, ethnicity, language, culture, social class, immigrant status, special needs, and learner characteristics. These are highlighted in NAEYC's core considerations for making decisions about *Developmentally Appropriate Practice*.

For example, in Standard 1b “multiple influences” on development and learning includes family and child diversity. Standard 3 requires candidates to use assessment to develop appropriate goals and strategies and promote positive outcomes for each child, and to know about effective assessment partnerships with families. In Standard 4 candidates are expected to develop a repertoire of teaching strategies appropriate for diverse children and to “promote positive outcomes for each child.” In Standard 5c diversity must be considered in the development of “meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child.” Finally in Standard 6, current issues related to inclusion and diversity are essential aspects of ethical conduct, collaborative learning to inform practice, reflective perspectives on early education, and informed advocacy for young children.

**Know, understand and use** – Key elements of each standard identify critical components of the standard emphasizing the importance of a sound knowledge base in the content of each standard and application of knowledge in teaching practice. “*Know*” refers to candidates' possession of key information; “*understand*” includes analysis and reflection; “*use*” refers to application in practice, always soundly based on professional knowledge.

**Technology** – is not a separate standard, but is woven throughout the standards. Early childhood teachers understand technology and media as important influences on children's development. They use technology as one way of communicating with families and sharing children's work, while recognizing the importance of using other communication methods for families with limited internet access. Similarly, they use technology in child assessment and as a professional resource with colleagues and for their own professional development.

**Young children** – refers to children in the developmental period known as early childhood. Although developmental periods do not rigidly correspond to chronological age, early childhood is generally defined as including all children from birth through age 8.

## *MEETING NAEYC STANDARDS*

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### **An evidence based program report**

Across degree levels and accreditation systems (NCATE and NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation), all programs demonstrate that they meet NAEYC standards through a program report that includes:

- A description of the state, institutional and professional context within which the program operates
- An organized system by which the program tracks candidate performance on each standard, across time, including positive effects on children
- A description of 6-8 key assessments that the program uses to document candidate performance in relation to the standards, with emphasis on multiple assessments in authentic contexts such as field experiences
- Summarized candidate performance data collected from these key assessments as evidence that program candidates' are competent in regard to the standard.
- Evidence that this information is used for continuous program improvement. For example, candidate performance data may indicate areas in which candidate's need more support, faculty members need more support, field experiences need refinement, or the expected level of candidate performance might be raised.

### **A focus on assessments and data**

NAEYC does not set any unique SPA requirements for assessments or data. Programs must meet the current NCATE expectations for number and type of assessments, for data collection, and for use of data to make meaningful improvements in teaching and learning.

NCATE requires that some assessments be identified as meeting the SPA "content" areas. NAEYC Standards include three content standards:

- Child Development (in the early childhood period of birth through age 8 years)
- Family and Community (systems and role in lives of young children)
- Content of the academic disciplines (as applied in early childhood education)

### **Preponderance of the evidence policy**

NAEYC supports the SASB policy that program review decisions be based on the preponderance of evidence at the standards level. The rubrics describe a holistic view of the standard and its key elements. There are multiple ways to interpret and apply the standards. Programs are encouraged to use the standards and their key elements as a framework for development and improvement. Learning opportunities and assessments should be aligned with the standards, but designed to support the program's unique mission, candidate characteristics, unit and institutional goals, and state context.

Every NAEYC standard must be met to earn NAEYC recognition.

## Understanding developmentally appropriate theory and practice

These Standards provide a general description of the unique nature of the early childhood period of child development, the unique theoretical foundations for understanding this period of development, application of early childhood knowledge to practice, and of the early childhood profession.

Early childhood teacher educators are expected to have academic backgrounds and experience in early childhood theory and practice, birth through age 8 years. They are expected to be familiar with current issues and research in early child development and early education. It is strongly suggested that all faculty be familiar with the NAEYC publication *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8* (2009) which contains a fully developed description of expectations for understanding, using and teaching critical early childhood theory and developmentally effective early childhood practice.

Three core considerations are central to teacher decision making in Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

1. What is known about child development and learning that permits general predictions about experiences likely to promote learning and development
2. What is known about each child as an individual that has implications for how best to adapt and be responsive to individual variation
3. What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which children live that teachers must strive to understand in order to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant and respectful for each child and family. (NAEYC, 2009, p. 10)

## Meeting Advanced standards

Advanced programs must offer learning experiences and assess early childhood knowledge and practice at advanced levels, exceeding the Initial standards. The Key elements of the Advanced standards and the Standards Rubrics in this document offer guidance on ways that advanced programs can provide specialized focus and can build upon candidate's prior early childhood study and experience.

## Innovation, risk and system development in early childhood education

There are many different approaches to early childhood professional preparation. While initial licensure preparation focuses on one (or variations on one) professional role—a teacher in a classroom or other group program for children birth through age 8—both associate and advanced programs are by design, both more specialized and more diverse. Except in a few cases, associate and advanced early childhood programs are not linked to state licensure, and thus may have latitude for more varied approaches to program design. As a result, these programs often have a greater opportunity for innovation and creativity.

The risk that goes along with this opportunity is that these programs can become a smorgasbord of courses without real coherence or depth. Associate programs may be designed simply as a collection of courses that will be accepted in transfer, but do not prepare candidates for work in the field or improve the practice of those already working in child care or Head Start. Advanced programs may offer a collection of interesting courses without preparing candidates for future professional leadership at either the master's or doctoral level.

The framework NAEYC adopted in these Professional Preparation Standards—the common language and standards across degree levels, the focus on candidates’ performance, the encouragement of focus and specialization, the identification of essential professional tools for advanced program candidates, and the invitation to programs to add specialized competencies—is intended to support programs’ innovation within a solid professional framework and to build a more unified professional development system for early childhood education.

## INITIAL STANDARDS SUMMARY

### *STANDARD 1. PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING*

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children’s characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children’s development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

#### **Key elements of Standard 1**

**1a:** Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs, from birth through age 8.

**1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning

**1c:** Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children

#### **Supporting explanation**

The early childhood field has historically been grounded in a child development knowledge base, and early childhood programs have aimed to support a broad range of positive developmental outcomes for all young children. Although the scope and emphasis of that knowledge base have changed over the years, and although early childhood professionals recognize that other sources of knowledge are also important influences on curriculum and programs for young children, early childhood practice continues to be deeply linked with a “sympathetic understanding of the young child” (Elkind 1994).

Well-prepared early childhood degree candidates base their practice on sound **knowledge and understanding of young children’s characteristics and needs**. This foundation encompasses multiple, interrelated areas of children’s development and learning – including physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, and aesthetic domains; play, activity, and learning processes; and motivation to learn – and is supported by coherent theoretical perspectives and by current research.

Candidates also understand and apply their understanding of the **multiple influences on young children’s development and learning**, and of how those influences may interact to affect development in both positive and negative ways. Those influences include *diverse cultural and linguistic contexts for development*, children’s close relationships with adults and peers, economic conditions of children and families, health status and disabilities, children’s individual developmental variations and learning styles, opportunities to play and learn, *technology* and the media, and family and community characteristics. Candidates also understand the potential influence of early childhood programs, including early intervention, on short- and long-term outcomes for children.

Candidates' competence is demonstrated in their ability to **use developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments** for each child (including curriculum, interactions, teaching practices, and learning materials). Such environments reflect *four critical features*.

- First, the environments are *healthy* – that is, candidates possess the knowledge and skills needed to promote young children's physical and psychological health, safety, and sense of security.
- Second, the environments reflect *respect* – for each child as a feeling, thinking individual and then for each child's culture, home language, individual abilities or disabilities, family context, and community. In respectful environments, candidates model and affirm anti-bias perspectives on development and learning.
- Third, the learning environments created by early childhood teacher candidates are *supportive* – candidates demonstrate their belief in young children's ability to learn, and they show that they can use their understanding of early childhood development to help each child understand and make meaning from her or his experiences through play, spontaneous activity, and guided investigations.
- Finally, the learning environments that early childhood candidates create are appropriately *challenging* – in other words, candidates apply their knowledge of contemporary theory and research to construct learning environments that provide achievable and "stretching" experiences for each child – including children with special abilities and children with disabilities or developmental delays.

*This Initial Standard provides a general description of the importance of understanding and applying sound theoretical foundations in early child development. See the NAEYC publication **Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8** (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

## **STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning.

### **Key elements of Standard 2**

**2a:** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics

**2b:** Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships

**2c:** Involving families and communities in young children's development and learning

## Supporting explanation

Because young children’s lives are so embedded in their families and communities, and because research indicates that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with families and communities, early childhood professionals need to thoroughly understand and apply their knowledge in this area.

First, well-prepared candidates possess **knowledge and understanding of diverse family and community characteristics**, and of the many influences on families and communities. Family theory and research provide a knowledge base. Socioeconomic conditions; family structures, relationships, stresses, and supports (including the impact of having a child with special needs); home language; cultural values; ethnicity; community resources, cohesiveness, and organization—knowledge of these and other factors creates a deeper understanding of young children’s lives. This knowledge is critical to candidates’ ability to help children learn and develop well.

Second, candidates possess the knowledge and skills needed to **support and engage diverse families through respectful, reciprocal relationships**. Candidates understand how to build positive relationships, taking families’ preferences and goals into account and incorporating knowledge of families’ languages and cultures. Candidates demonstrate respect for variations across cultures in family strengths, expectations, values, and childrearing practices. Candidates consider family members to be resources for insight into their children, as well as resources for curriculum and program development. Candidates know about and demonstrate a variety of communication skills to foster such relationships, emphasizing informal conversations while also including appropriate uses of conferencing and *technology* to share children’s work and to communicate with families.

In their work, early childhood teacher candidates develop *cultural competence* as they build relationships with diverse families, including those whose children have disabilities or special characteristics or learning needs; families who are facing multiple challenges in their lives; and families whose languages and cultures may differ from those of the early childhood professional. Candidates also understand that their relationships with families include assisting families in finding needed resources, such as mental health services, health care, adult education, English language instruction, and economic assistance that may contribute directly or indirectly to their children’s positive development and learning. Well-prepared early childhood candidates are able to identify such resources and know how to connect families with appropriate services, including help with planning transitions from one educational or service system to another.

Finally, well-prepared candidates possess essential skills to **involve families and communities in many aspects of children’s development and learning**. They understand and value the role of parents and other important family members as children’s primary teachers. Candidates understand how to go beyond parent conferences to engage families in curriculum planning, assessing children’s learning, and planning for children’s transitions to new programs. When their approaches to family involvement are not effective, candidates evaluate and modify those approaches rather than assuming that families “are just not interested.”

*This Initial Standard provides a general description of developmentally appropriate family and community involvement in early childhood education. See the NAEYC publication **Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8** (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

### **STANDARD 3. OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

#### **Key elements of Standard 3**

**3a:** Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment – including its use in development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children

**3b:** Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches, including the use of *technology* in documentation, assessment and data collection.

**3c:** Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child, including the use of assistive *technology* for children with disabilities.

**3d:** Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments.

#### **Supporting explanation**

Although definitions vary, in these standards the term “assessment” includes all methods through which early childhood professionals gain understanding of children’s development and learning. Ongoing, systematic observations and other informal and formal assessments are essential in order for candidates to appreciate children’s unique qualities, to develop appropriate goals, and to plan, implement, and evaluate effective curriculum. Although assessment may take many forms, early childhood candidates demonstrate its central role by embedding assessment-related activities in curriculum and in daily routines, so that assessment becomes a habitual part of professional life.

Well-prepared early childhood candidates can explain the central **goals, benefits, and uses of assessment**. In considering the goals of assessment, candidates articulate and apply the concept of “alignment” – good assessment is consistent with and connected to appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children. They know how to use assessment as a positive tool that supports children’s development and learning, and that improves outcomes for young children and families. Candidates are able to explain such positive uses of assessment and exemplify them in their own work, while also showing awareness of the potentially negative uses of assessment in early childhood programs and policies.

Many aspects of effective assessment require collaboration with families and with other professionals. Through **partnerships with families and with professional colleagues**, candidates use positive assessment to identify the strengths of families and children and to develop effective learning environments. Through appropriate screening and referral, assessment may also result in identifying children who may benefit from special services. Both family members and, as appropriate, members of inter-professional teams may be involved in assessing children’s



development, strengths, and needs. As new practitioners, candidates may have had limited opportunities to experience such partnerships, but they demonstrate essential knowledge and core skills in team building and in communicating with families and colleagues from other disciplines.

Early childhood assessment includes **observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment strategies**. Effective teaching of young children begins with thoughtful, appreciative, systematic observation and documentation of each child's unique qualities, strengths, and needs. Observation gives insight into how young children develop and respond to opportunities and obstacles in their lives. Observing young children in classrooms, homes, and communities helps candidates develop a broad sense of who children are – as individuals, as group members, as family members, as members of cultural and linguistic communities. Candidates demonstrate skills in conducting systematic observations, interpreting those observations, and reflecting on their significance. Because spontaneous *play* is such a powerful window on all aspects of children's development, well-prepared candidates create opportunities to observe children in playful situations as well as in more formal learning contexts. Candidates practice a variety of formative and summative, qualitative and standardized, assessment tools and strategies.

Many *young children with disabilities* are included in early childhood programs, and early identification of children with developmental delays or disabilities is very important. All beginning professionals, therefore, need essential knowledge about how to collect relevant information, including appropriate uses of screening tools and play-based assessments, not only for their own planning but also to share with families and with other professionals. Well-prepared candidates are able to choose valid tools that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate; use the tools correctly; adapt tools as needed, using assistive technology as a resource; make appropriate referrals; and interpret assessment results, with the goal of obtaining valid, useful information to inform practice and decision making.

Although assessment can be a positive tool for early childhood professionals, it has also been used in inappropriate and harmful ways. Well-prepared candidates understand and practice **responsible assessment**. Candidates understand that responsible assessment is ethically grounded and guided by sound professional standards. It is collaborative and open. Responsible assessment supports children, rather than being used to exclude them or deny them services. Candidates demonstrate understanding of appropriate, responsible assessment practices for culturally and linguistically diverse children and for children with developmental delays, disabilities, or other special characteristics. Finally, candidates demonstrate knowledge of legal and ethical issues, current educational concerns and controversies, and appropriate practices in the assessment of diverse young children.

*This Initial Standard provides a general description of developmentally appropriate assessment in early childhood education. See the NAEYC publication **Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8** (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

## **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.

### **Key elements of Standard 4**

- 4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children
- 4b:** Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education, including appropriate uses of technology
- 4c:** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching /learning approaches
- 4d:** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child

### **Supporting explanation**

Early childhood candidates demonstrate that they understand the theories and research that support **the importance of relationships and high-quality interactions in early education**. In their practice, they display warm, nurturing interactions with each child, communicating genuine liking for and interest in young children's activities and characteristics. Throughout the years that children spend in early childhood settings, their successful learning is dependent not just on "instruction" but also on personal connections with important adults. Through these connections children develop not only academic skills but also positive learning dispositions and confidence as learners. Responsive teaching creates the conditions within which very young children can explore and learn about their world. The close attachments children develop with their teachers/caregivers, the expectations and beliefs that adults have about young children's capacities, and the warmth and responsiveness of adult-child interactions are powerful influences on positive developmental and educational outcomes. How children expect to be treated and how they treat others is significantly shaped in the early childhood setting. Candidates in early childhood programs develop the capacity to build a caring community of learners in the early childhood setting.

Early childhood professionals need a **broad repertoire of effective strategies and tools** to help young children learn and develop well. Candidates must ground their curriculum in a set of core approaches to teaching that are supported by research and are closely linked to the processes of early development and learning. In a sense, those approaches *are* the curriculum for infants and toddlers, although academic content can certainly be embedded in each of them. With preschool and early primary grade children, the relative weight and explicitness of subject matter or academic content become more evident in the curriculum, and yet the core approaches or strategies remain as a consistent framework. Engaging conversations, thought-provoking questions, provision of materials, and spontaneous activities are all evident in candidates' repertoire of teaching skills.

Candidates demonstrate the essential *dispositions* to develop positive, respectful relationships with children whose cultures and languages may differ from their own, as well as with children who may have developmental delays, disabilities, or other learning challenges. In making the transition from family to a group context, very young children need continuity between the practices of family members and those used by professionals in the early childhood setting. Their feelings of safety and confidence depend on that continuity. Candidates know the cultural practices and contexts of the young children they teach, and they adapt practices as they continue to develop *cultural competence*, culturally relevant knowledge and skills.

Well-prepared early childhood teachers make purposeful use of various learning formats based on their understanding of children as individuals and as part of a group, and on alignment with important educational and developmental goals. A flexible, research-based **repertoire of teaching/learning approaches to promote young children's development**. These include:

- Fostering oral language and communication.
- Drawing from a continuum of teaching strategies.
- Making the most of the environment, schedule and routines
- Setting up all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environment
- Focusing on children's individual characteristics, needs, and interests.
- Linking children's language and culture to the early childhood program.
- Teaching through social interactions
- Creating support for play.
- Addressing children's challenging behaviors.
- Supporting learning through *technology*.
- Using integrative approaches to curriculum

All of these teaching approaches are effective across the early childhood age span. From the infant-toddler room to the early grades, young children are developing not only early language and reading skills but also the *desire* to communicate, read and write. They are developing not only early math and science skills and concepts but also the *motivation* to solve problems. They are developing empathy, sociability, friendships, self-concept and self-esteem. Concept acquisition, reasoning, self-regulation, planning and organization, emotional understanding and empathy, sociability – development of all of these is deeply entwined with early experiences in mathematics, language, literacy, science and social studies in the early education program. Children's development in the social, emotional and cognitive functioning domains – developing independence, responsibility, self-regulation and cooperation - can be critical to success in the transition to school and in the early grades.

Early childhood professionals make decisions about their practice based on their developing expertise. They make professional judgments through each day based on knowledge of child development and learning, individual children, and the social and cultural contexts in which children live. From this knowledge base, effective teachers design activities, routines, interactions and curriculum for specific children and groups of children. They consider both what to teach and how to teach, developing the habit of ***reflective, responsive and intentional practice to promote positive outcomes for each child***.

*This Initial Standards provides a general description of developmentally appropriate and effective teaching strategies, tools and approaches for early childhood education. See the NAEYC publication*

*Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8 (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

## **STANDARD 5. USING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CURRICULUM**

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

### **Key elements of Standard 5**

**5a:** Understanding content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines: language and literacy; the arts – music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts; mathematics; science, physical activity, physical education, health and safety; and social studies.

**5b:** Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines

**5c:** Using own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child.

### **Supporting explanation**

Good early childhood curriculum does not come out of a box or a teacher-proof manual. Early childhood professionals have an especially challenging task in developing effective curriculum. As suggested in Standard 1, well-prepared candidates ground their practice in a thorough, research-based understanding of young children’s development and learning processes. In developing curriculum, they recognize that every child constructs knowledge in personally and culturally familiar ways. In addition, in order to make curriculum powerful and accessible to all, well-prepared candidates develop curriculum that is free of biases related to ethnicity, religion, gender, or ability status – and, in fact, the curriculum actively counters such biases.

The teacher of children from birth through age 8 must be well versed in **the essential content knowledge and resources in many academic disciplines**. Because children are encountering those content areas for the first time, early childhood professionals set the foundations for later understanding and success. Going beyond conveying isolated facts, well-prepared early childhood candidates possess the kind of content knowledge that focuses on the “big ideas,” methods of investigation and expression, and organization of the major academic disciplines. Thus, the early childhood professional knows not only *what* is important in each content area but also *why* it is important – how it links with earlier and later understandings both within and across areas. Because of its central place in later academic competence, the domain of language and literacy requires in-depth research-based understanding and skill. Mathematics, too, is increasingly recognized as an essential foundation.

Teachers of young children demonstrate the understanding of **central concepts, inquiry tools and structure of content areas** needed to provide appropriate environments that support

learning in each content area for each child, beginning in infancy (through foundational developmental experiences) and extending through the primary grades. Candidates demonstrate basic knowledge of the research base underlying each content area, basic knowledge of the core concepts and standards of professional organizations in each content area, and rely on sound resources for that knowledge. Finally, candidates demonstrate that they can analyze and critique early childhood curriculum experiences in terms of the relationship of the experiences to the research base and to professional standards.

Well-prepared candidates choose their approaches to the task depending on the ages and developmental levels of the children they teach. They use their own **knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum for each child**. With the youngest children, early childhood candidates emphasize the key experiences that will support later academic skills and understandings— with great reliance on the core approaches and strategies described in Standard 4 and with great emphasis on oral language and the development of children’s background knowledge. Working with somewhat older or more skilled children, candidates also identify those aspects of each subject area that are critical to children’s later academic competence. With each child, early childhood professionals support later success by modeling engagement in challenging subject matter and by building children’s faith in themselves as young learners— as young mathematicians, scientists, artists, readers, writers, historians, economists, and geographers (although children may not think of themselves in such categories).

Early Childhood curriculum content / discipline areas include:

- Learning goals, experiences and assessment in academic disciplines or content areas including
  - Language and literacy
  - The arts: Music, creative movement, dance, drama, and visual arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Physical activity, physical education, health and safety
  - Social studies

Designing, implementing and evaluating meaningful, challenging curriculum requires alignment with appropriate early learning standards, and knowledgeable use of the discipline’s resources to focus on key experiences for each age group and each individual child.

Early childhood teacher candidates, just like experienced teachers, go beyond their own basic knowledge to identify and use high-quality resources, including books, standards documents, Web resources, and individuals who have specialized content expertise, in developing early childhood curriculum. In addition to national or state standards (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE 2002) or desired several larger goals are also held by all early childhood teachers:

- **Security and self-regulation.** Appropriate, effective curriculum creates a secure base from which young children can explore and tackle challenging problems. Well-implemented curriculum also helps children become better able to manage or regulate their expressions of emotion and, over time, to cope with frustration and manage impulses effectively, rather than creating high levels of frustration and anxiety.

- **Problem-solving and thinking skills.** Candidates who have skills in developing and implementing meaningful, challenging curriculum will also support young children’s ability – and motivation – to solve problems and think well.
- **Academic and social competence.** Because good early childhood curriculum is aligned with young children’s developmental and learning styles, it supports the growth of academic and social skills.

With these goals in mind, candidates develop curriculum to include both planned and spontaneous experiences that are developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and challenging for all young children, including those with developmental delays or disabilities; that address cultural and linguistic diversities; that lead to positive learning outcomes; and that – as children become older – develop positive dispositions toward learning within each content area.

*This Initial Standard provides a general description of challenging and meaningful developmentally appropriate curriculum for early childhood education. See the NAEYC publication **Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8** (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

## STANDARD 6. BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

### Key elements of Standard 6

**6a:** Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field

**6b:** Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines

**6c:** Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice; using technology effectively with young children, with peers, and as a professional resource.

**6d:** Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education

**6e:** Engaging in informed advocacy for young children and the early childhood profession

### Supporting explanation

The early childhood field has a distinctive history, values, knowledge base, and mission. Early childhood professionals, including beginning teachers, have a strong **identification and involvement with the early childhood field**, to better serve young children and their families. Well-prepared candidates understand the nature of a profession. They know about the many connections between the early childhood field and other related disciplines and professions with which they may collaborate while serving diverse young children and families. Candidates are also aware of the broader contexts and challenges within which early childhood professionals work. They consider current issues and trends that might affect their work in the future.

Because young children are at such a critical point in their development and learning, and because they are vulnerable and cannot articulate their own rights and needs, early childhood professionals have compelling responsibilities to **know about and uphold ethical guidelines and other professional standards**. The profession's code of ethical conduct guides the practice of responsible early childhood educators. Well-prepared candidates are very familiar with the *NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct* and are guided by its ideals and principles. This means honoring their responsibilities to uphold high standards of confidentiality, sensitivity, and respect for children, families, and colleagues. Candidates know how to use the Code to analyze and resolve professional ethical dilemmas and are able to give defensible justifications for their resolutions of those dilemmas. Well-prepared candidates also know and obey relevant laws such as those pertaining to child abuse, the rights of children with disabilities, and school attendance. Candidates use professional judgment to make decisions about the use of media and technology with young children in ways that are appropriate for the individual and the group, that are integrated into the curriculum, that provide equitable access and that "engages children in creative play, mastery learning, problem solving and conversation." (NAEYC, 1996; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) Finally, candidates are familiar with relevant professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards for content and child outcomes; position statements about, for

example, early learning standards, linguistic and cultural diversity, early childhood mathematics, technology in early childhood, and prevention of child abuse; child care licensing requirements; and other professional standards affecting early childhood practice.

**Continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice** is a hallmark of a professional in any field. An attitude of inquiry is evident in well-prepared candidates' writing, discussion, and actions. Whether engaging in classroom-based research, investigating ways to improve their own practices, participating in conferences, or finding resources in libraries and Internet sites, candidates demonstrate self-motivated, purposeful learning that directly influences the quality of their work with young children. Candidates—and professional preparation programs—view graduation or licensure not as the final demonstration of competence but as one milestone among many, including professional development experiences before and beyond successful degree completion.

At its most powerful, learning is socially constructed, in interaction with others. Even as beginning teachers, early childhood candidates demonstrate involvement in collaborative learning communities with other candidates, higher education faculty, and experienced early childhood practitioners. By working together on common challenges, with lively exchanges of ideas, members of such communities benefit from one another's perspectives. Candidates also demonstrate understanding of essential skills in interdisciplinary collaboration. Because many children with disabilities and other special needs are included in early childhood programs, every practitioner needs to understand the role of the other professionals who may be involved in young children's care and education (e.g., special educators, reading specialists, speech and hearing specialists, physical and occupational therapists, specialists in gifted education, school psychologists). Candidates demonstrate that they have the essential communication skills and knowledge base to engage in interdisciplinary team meetings as informed partners and to fulfill their roles as part of IEP/IFSP teams for children with developmental delays or disabilities. They use *technology* effectively with children, with peers, and as a professional resource.

Well-prepared candidates practice is influenced by **knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives**. As professionals, early childhood candidates' decisions and advocacy efforts are grounded in multiple sources of knowledge and multiple perspectives. Even routine decisions about what materials to use for an activity, whether to intervene in a dispute between two children, how to organize nap time, what to say about curriculum in a newsletter, or what to tell families about new video games are informed by a professional context, research-based knowledge, and values. In their work with young children, candidates show that they make and justify decisions on the basis of their *knowledge* of the central issues, professional values and standards, and research findings in their field. They also show evidence of *reflective* approaches to their work, analyzing their own practices in a broader context, and using reflections to modify and improve their work with young children. Finally, well-prepared candidates display a *critical* stance, examining their own work, sources of professional knowledge, and the early childhood field with a questioning attitude. Their work demonstrates that they do not just accept a simplistic source of "truth"; instead, they recognize that while early childhood educators share the same core professional values, they do not agree on all of the field's central questions. Candidates demonstrate an understanding that through dialogue and attention to differences, early childhood professionals will continue to reach new levels of shared knowledge.

Finally, early childhood candidates demonstrate that they can engage in **informed advocacy for children and the profession**. They know about the central policy issues in the field, including professional compensation, financing of the early education system, and standards setting and assessment. They are aware of and engaged in examining ethical issues and societal concerns about program quality and provision of early childhood services and the implications of those



issues for advocacy and policy change. Candidates have a basic understanding of how public policies are developed, and they demonstrate essential advocacy skills, including verbal and written communication and collaboration with others around common issues.

*This Initial Standard provides a general description of the unique nature of the early childhood profession, its unique Code of Ethical Conduct and other guidelines, and special importance of collaboration and continuous learning in a rapidly evolving field that includes professional roles and settings inside and outside of traditional schools. See the NAEYC publication **Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8** (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

## **STANDARD 7. EARLY CHILDHOOD FIELD EXPERIENCES**

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Field experiences and clinical practice are planned and sequenced so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to promote the development and learning of young children across the entire developmental period of early childhood – in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3 through 5, 5 through 8 years) and in the variety of settings that offer early education (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

### **Key elements of Standard 7**

7a. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3-5, 5-8)

7b. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs)

### **Supporting explanation**

A key component of NAEYC standards at all degree levels is hands-on field or clinical experiences. Each of the first six NAEYC Standards includes a key element focused on application or use of knowledge and skills related to the standard. These key elements are learned, practiced and assessed in field experiences. This Initial and Advanced Program Standard 7 is comparable to NAEYC Associate Program Criterion 5.

**Field experiences should be well planned and sequenced** within and across degree levels to prepare candidates for the unique qualities of the early childhood developmental period and early educational settings. From field observations for the candidate considering an early childhood career, to systematic inquiry into their own classroom practices for the candidate in the field, to immersion in applied research for the doctoral candidate, supervised, reflective field experiences are critical to high quality professional preparation. Developmental research and theory has long been the foundation of early childhood education theory and practice.

Initial and Advanced programs should assign **field experiences in at least two age groups and at least two early education settings**. Current research and policy leaders hope to build a more integrated and aligned PreK-3 system for young children, for early childhood teacher preparation and for early childhood professional careers. Although the current early education system is fragmented, many of the teachers currently working in Head Start, preschool and child care settings are enrolled in early childhood baccalaureate degree programs in order to meet the requirements of the federal Head Start program, to meet the requirements of NAEYC accreditation for early educational settings directly serving young children, or to increase their career options. Although state policies and professional credentials may focus one age group or

setting in a particular context, over the course of a career, an early childhood teacher may move from an infant toddler setting, to a third grade classroom, and then to a community Head Start or prekindergarten program. In the current context, a sequence of field experiences should ensure that graduates of baccalaureate programs in early childhood are qualified for a career with options across the entire early childhood age range and in multiple early education settings.

Finding high quality early childhood field sites is a challenge across all early childhood settings - whether primary school, child care center, or Head Start classroom. The “professional development schools” movement and the current interest in “residency” models for teacher education underscore the challenge of identifying and partnering with high-quality sites in which education professionals can develop or refine their skills with competent mentorship and supervision. Some programs may choose to partner with high need / low resource schools or centers. Many programs are working with states, communities or local school districts to raise teacher qualifications and improve quality in child care, Head Start, or primary grade classrooms. When the quality of the field site is not high, it is the responsibility of the teacher preparation program to provide other models and/or experiences to ensure that candidates are learning to work with young children and families in ways consistent with the NAEYC standards.

Quality field experiences support candidates to understand and apply the competencies reflected in the NAEYC standards as they observe, implement and receive constructive feedback in real world early learning settings. **Indicators of strength** in the quality of field experiences include:

- Field experiences are well planned and sequenced, and allow candidates to integrate theory, research and practice.
- When settings used for field experiences do not reflect high quality standards, candidates are provided with other models and/or experiences to ensure that they are learning to work with young children and families in ways consistent with the NAEYC standards.
- Faculty and other supervisors help candidates to make meaning of their experiences in early childhood settings and to evaluate those experiences against standards of quality.
- Adults who mentor and supervise candidates provide positive models of early childhood practice consistent with NAEYC standards.
- Field experiences expose candidates to settings that include cultural, linguistic, racial and ethnic diversity in families and communities.

**Suggested program chart of field experiences**

	Location / setting	# Hours	Age group	Assignments
Field Experience I	Infant & Toddler	10 hrs.	0-3	5 hours observing;  5 hours implementing developmental activity plans  (Assessment # _____)
Field Experience II	In PreK/K and Grades 1-3.  At least one placement in a diverse, urban setting is required.	8 wks & 7 weeks, full-time 40 hours per week.	3-5 or 5-8	Student teaching  (Assessment # _____)

*The completed chart above is just an example. In order to meet NAEYC Standard 7, the two field experiences selected for this chart must demonstrate that candidates have field or clinical assignments in at least two of the three early childhood age groups and in at least two different early education settings.*

A **rubric** for reviewers is included in the Standards, Key Elements and Rubrics section of this document.

Age groups are defined as: Birth through age 3, 3 through 5 years, and 5 through 8 years

Locations or Settings are defined as: Primary or elementary school, child care center or home, and Head Start.

The narrative in NCATE Program Report Template “Section I – Context, Item 2 Description of the field and clinical experiences required for the program” should explain how the program ensures high *quality field experiences*. Quality field experiences support candidates to understand and apply the competencies reflected in the NAEYC standards as they observe, implement and receive constructive feedback in real world early learning settings. Programs are encouraged to consider the “indicators of strength” listed in the Supporting Explanation of Standard 7 when writing this narrative.

## ADVANCED STANDARDS SUMMARY

### ***LEADERSHIP IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION***

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The need for leadership in the early childhood field has never been greater. New research on the importance of early development and learning, and on the role of highly qualified teachers in promoting positive outcomes for children, makes it imperative to produce a new generation of professionals with outstanding preparation well beyond that provided in initial licensure programs. NAEYC and NCATE share a commitment to a continuum of professional development in which advanced master's and doctoral training play a critical role.

Like the field of education in general, the early childhood profession suffers from critical shortages at every level, from beginning practitioners through university faculty. Excellent programs at the advanced master's and doctoral levels are urgently needed to produce the accomplished teachers, administrators, state early childhood specialists, child and family advocates, professional development specialists, teacher educators, and researchers who will be the intellectual, programmatic, and public policy leaders of the future.

#### **Meeting the NAEYC Advanced Standards**

While all Advanced programs are offered at the graduate level, not all graduate programs are Advanced early childhood programs. *Master's programs that lead to initial teacher certification/licensure for candidates who lack prior preparation in a closely related teacher education field are not considered "advanced" by NAEYC and such programs should be submitted and reviewed as "initial" programs.* The Advanced NAEYC Standards require depth, breadth and specialization that expand upon and exceed the expectations of Initial early childhood licensure programs. Assessments and scoring guides for Advanced Programs should be different from and expect more advanced work than Initial Programs.

Examples of expanded depth and breadth for different specializations are included in the Supporting Explanation for each Advanced Standard. In some standards, key elements are expanded at the Advanced level. One Rubric is designed for each NAEYC Standard and indicates differences in expectations of Initial and Advanced programs.

#### **Features of all strong advanced programs**

Even if they include varied specializations, all advanced programs need a *consistent framework and common experiences* that allow candidates to experience the program in a coherent way. Creating this coherence within a graduate program requires developing a shared conceptual framework and a common vocabulary and reference points—for example, theoretical perspectives on development, curriculum, and pedagogy. Vehicles for ensuring this common framework may include a set of core courses, a first-year or final-semester seminar, or other unifying experiences.

Beyond the common core, each candidate needs the opportunity to gain significant *depth and specialization* in theory, research, and professional competence in an area relevant to the candidate's current work and future goals. Later sections of this document elaborate on the importance of providing specialized focus in advanced programs.

Strong advanced programs also offer candidates *intensive internships, field experiences, research opportunities, or other contexts* in which to apply theoretical and research-based knowledge in a systematic, scholarly way and to develop advanced skills. Professional consensus and NCATE requirements call for every candidate in an advanced program to have such well-designed and professionally supervised experiences.

Whatever the specialization or professional focus, advanced programs need some kind of *well-designed and well-assessed capstone* experiences that promote synthesis and reflection. Programs have successfully used experiences such as theses and dissertations, integrative examinations, portfolios, field projects, seminars with reflective papers, and many other approaches. At their best, these experiences become vehicles to support candidates' synthesis of and reflection upon their graduate education.

### ***Early childhood advanced professional education: Special considerations from the field***

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The features just described are appropriate and relevant for *all* advanced master and doctoral programs in professional education, including those that prepare early childhood candidates. But some special characteristics of the early childhood field are also important to consider when setting standards for and designing high-quality programs.

#### **Early childhood as a strongly interdisciplinary, collaborative, and systems-oriented profession**

Effective early childhood education and the promotion of positive development and learning in the early years call for a strongly interdisciplinary and systems-oriented approach. By its nature the early childhood field is, and historically has been, interdisciplinary. Early childhood leaders need to integrate knowledge of all aspects of child development, content knowledge in academic disciplines, early intervention programs and other programs for young children draw on knowledge from other disciplines, including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, special education, bilingual education, family dynamics, mental health, and multiple other approaches to the comprehensive well-being of young children and their families.

An interdisciplinary, systems-oriented perspective is essential if professionals, especially at the advanced level, are to integrate multiple sources of knowledge into a coherent approach to their work. Finally, early childhood candidates prepared at the advanced level—whatever their specialization—must be ready to serve *all* children and *all* families as agents of change and as potential leaders who can address complex issues of access, diversity, and equity.

#### **Highly dynamic, developmental, and policy-relevant nature of the early childhood field**

The field of early childhood development and education is receiving intensive attention from the academic and political communities. Perhaps more than at any time since the 1960s, research and public policies are directed at the early years. Rapid changes are occurring in the number of state-supported prekindergarten programs. Programs serving children living in poverty and children at developmental and educational risk are experiencing significant changes. Policies mandating higher qualifications for early childhood teachers are being implemented at the federal and state levels. State and federal agencies are developing new content and program standards. Controversies swirl around school readiness assessments, early learning standards, early childhood curriculum models and appropriate, meaningful accountability measures in early education programs.

For these reasons and more, early childhood graduate programs must be ready to prepare professionals for a dynamic and rapidly developing future. Whether leadership is exerted in a classroom role, at the program or agency level, or in two- or four-year institutions, advanced program candidates and advanced program faculty need a strong future orientation. While articulating the profession's traditions and core values, advanced program candidates must also be taught how to analyze trends, how to critically assess the field's emerging knowledge base, and how to use a variety of tools to find professional resources that will enable them to stay at the forefront of their field as lifelong learners. Finally, the nature of the early childhood field requires that all professionals, whatever their specific role, share a commitment to and skill in advocacy for young children, families, and their profession.

### **Diversity and focus in early childhood professional settings and roles**

Early childhood professionals work in a much greater variety of settings and professional roles than many other education professionals. Public school programs from state-funded pre-K to third grade, community child care programs, Head Start, resource-and-referral agencies, specialized infant/toddler programs, inclusive early childhood programs, state agencies, nonprofit organizations serving children and families, community colleges, university teacher education programs, and many other settings are typical of the diversity of the early childhood world. Within those settings, professionals holding advanced degrees may be master teachers, program directors, trainers, faculty, early education specialists, advocates, agency administrators — or other professionals.

A challenge for early childhood advanced programs is to acknowledge this diversity of settings and roles, preparing candidates for specialized and leadership positions while attending to the coherence and depth needed for high-quality advanced preparation. *The NAEYC standards require programs to identify one or more areas of focus* and to document how program candidates achieve depth while also gaining a broad understanding of the complexities of the early childhood field.

### **Diversity of pathways bringing candidates into advanced early childhood programs**

*Advanced programs must offer learning experiences and assess early childhood knowledge and practice at advanced levels, exceeding the Initial standards.* Graduate candidates in early childhood programs enter these programs with especially diverse prior preparation and experience. Because of the diversity of the field itself, advanced program candidates may have relatively little in common as they begin their graduate work. Their work experiences may differ widely, and their undergraduate preparation may be equally varied.

Although this diversity of prior experience has potential to enhance the learning community, early childhood advanced programs need to be especially vigilant to document that *all* candidates are competent in the areas addressed by the NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards. In cases in which prior study and experience have not provided a candidate with this competence, the graduate program must find other ways of building this base of knowledge, disposition, and skill *before* candidates embark on advanced study — for example, through noncredit professional seminars or directed readings.

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at developmental and educational risk are experiencing significant changes. Policies mandating higher qualifications for early childhood teachers are being implemented at the federal and state levels. State and federal agencies are developing new content and program standards. Controversies swirl around school readiness assessments and accountability.

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### ***SPECIALIZED OF AREAS OF FOCUS***

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*NAEYC Advanced Professional Preparation Standards ask each program to identify one or more areas of specialization or focus. This requirement is intended to be flexible; it is not intended to prescribe a narrow set of courses or to limit programs' and candidates' innovation. Depending on the prior experience and future goals of the candidates they serve, programs may offer a relatively extensive common core of courses to introduce candidates to a variety of specializations, helping them identify a focus for the latter part of their study. Other programs may primarily serve candidates who enter with a clear area of focus consistent with the program's strengths—program administration, for example, or early literacy.*

These specializations may be further refined and individualized as candidates develop their own professional goals and their plans to reach those goals. Programs with several possible options or areas of focus will frequently find candidates with different interests enrolled in the same courses; depth and focus can still be provided through differentiated assignments and other individualized experiences.

Programs may select one or more of the following areas of focus, or they may modify these areas to be consistent with their unique features, or they may identify other areas consistent with the intentions of this requirement.

#### **Early childhood accomplished teacher**

NAEYC Early Childhood Accomplished Teacher specialization is intended to align with and support the Early Childhood/ Generalist Standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). This focus provides in-depth advanced study for experienced teachers. In all cases candidates will have already successfully demonstrated competence in relation to NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards—*this focus is not for initial licensure*. Within this focus may be preparation for specialized teaching roles such as infant/toddler specialists, early childhood teacher mentor or coach, or early literacy specialists.

#### **Early childhood administrator**

This focus provides in-depth study for those seeking to become or enhance their credentials as early childhood administrators. These roles might include child care program director, state preK coordinator, Head Start coordinator, or other administrative positions within an early childhood

education system. The specialization assumes candidates already possess background and competence consistent with initial licensure in early childhood education. A primary focus in this specialization is to acquire additional specialized administrative or management competencies – for example, in personnel management, budgeting, or staff development – but with specific application to early childhood contexts.

### **Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist**

NAEYC believes that *all* early childhood professionals should have knowledge and skills in advocacy and that advanced programs should enhance all candidates' competence in this area. A program focus in this area provides in-depth study and experience for those who have or aspire to professional careers in early childhood public policy and advocacy. Building on existing competence in the core areas described in NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards, candidates gain understanding and skill in translating that competence into building coalitions and designing effective public policies or advocacy initiatives.

### **Early childhood teacher educator/researcher**

This focus provides in-depth study for those whose professional roles emphasize the preparation of future early childhood practitioners in two- and four-year preparation programs as well as through community training, technical assistance, and CDA training. This specialization requires a focus both on content and on pedagogy, including adult learning principles and skills in working with diverse candidates or trainees. The specialization also emphasizes skills in generating new knowledge through research, most strongly at the doctoral level.

### **Other early childhood leadership roles**

Programs may modify or rename these suggested areas of focus, propose other areas of focus, or combine those outlined above in ways that fit programs' unique mission, strengths, and community needs.

## ***NAEYC STANDARD 1. PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING***

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

### **Key elements of Standard 1, Advanced Programs**

**1a:** Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs, from birth through age 8.

**1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning

**1c:** Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children



## Supporting explanation

### *All advanced program candidates*

All candidates in advanced programs base their practice on a sound foundation of child development knowledge. The candidate's initial knowledge, skills, and related dispositions are given greater depth, complexity, and applicability to professional contexts through graduate education. As in other Advanced standards, the ways in which this occurs, and the expectations for how candidates will demonstrate their competence, vary according to the specialization.

### *Early childhood accomplished teacher*

Both NAEYC and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) see child development knowledge as the foundation of accomplished early childhood practice. Candidates who are classroom teachers have some of the most direct opportunities to use child development knowledge in their work with young children and families. The differences between initial and advanced program candidates lie in the extent of developmental knowledge, the specificity of research-based understanding, and in some cases, the decision to focus in greater depth on one or more aspects of early development and learning. For example, candidates in some programs (or in a specialization within a program) might demonstrate in-depth understanding and application of child development research on risk and resilience, on language development, or on developmental issues in children's use of technology.

### *Early childhood administrator*

Administrators, too, promote young children's development and learning, but their competence is demonstrated in different ways. Depending on the specifics of their roles, well-prepared candidates in advanced programs may apply current knowledge in designing programs, supporting staff, or developing state-level requirements related to the application of child development concepts. They evaluate their own and others' programs and staff interactions in light of knowledge about child development and learning. Because agencies and programs are so embedded in communities, these candidates need to show awareness of and responsiveness to variations in beliefs about, and evidence of, children's development and behavioral norms as a function of community and cultural contexts.

### *Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist*

Candidates focused on public policy and advocacy will demonstrate their understanding of early childhood knowledge and skills through developing or identifying public policies that support development and learning in ways consistent with research and professional practices. They should be able to critique policies that fail to support development and learning, using research to back up their views. They show ability to advocate for growth-promoting environments for all young children.

### *Early childhood teacher educator/researcher*

These candidates also have great potential to affect child outcomes by affecting teacher practice. Demonstrations of competence may include using effective methodologies to generate new knowledge about child development and the conditions that promote it, as well as using effective teaching strategies to make current child development knowledge meaningful and powerful for future teachers or other community practitioners.

## ***NAEYC STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS***

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.

### **Key elements of Standard 2, Advanced Programs**

**2a:** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics

**2b:** Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships

**2c:** *Demonstrating cultural competence and effective collaboration* to involve families and communities in their children’s development and learning

### **Supporting explanation**

#### ***All advanced program candidates***

Research-based, in-depth knowledge about families and community contexts must be well understood and valued by advanced program candidates, whatever their professional role. Gaining deeper insight into the concept of reciprocal relationships with families is essential for accomplished teachers but also for administrators, policy makers and advocates, researchers, and teacher educators. The ways in which this occurs, and the expectations for how candidates will demonstrate their competence, vary according to the specialization.

#### ***Early childhood accomplished teacher***

Those working directly with young children use their advanced preparation to gain greater currency and skill in understanding family dynamics and relationships, increasing their skill in building relationships with all families, and using effective teaching strategies that build on family and community norms and values. Some candidates may identify specific aspects of family and community in which to obtain even greater insight – for example, working with families in specific cultures, gaining more extensive skills in supporting families of children with disabilities, or developing family-centered assessments. As emphasized in the NBPTS Early Childhood/ Generalist Standards, partnerships and engagement with families are hallmarks of the accomplished practitioner.

#### ***Early childhood administrator***

Administrators often have great responsibility for linking with young children’s families, enrolling families in programs, helping staff work on challenging family situations, or creating new state initiatives for involving families of prekindergarten children. Competencies for candidates specializing in administration may include the ability to identify appropriate roles for administrators and teachers in various aspects of family interaction; skills in linking families with agencies or helping teachers do so; and skills in developing program- or agency-wide approaches to strengthening families’ bonds with the program and enhancing families’ ability to support their children’s learning. Finally, administrators must show competence in helping staff or other colleagues become more effective in communicating with families and assessing families’ strengths and needs as they relate to young children’s development.

***Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist***

Candidates focused on public policy and advocacy also require in-depth understanding of family and community characteristics, including state and national trends, demographics, and other information relevant to public policy and advocacy work. Rather than directly supporting, empowering, or involving families, these candidates show competence in creating or advocating for conditions that allow these outcomes to occur. Candidates understand local, state, and federal policies relevant to families of young children and show skills in working effectively at these various levels.

***Early childhood teacher educator/researcher***

Depending on the specific emphases within their programs, these candidates show skill in using sound methodologies to generate new knowledge about families of young children, or they may devise more effective ways to help future teachers and community practitioners understand, engage, and support families.

### ***NAEYC STANDARD 3. OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES***

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

**Key elements of Standard 3, Advanced Programs**

**3a:** Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment – including its use in development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children.

**3b:** Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches, including the use of *technology* in documentation, assessment and data collection.

**3c:** Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child, including the use of assistive *technology* for children with disabilities.

**3d:** *Demonstrating ability to collaborate effectively* to build assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments.

**Supporting explanation*****All advanced program candidates***

Assessment issues are relevant and challenging for all candidates in advanced programs. Future early childhood leaders should be at the forefront of research, policy, and best practices in the assessment of young children and in program evaluation. Advanced program candidates build on the competencies described in NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards, gaining greater depth and specialization related to their current or intended professional role.

***Early childhood accomplished teacher***

These candidates have great opportunities to articulate and use in-depth knowledge and skills in early childhood assessment and to link assessment to curriculum planning in increasingly skillful ways. Beyond the Initial competencies, candidates must show enhanced skills in analyzing, understanding, and using a variety of sound assessment tools and practices. For all candidates, expertise and interdisciplinary teamwork in assessing culturally and linguistically diverse children, and children with developmental delays, disabilities, or other special needs, are critical. Consistent with National Board standards, candidates also show competence in working with other professionals on assessment issues, and a high level of skill in engaging families in assessment. In addition, advanced program candidates show skills in articulating issues around assessment and advocating within and beyond their workplace for ethical, effective assessment policies and practices. They know how to use assessments to provide thoughtful, appreciative, systematic data gathering and analysis to inform teaching practice.

***Early childhood administrator***

Assessment decisions (for example, selection of tools, development of assessment guidelines, training of evaluators, interpretation to families) are often in the hands of early childhood administrators. They often are responsible for monitoring others' use and skill in observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment. In addition, administrators are responsible for program or agency evaluation either in response to accountability requirements or simply for continuous program improvement. They should be engaged in ongoing assessment of their own programs, using professionally accepted standards and tools. Learning opportunities and demonstrated competencies in assessment is essential for an administrator specialization in an advanced program.

***Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist***

Candidates focused on public policy and advocacy have many opportunities to demonstrate mastery of assessment-related knowledge and skills. While not involved in direct assessment, they must have research-based understanding of assessment issues and assessment policies at the local, state, and federal levels—whether in child care, Head Start, or public school contexts. Advanced programs prepare candidates to analyze the implications of public policies for appropriate child and program-level assessment and to advocate for policies and resources that support beneficial approaches to assessment.

***Early childhood teacher educator/researcher***

Major gaps exist in the development and validation of assessment tools and in the analysis of the effects of various assessment approaches in improving child and program outcomes. Such research areas may be the focus of advanced program candidates in this specialization. Those emphasizing teacher education have challenges, too, as many future teachers and community practitioners lack knowledge and skills in assessment. Advanced programs nurture and evaluate candidates' knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions related to the study and promotion of sound assessment practices.

## ***NAEYC STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO CONNECT WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES***

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.

### **Key elements of Standard 4, Advanced Programs**

**4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children

**4b:** Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education, including appropriate uses of technology

**4c:** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching /learning approaches *with a high level of cultural competence, understanding and responding to diversity in culture, language and ethnicity.*

**4d:** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child

### **Supporting Explanation**

#### ***All advanced program candidates***

It is important for advanced programs and all advanced program candidates to share that foundation of developmentally appropriate practices that characterize excellence in early education. For example, they should understand the nature of adult-child relationships in the early years and the importance of positive relationships as a foundation for effective teaching strategies. While the Accomplished Teacher specialization pays detailed attention to all elements of this standard, which are the bases of accomplished early childhood practice. Other specializations make more flexible use of the competencies suggested in the standard, adapting them and selecting specific aspects for greater depth and focused attention.

*See the Initial Standards for a general description of developmentally appropriate and effective teaching strategies, tools and approaches for early childhood education.*

*See the NAEYC publication *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8* (2009) for a fully developed description of expectations for this standard.*

#### ***Early childhood accomplished teacher***

These candidates have the most direct opportunities to apply advanced knowledge and skills in the areas of "Teaching and Learning" in their daily work with young children. In most cases, advanced program candidates will identify one or more of the key elements (or even more specific aspects of those elements) in which to document genuine expertise. For example, some programs and candidates might place special emphasis on uses of technology in early childhood environments. Others might focus on issues related to cultural

competence and teacher-child or teacher-family relationships. Candidates may become skilled in the use of inquiry skills to develop and implement action research projects.

### ***Early childhood administrator***

Effective administrators ensure that teaching and learning takes place at a high level of quality in their programs or agencies. Candidates in the Administrator specialization learn about and document their competence in taking current research and best practices in relationships, curriculum, and pedagogy and translating those into administration level actions. Candidates might develop resources for program staff, design criteria for programs applying for a new state prekindergarten initiative, research innovative approaches to physical space for an inclusive program – there are many possibilities.

### ***Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist***

Candidates focused on policy and advocacy will demonstrate mastery by developing or identifying public policies that support high quality teaching and learning in ways consistent with research and professional practices. As in the other advanced specializations, they may take one or more of the key elements for in-depth study. They are able to critique policies that fail to support high-quality teaching and learning, using research to back up their views. They show an ability to advocate for classroom practices, curriculum, and relationship-building opportunities that support the learning and positive development of all young children.

### ***Early childhood teacher educator/researcher***

Every key element within this standard suggests multiple research questions that can be addressed through quantitative or qualitative methods. Candidates should identify significant research questions, critique current research, and design worthwhile studies. Those candidates who will be preparing future teachers in higher education or community programs learn and demonstrate research-based approaches to building others' skills in curriculum development and teaching strategies.

## ***NAEYC STANDARD 5. USING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CURRICULUM***

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

### **Key elements of Standard 5, Advanced Programs**

**5a:** Understanding content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines: language and literacy; the arts – music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts; mathematics; science, physical activity, physical education, health and safety; and social studies.

**5b:** Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines

**5c:** Using own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child.

## Supporting explanation

### *All advanced program candidates*

It is important for advanced programs and all advanced program candidates to share a foundation of knowledge and skills across academic disciplines. For example, because all advanced candidates should understand the critical role of language and literacy in early childhood development, that understanding should be evident in their work within each specialization. Accomplished teachers will build advanced knowledge and practice in all elements of this standard. Other specializations make more flexible use of the competencies suggested in the standard, adapting them and selecting specific aspects for greater depth and focused attention.

*See the Initial Standards for a more developed description of content disciplines and application of their central concepts, inquiry tools and structures in early childhood education.*

### *Early childhood accomplished teacher*

These candidates have chosen to develop advanced teaching skills, gaining greater depth, specialization, and sophistication in their practice. Candidates in this specialization demonstrate strong mastery of generalist content across disciplines. They may be building expertise in a particular academic discipline as applied in early education, i.e. early literacy or math specialists. Other candidates might focus on application of recent research on development of competence in a specific early age group, i.e. development of early foundations of numeracy in toddlers.

### *Early childhood administrator*

Candidates in the Administrator specialization learn about and document their competence in taking current research and best practices in curriculum and pedagogy, translating those into program-, state-, or agency-level actions. Programs offer opportunities for candidates to develop competence in supporting early childhood teachers to gain professional knowledge of the academic content disciplines that are essential to a strong early childhood curriculum. Candidates show ability to use early learning standards and to identify resources needed to support teaching and learning across content areas.

### *Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist*

Candidates focused on policy and advocacy will demonstrate skills in developing or identifying public policies that support high quality teaching and learning in ways consistent with research and professional practices. Candidates will demonstrate the ability to advocate for meaningful, challenging curriculum across all early educational settings and for each child. They will make connections between recent research on the importance of education in the early years and advocacy for policies and resources to support children, families, teachers and early learning programs to address academic achievement gaps.

***Early childhood teacher educator/researcher***

Each element of this standard suggests multiple research questions that can be addressed through quantitative or qualitative methods. Candidates should identify significant research questions, critique current research, and design worthwhile studies. Those candidates who will be preparing future teachers will learn and demonstrate research-based approaches to building others' skills in content-rich curriculum development and teaching strategies.

***NAEYC STANDARD 6. GROWING AS A PROFESSIONAL***

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Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

**Key elements of Standard 6, Advanced Programs**

**6a:** Demonstrating professional identification with and *leadership skills* in the early childhood field to think strategically, build consensus, create change, *effectively collaborate with and mentor others*, and have a positive influence on outcomes for children, families and the profession.

**6b:** *In-depth understanding and thoughtful application of* NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and other professional guidelines relevant to their professional role

**6c:** Using *professional resources, inquiry skills and research methods* to engage in continuous, collaborative learning and investigation relevant to practice and professional role.

**6d:** Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education based upon *mastery of relevant theory and research*

**6e:** Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession, *skillfully articulating and advocating for sound professional practices and public policies*.

**6f:** Demonstrating a *high level of oral, written and technological communication skills* with specialization for specific professional role(s) emphasized in the program.

**Supporting explanation*****All advanced program candidates***

Candidates who have chosen to engage in graduate education have taken charge of their own professional development and have made a deep commitment to their profession. NAEYC has expanded the key elements of this Standard at the Advanced level to describe the essential professional tools that the field expects from accomplished early childhood teachers, early childhood program administrators, early childhood policy and advocacy specialists, and early childhood teacher educators and researchers. As future leaders (and often present leaders), candidates in advanced programs should demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the early childhood profession. They build on the competencies outlined in NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards but now are more engaged in the work of the profession and committed to collaboration across multiple and often complex communities. Similarly, candidates show a high level of awareness and application of ethical standards, focusing on ethical issues typical of their current or future role.



***Early childhood accomplished teacher***

These candidates have chosen to move forward within teaching to gain greater depth, specialization, and sophistication in their practice. Well-prepared candidates demonstrate notable ability to reflect on their practice, to articulate the complex professional bases for their teaching decisions, and to use others – including colleagues from other disciplines – as resources to improve their practice. Engagement in National Board certification gives many candidates the most direct opportunity to demonstrate professional skill and disposition. Finally, candidates in this specialization show that they connect in productive ways with teachers and other professionals within and across disciplines, using learning communities for continuous growth and reflection.

***Early childhood administrator***

Every aspect of professionalism becomes a part of the advanced preparation of early childhood administrators. Programs offer opportunities for candidates to develop competence in helping agency staff or other personnel to gain professional dispositions and skills. Candidates show ability to identify and address ethical dilemmas common in program administration. They also nurture professional networks as administrators, learning with and from other professionals.

***Early childhood public policy and advocacy specialist***

Almost every aspect of public policy is relevant to the status of the early childhood profession. Specialization in this area strengthens candidates' ability to identify, research, and develop policies that support a well-compensated, stable early childhood work force and a well-financed system of early education. Candidates will demonstrate the ability to address other critical professional issues, both for early childhood educators and for the children and families they serve. Skill in building coalitions around core professional issues is essential.

***Early childhood teacher educator/researcher***

Teacher educators are key to the socialization of new professionals into the field. Advanced programs provide them with opportunities to help newer professionals learn about the scope, mission, and critical issues in the field. Candidates in this specialization should know and use effective, sound methodology to develop and conduct studies of the profession – whether of the effectiveness of various forms of preparation, of practitioners' understanding of ethical issues, or of other professional issues. To be effective, their work requires them to engage collaboratively with others both within and outside academia. And researcher candidates require special competence in understanding and using ethical guidelines for the protection of human subjects, especially when those research subjects are vulnerable young children.

***STANDARD 7. EARLY CHILDHOOD FIELD EXPERIENCES***

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Field experiences and clinical practice are planned and sequenced so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to promote the development and learning of young children across the entire developmental period of early childhood – in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3 through 5, 5 through 8 years) *and* in the variety of settings that offer early education (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

## Key elements of Standard 7, Advanced Programs

7a. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3-5, 5-8)

7b. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs)

### Supporting explanation

A key component of NAEYC standards at all degree levels is hands-on field or clinical experiences. Each of the first six NAEYC Standards includes a key element focused on application or use of knowledge and skills related to the standard. These key elements are learned, practiced and assessed in field experiences. This Initial and Advanced Program Standard 7 is comparable to NAEYC Associate Program Criterion 5.

**Field experiences should be well planned and sequenced** within and across degree levels to prepare candidates for the unique qualities of the early childhood developmental period and early educational settings. From field observations for the candidate considering an early childhood career, to systematic inquiry into their own classroom practices for the candidate in the field, to immersion in applied research for the doctoral candidate, supervised, reflective field experiences are critical to high quality professional preparation. Developmental research and theory has long been the foundation of early childhood education theory and practice.

Initial and Advanced programs should assign **field experiences in at least two age groups and at least two early education settings**. Current research and policy leaders hope to build a more integrated and aligned birth-through-age 8 early education system for young children, for early childhood professional preparation, and for early childhood professional careers. Although the current early education system is fragmented, many of the teachers currently working in Head Start, preschool and child care settings are enrolled in early childhood baccalaureate degree programs in order to meet the requirements of the federal Head Start program, to meet the requirements of NAEYC accreditation for early educational settings directly serving young children, or to increase their career options. Although state policies and professional credentials may focus one age group or setting in a particular context, over the course of a career, an early childhood teacher may move from an infant toddler setting, to a third grade classroom, and then to a community Head Start or prekindergarten program. In the current context, a sequence of field experiences should ensure that graduates of baccalaureate programs in early childhood are qualified for a career with options across the entire early childhood age range and in multiple early education settings.

Finding high quality early childhood field sites is a challenge across all early childhood settings - whether primary school, child care center, or Head Start classroom. The “professional development schools” movement and the current interest in “residency” models for teacher education underscore the challenge of identifying and partnering with high-quality sites in which education professionals can develop or refine their skills with competent mentorship and supervision. Some programs may choose to partner with high need / low resource schools or centers. Many programs are working with states, communities or local school districts to raise teacher qualifications and improve quality in child care, Head Start, or primary grade classrooms. When the quality of the field site is not high, it is the responsibility of the teacher preparation program to provide other models and/or experiences to ensure that candidates are learning to work with young children and families in ways consistent with the NAEYC standards.

Quality field experiences support candidates to understand and apply the competencies reflected in the NAEYC standards as they observe, implement and receive constructive feedback in real world early learning settings. **Indicators of strength** in the quality of field experiences include:

- Field experiences are well planned and sequenced, and allow candidates to integrate theory, research and practice.
- When settings used for field experiences do not reflect high quality standards, candidates are provided with other models and/or experiences to ensure that they are learning to work with young children and families in ways consistent with the NAEYC standards.
- Faculty and other supervisors help candidates to make meaning of their experiences in early childhood settings and to evaluate those experiences against standards of quality.
- Adults who mentor and supervise candidates provide positive models of early childhood practice consistent with NAEYC standards.
- Field experiences expose candidates to settings that include cultural, linguistic, racial and ethnic diversity in families and communities.

**Suggested program chart of field experiences**

	Location / setting	# Hours	Age group	Assignments
Field Experience I	Infant & Toddler	10 hrs.	0-3	5 hours observing;  5 hours implementing developmental activity plans  (Assessment # _____)
Field Experience II	In PreK/K and Grades 1-3.  At least one placement in a diverse, urban setting is required.	8 wks & 7 weeks, full-time 40 hours per week.	3-5 or 5-8	Student teaching  (Assessment # _____)

*The completed chart above is just an example. In order to meet NAEYC Standard 7, the two field experiences selected for this chart must demonstrate that candidates have field or clinical assignments in at least two of the three early childhood age groups and in at least two different early education settings.*

A **rubric** for reviewers is included in the Standards, Key Elements and Rubrics section of this document.

Age groups are defined as: Birth through age 3, 3 through 5 years, and 5 through 8 years

Locations or Settings are defined as: Primary or elementary school, child care center or home, and Head Start.

The narrative in NCATE Program Report Template “Section I – Context, Item 2 Description of the field and clinical experiences required for the program” should explain how the program ensures high *quality field experiences*. Quality field experiences support candidates to understand and apply the competencies reflected in the NAEYC standards as they observe, implement and receive constructive feedback in real world early learning settings. Programs are encouraged to consider the “indicators of strength” listed in the Supporting Explanation of Standard 7 when writing this narrative.

**In Advanced Programs**, field experiences should be designed to support candidate competence in the specialized professional roles identified as a program focus such as accomplished early childhood teacher, early childhood teacher educator, early childhood researcher or early childhood policy maker.

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## STANDARDS RUBRICS FOR INITIAL AND ADVANCED PROGRAMS

### *INTRODUCTION*

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As part of the process of standards revision, NCATE requires all specialty organizations to construct rubrics that are linked to the standards. The rubrics submitted here are refinements of those used by NAEYC in its program reviews over the past seven years. They have been refined in light of feedback from programs, reviewers, audit team members and the NAEYC Commission, in the interest of consistency of NAEYC decisions across accreditation and recognition systems.

There are three **content standards**: 1) early childhood development, 2) role of families and communities in lives of young children, and 3) generalist content in the academic disciplines that comprise an early childhood curriculum.

#### **Preponderance of the evidence policy**

NAEYC applies the SASB policy that program review decisions be based on the preponderance of evidence at the standards level. The rubrics describe a holistic view of the standard and its key elements. Programs will meet the standards and their key elements in ways designed to support the program's unique mission, candidate characteristics, unit and institutional goals, and state context.

- Every NAEYC standard must be met to earn NAEYC recognition.

- A standard may be reviewed as met without each key element being met, if the preponderance of evidence indicates that the standard is met.

*Considering the preponderance of the evidence* is more complex than an arithmetical "are the majority of elements met?" or "how many elements can be not met?" Reviewers are asked to make professional judgments, considering the following questions as they review each standard.

Do the program descriptions, assessment tools and performance data provide sufficient evidence that

- Candidates are mastering the related knowledge base at the appropriate level (Initial or Advanced) with the breadth and depth indicated in the Supporting explanation?
- Candidates have demonstrated ability to apply that knowledge base in practice at the appropriate level (Initial or Advanced)?
- Candidates are developing early childhood expertise across the birth through age 8 early childhood period?
- Candidates are prepared for work with diverse children and families and are developing cultural competence?



## Data Expectations

There are no special NAEYC data requirements. NAEYC reviews for compliance with NCATE data requirements. According to NCATE policy, data needs to be disaggregated by standard, but does not need to be disaggregated by key element. Programs are expected to submit data from two applications of each assessment.

When data indicates less than satisfactory candidate performance on a standard, programs are expected to analyze and respond to support candidate learning. NAEYC does not set a threshold level of performance for assessments or threshold percentage of candidates who should perform at a particular level on an assessment. It is the responsibility of the program to set these thresholds in ways that are responsive to their mission, candidates, institution and state.

## Rubric Terminology

Rubrics are intentionally drawn from the key elements and supporting explanations of each standard, but key elements are not used as a scoring system. Reviewers make a global judgment about whether evidence shows that each standard is met as a whole. NAEYC uses the following terminology to describe levels of performance:

**DOES NOT YET MEET EXPECTATIONS:** Program evidence does not show that candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the standard at the appropriate level.

**MEETS, WITH CONDITIONS:** Program evidence shows that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the standard, but essential areas for improvement are identified.

**MEETS EXPECTATIONS:** Program evidence shows that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the standard at the appropriate level.

**EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS/TARGET:** This decision should be used only when 1) candidates' performance *meets* the expectations described for the standard at the appropriate level with many opportunities to learn, practice and develop competence related to the standard *and* 2) specific, unique, innovative or otherwise notable strengths are being commended in the Recognition Report.

*Notable strengths many include* specific innovation, partnerships or other program activities that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field. Examples include participation in innovative initiatives, partnerships, research projects, or sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time. Programs must be able to connect these activities to one or more NAEYC standards.

## Expectations for Advanced Programs

Advanced Programs meet each standard in ways that are consistent with the span or range of knowledge, cognitive demands and skill requirements described in the *Advance Key Elements and Supporting Explanation*. In some standards, key elements are expanded to indicate advanced levels of understanding and performance. In all standards, Advanced programs build upon and expand the knowledge base and competence of candidates who already have Initial early childhood licensure or other initial early childhood studies. Advanced programs build increased depth and breadth appropriate to the areas of specialization identified by the program.

*Possible areas of specialization include:* Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Early Childhood Administrator, Early Childhood Policy and Advocacy Specialist, Early Childhood Teacher Educator, Early Childhood Researcher, and Other areas identified by the program.

**RUBRIC STANDARD 1. PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

Candidates use their understanding of young children’s characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children’s development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

**1a: Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs**

**1b: Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning**

**1c: Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments**

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates’ performance meets the Initial level expectations described in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates’ performance meets the expectations described for the standard with the breadth and depth indicated in the key elements and supporting explanation with competence appropriate for an Initial, beginning early childhood teacher.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent <i>and</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul>

<p>those described in the standard.</p> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate candidate performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>described in the standard.</p> <p>Scoring guides or rubrics generally provide qualitative distinctions between levels of performance.</p> <p><i>Performance data</i> is disaggregated by standard and program, indicating that candidate work reflects <i>current, evidence-based knowledge</i> of child development in most respects and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is knowledgeable about all <i>domains</i> of development across the birth through age 8 early childhood period and interrelationships among domains</li> <li>• Uses understanding of <i>multiple influences</i> on child development and interaction between influences including diverse cultural contexts, economic conditions of families, health status and disabilities, individual developmental variations, and family and community characteristics.</li> <li>• <i>Understands, applies and can cite the essentials of developmental theory, research and the principles</i> that they are using to create healthy, respectful, supporting and challenging environments.</li> </ul> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</p>	<p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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Additional expectations for Advanced programs		
Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Advanced level expectations described in the key elements and supporting explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate or use performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the Advanced standard as indicated in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation. The program builds on and expands candidates' Initial early childhood knowledge and experience.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent</li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment tools are appropriate to identified areas of specialization (Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Administrator, Policy Specialist, Teacher Educator, Researcher...)</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning.</p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li><li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li></ul>
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**RUBRIC STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

Candidates know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.

**2a: Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics**

**2b: Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships**

**2c: Involving families and communities in their children’s development and learning**

Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets and Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates’ performance meets the Initial level expectations described in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates’ performance meets the expectations described for the standard with the breadth and depth indicated in the key elements and supporting explanation with competence appropriate for an Initial, beginning early childhood teacher.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent <i>and</i></li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform</li> </ul>

<p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate candidate performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Scoring guides or rubrics generally provide qualitative distinctions between levels of performance.</p> <p><i>Performance data</i> is disaggregated by standard and program, indicating that candidate work reflects <i>current, evidence-based knowledge</i> of diverse families and communities in most respects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understands, applies and can cite the essentials of family theory, research and principles</i> used to understand families and communities. Knows significant characteristics of the families and communities in which they practice.</li> <li>• Is developing a <i>repertoire of approaches</i> to support respectful, reciprocal communication and relationship building with diverse families and communities.</li> <li>• <i>Uses knowledge of families' goals, language, culture, and individual characteristics to build relationships</i> and engage families in children's learning from birth through age 8 with competence appropriate for an Initial / beginning early childhood teacher.</li> </ul> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</p>	<p>program planning</p> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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Additional expectations for Advanced programs		
Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Advanced level expectations described in the key elements and supporting explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate or use performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the Advanced standard as indicated in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation. The program builds on and expands candidates' Initial early childhood knowledge and experience.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent</li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment tools are appropriate to identified areas of specialization (Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Administrator, Policy Specialist, Teacher Educator, Researcher...)</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning.</p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li><li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li></ul>
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**STANDARD 3. OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Candidates know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to support children’s development and learning.

**3a: Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment**

**3b: Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches**

**3c: Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child**

**3d: Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and other professionals with professional colleagues**

Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets and Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates’ performance meets the Initial level expectations described in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates’ performance meets the expectations described for the standard with the breadth and depth indicated in the key elements and supporting explanation with competence appropriate for an Initial, beginning early childhood teacher.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent <i>and</i></li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform</li> </ul>

<p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate candidate performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Scoring guides or rubrics generally provide qualitative distinctions between levels of performance.</p> <p><i>Performance data</i> is disaggregated by standard and program, indicating that candidate work reflects <i>current, evidence-based knowledge</i> of diverse families and communities in most respects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understands and applies current, evidence-based knowledge about assessment</i> and uses that knowledge to understand goals, benefits and uses of assessment from birth through age 8.</li> <li>• Is learning about and practicing a <i>repertoire of assessment tools and approaches</i> with understanding of their different purposes, strengths and limitations.</li> <li>• Is learning to use these in <i>responsible, legal and ethical</i> ways that are appropriate to the child and that can be used to refine teaching strategies.</li> <li>• <i>Able to collaborate with families and other professionals</i> to reflect on assessment results to improve teaching and promote positive child outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and</p>	<p>program planning</p> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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	learning and to inform program planning	
<b>Additional expectations for Advanced programs</b>		
<b>Does Not Met Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Advanced level expectations described in the key elements and supporting explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate or use performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the Advanced standard as indicated in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation. The program builds on and expands candidates' Initial early childhood knowledge and experience.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent</li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment tools are appropriate to identified areas of specialization (Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Administrator, Policy Specialist, Teacher Educator, Researcher...)</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning.</p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships</li> </ul>

		<p>or research projects <i>or</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li><li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li></ul>
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**NAEYC STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO CONNECT WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.

**4a: Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with children**

**4b: Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education**

**4c: Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching /learning approaches**

**4d: Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child**

Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets and Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates’ performance meets the Initial level expectations described in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates’ performance meets the expectations described for the standard with the breadth and depth indicated in the key elements and supporting explanation with competence appropriate for an Initial, beginning early childhood teacher.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> </ul>

<p>equivalent <i>or</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate candidate performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>or consistent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The span or range of knowledge is equivalent <i>and</i></li> <li>The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Scoring guides or rubrics generally provide qualitative distinctions between levels of performance.</p> <p><i>Performance data</i> is disaggregated by standard and program, indicating that candidate work reflects <i>current, evidence-based knowledge</i> of diverse families and communities in most respects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Understands and applies current, research-based knowledge about the importance of positive relationships and interactions with diverse children and families.</i></li> <li><i>Practices teaching tools and strategies that are appropriate for children from birth through age 8 including planning environments and routines; creating supports for play, social interaction and use of technology; integrating curriculum; and addressing challenging behaviors.</i></li> <li><i>Is practicing a continuum of teaching approaches that scaffold and support learning for children from birth</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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	<p>through age 8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to <i>reflect on own practice</i> to intentionally respond to and support each child, varying approaches depending on each child’s age, individual characteristics, family and cultural context.</li> </ul> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</p>	
<p><b>Additional expectations for Advanced programs</b></p>		
Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates’ performance meets the Advanced level expectations described in the key elements and supporting explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate or use performance data related to the</i></p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates’ performance meets the expectations described for the Advanced standard as indicated in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation. The program builds on and expands candidates’ Initial early childhood knowledge and experience.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent</li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul>



<p><i>standard.</i></p>	<p>described in the standard.</p> <p>Assessment tools are appropriate to identified areas of specialization (Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Administrator, Policy Specialist, Teacher Educator, Researcher...)</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning.</p>	<p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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**NAEYC STANDARD 5. USING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CURRICULUM**

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

**5a: Understanding content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines**

**5b: Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines**

**5c: Using their own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curricula for each child**

Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets and Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Initial level expectations described in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the standard with the breadth and depth indicated in the key elements and supporting explanation with competence appropriate for an Initial, beginning early childhood teacher.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate candidate performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>or consistent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The span or range of knowledge is equivalent <i>and</i></li> <li>The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Scoring guides or rubrics generally provide qualitative distinctions between levels of performance.</p> <p><i>Performance data</i> is disaggregated by standard and program, indicating that candidate work reflects <i>current, evidence-based knowledge</i> of diverse families and communities in most respects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Understands and applies current, research-based knowledge of content in each academic discipline</i> using authoritative sources for continuing development of own knowledge.</li> <li>Uses <i>central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of each content area</i> to understand child assessment results and to plan and implement meaningful, challenging learning experiences for young children.</li> <li>Uses <i>own knowledge, early learning standards, and other resources for each academic discipline</i> to plan integrated curriculum or projects from a sound academic knowledge base, varying approaches depending on each child's</li> </ul>	<p><i>and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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	<p>age, individual characteristics, family and cultural context.</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</p>	
<b>Additional expectations for Advanced programs</b>		
<b>Does Not Met Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Advanced level expectations described in the key elements and supporting explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate or use performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the Advanced standard as indicated in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation. The program builds on and expands candidates' Initial early childhood knowledge and experience.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent</li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment tools are appropriate to identified areas of specialization (Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Administrator, Policy</p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical</p>

	<p>Specialist, Teacher Educator, Researcher...)</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning.</p>	<p>issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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## 6. BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL

Candidates identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

**6a: Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field**

**6b: Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines**

**6c: Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice**

**6d: Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education**

**6e: Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession**

Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets and Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Initial level expectations described in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the standard with the breadth and depth indicated in the key elements and supporting explanation with competence appropriate for an Initial, beginning early childhood teacher.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Initial Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate candidate performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent <i>and</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Scoring guides or rubrics generally provide qualitative distinctions between levels of performance.</p> <p><i>Performance data</i> is disaggregated by standard and program, indicating that candidate work reflects <i>current, evidence-based knowledge</i> of diverse families and communities in most respects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identifies with the early childhood field</i> and is knowledgeable about its distinctive history, ethics, standards, and advocacy issues.</li> <li>• Uses <i>the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and other early childhood professional guidelines</i> to understand professional roles, responsibilities and challenges.</li> <li>• Engages in <i>continuous collaborative learning, critical analysis and reflection</i> about one practice, issues in the field.</li> <li>• Understands central policy issues in the field and is developing the skills for engagement in informed <i>advocacy</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> <li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li> </ul>
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	Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning	
<b>Additional expectations for Advanced programs</b>		
<b>Does Not Met Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> that candidates' performance meets the Advanced level expectations described in the key elements and supporting explanation.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are not aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are not the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is not equivalent <i>or</i></li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are not congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p><i>If assessment tools are not aligned, it is not possible to generate or use performance data related to the standard.</i></p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that, in general, candidates' performance meets the expectations described for the Advanced standard as indicated in the Key Elements and Supporting Explanation. The program builds on and expands candidates' Initial early childhood knowledge and experience.</p> <p><i>Assessment tools</i> are aligned with the Advanced Standard, Key Elements and Supporting Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The categories of content are the same or consistent</li> <li>• The span or range of knowledge is equivalent</li> <li>• The cognitive demands and skill requirements are congruent with those described in the standard.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment tools are appropriate to identified areas of specialization (Accomplished Early Childhood Teacher, Administrator, Policy Specialist, Teacher Educator, Researcher...)</p> <p>Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and</p>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment tools meet expectations</li> <li>• Performance data meets expectations <i>and</i></li> <li>• Program is <i>using data</i> to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or</li> </ul>



	learning and to inform program planning.	transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li><li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li></ul>
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**STANDARD 7. FIELD EXPERIENCES**

Field experiences and clinical practice are planned and sequenced so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to promote the development and learning of young children across the entire developmental period of early childhood – in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3-5, 5-8) and in the variety of settings that offer early education (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

**Key elements of Standard 7**

7a. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3-5, 5-8)

7b. Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs)

Does Not Met Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets and Exceeds Expectations/Target
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> substantive field experiences with opportunities to observe and practice in relation to the standards across the early childhood developmental period and in multiple early learning settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are field experiences in only one of the early childhood age groups <i>and</i></li> <li>• There are field experiences in only one early learning setting</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that candidates are provided with substantive field experiences with opportunities to observe and practice in relation to the standards across the early childhood developmental period and in multiple early learning settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early childhood age groups <i>and</i></li> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early learning settings</li> </ul>	<p><i>There is strong evidence that</i> candidates are provided with extensive, developmental opportunities to gain <i>in-depth understanding</i> of the early childhood developmental period and of the variety of settings that offer early education.</p> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early childhood age groups <i>and</i></li> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early learning settings</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical</p>

		<p>issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li> <li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li> </ul> <p>That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</p>
<p><b>Additional expectations for Advanced programs</b></p>		
<p><b>Does Not Met Expectations</b></p>	<p><b>Meets Expectations</b></p>	<p><b>Exceeds Expectations</b></p>
<p>Program evidence <i>does not show</i> substantive field experiences with opportunities to observe and develop advanced understanding and practice in relation to the standards across the early childhood developmental period and in multiple early learning settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are field experiences in only one of the early childhood age groups <i>and</i></li> <li>• There are field experiences in only one early learning setting</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that candidates are provided with substantive field experiences with opportunities to observe and practice in relation to the standards across the early childhood developmental period and in multiple early learning settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early childhood age groups <i>and</i></li> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early learning settings</li> </ul>	<p>Program evidence <i>shows</i> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The program <i>meets</i> all expectations for this standard at the Initial level <i>and</i></li> <li>2) Demonstrates <i>specific strengths</i> that are innovative, transformative, responsive to critical issues in the field, or indicate sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program improvements over a period of time.</li> </ol> <p>Using the column at left</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early childhood age groups <i>and</i></li> <li>• There are field experiences in at least two early learning settings</li> </ul> <p>Program report indicates specific unique or</p>

		<p>innovative strengths in relation to this standard that respond to needs of candidates, to community or state context, or to critical issues in field including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation in innovative or transformative initiatives, partnerships or research projects <i>or</i></li><li>• Sustained and meaningful use of data to inform program planning over time,</li><li>• That support candidate learning and performance on the standard.</li></ul>
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## ALIGNMENT OF NAEYC INITIAL STANDARDS WITH SASB PRINCIPLES

NAEYC is a constituent member of National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), recognized as the specialized professional association or “SPA” for early childhood teacher education. NAEYC standards are approved by the NCATE Specialty Area Standards Board (SASB) and are aligned with the four SASB Principles. Those principles are in turn aligned with NCATE Unit Standard 1.

NCATE has aligned the SASB principles with InTASC Principles and NBPTS Core Propositions as presented below. InTASC principles are written for beginning teachers. NBPTS standards are written for more accomplished teachers who have completed a bachelor’s degree, hold teacher licensure if required, and have three years of teaching experience. NAEYC’s standards for undergraduate and initial early childhood licensure programs will align most closely with InTASC Principles. NAEYC’s standards for advanced programs will align most closely with NBPTS Core Propositions.

The NAEYC Initial and Advanced Standards are in use by baccalaureate and graduate programs seeking NCATE accreditation, by state early childhood professional development systems and the NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation. The matrix on the following page is intended to make alignment across NAEYC, NCATE, INTASC and NBPTS more visible to the field.

NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards

NAEYC Standard	NCATE SASB Principle	NCATE Unit Standard (Element)	InTASC Principle	NBPTS Core Proposition
1. Promoting Child Development and Learning	1. Content Knowledge	1. Content Knowledge	1. Content of disciplines taught	2. Knowledge of subjects taught
2. Building Family and Community Relationships	1. Content Knowledge	1. Content Knowledge	1. Content of disciplines taught	2. Knowledge of subjects taught
3. Observing, Documenting and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families	3. Learning Environments	1. Content Pedagogy	2. Student learning 3. Diverse learners 4. Instructional strategies 5. Learning environments 6. Communication 7. Planning instruction 8. Assessment	1. Student learning 2. Knowledge of subjects taught 3. Assessment
4. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families	2. Content Pedagogy	1. Content Pedagogy	2. Student learning 3. Diverse learners 4. Instructional strategies 5. Learning environments 6. Communication 7. Planning instruction 8. Assessment	1. Student learning 2. Knowledge of subjects taught 3. Assessment
5. Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum	1. Content Knowledge	1. Content Knowledge	1. Content of disciplines taught	2. Knowledge of subjects taught
6. Becoming a Professional	4. Professional knowledge and skills	2. Content Pedagogy	9. Reflective practice and professional development 10. Relationships with colleagues, parents and community agencies	4. Reflective practice and learning 5. Learning communities
7. Field Experiences	This is a programmatic standard that describes required settings in which candidates learn and practice the professional knowledge and skills described in NAEYC Standards 1-6. It supports and expands NCATE unit standard			

## THE 2008-2010 NAEYC STANDARDS WORKGROUPS

### *2008-2009 NAEYC Position Statement Work Group*

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**Rebecca Brinks**

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Chair, Commission on NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation

**Julie Bullard**

Director, Early Childhood Education, University of Montana – Western  
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