

Dear Early Childhood Field,

In September 2018, we released the first Public Draft of the *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*. We are thrilled by and appreciative of the extensive feedback you provided throughout the public comment period! Nearly 700 individuals responded to the survey; almost 20 individuals and national organizations submitted letters; and there was robust participation in the informational webinar and during Annual Conference sessions as well as at events across the country. We heard you and, after four months of intensive work, are pleased to now release the second Public Draft for your consideration. But first, below are a few themes from the feedback:

- The vast majority of the field supported revisions in the standards and competencies. The majority of concerns cited related to Standards One (Child Development and Learning in Context) and Two (Family Partnerships). These concerns addressed educators' responsibilities and competencies particularly related to social justice, diversity, and equity. Themes from the feedback included the need for the document to:
  - Be pragmatic
  - Be inclusive and accessible
    - Avoid jargon and use language that is more accessible to readers at all levels;
    - Use language that will reach and be used by more conservative teachers, programs, and states;
    - Include more age-band examples throughout the document so that early childhood educators working across the birth-eight continuum see themselves in the standards and competencies.
  - Be specific
    - Differentiate what should be expected at all levels and what reflects advanced or graduate levels of understanding and practice.
- In addition, many respondents supported the standards but had questions about how the profession will support individuals in attaining the competencies and whether individuals will be compensated for their expertise.

In this second Public Draft (**comment period open through June 14**), the workgroup informing the revisions has made further adjustments to the standards and competencies to reflect the field's feedback. In addition, several other documents are included in this draft: references for each standard, a glossary, and, most importantly, a first draft of the leveling of the standards and competencies to the ECE I, II and III levels recommended in *Power to the Profession*.

This draft reflects efforts to capture and ultimately resolve a decades-long discussion and debate about distinctions between the early childhood associate and baccalaureate degrees. It

is not, however, a final document, and as such, demands and will deeply benefit from thorough consideration by the field. Higher education faculty members, in particular, are needed to reflect and respond about similarities and differences in the depth and breadth of early childhood content in these programs. We anticipate – and desire – robust feedback from you to help make a first iteration of the leveling aligned with the ECE I, II and III scopes of practice, reflective of the current content in associate and baccalaureate programs as well as the updated content included in the Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators.

For those who want to dig into the leveling, we suggest that you first focus on the level with which you are most familiar. Think about whether:

- The content in that level reflects the current content in your program;
- The content reflects the scope of practice laid out in Power to the Profession for that level;
- The content reasonably pushes the envelope for programs at that level to master the updated content in the Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators.

After reflecting on content for the level with which you are most familiar, look across the other levels and consider whether the similarities and differences across the levels are reasonable.

As a reminder, much like the *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*, the leveling is a living document. It will need to be updated periodically by the profession to maintain its currency. The leveling is meant to serve as a guide to professional preparation programs, early childhood educator licensing systems, state early childhood competencies, performance evaluation systems and other components of the early childhood ecosystem.

We are eager to hear from the field on this second public draft of the *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators* and the first draft of the Leveling! There are many ways to share your feedback, and we hope that you use - and encourage others to use - as many outlets as possible.

- This survey will be open through June 14.
- Throughout the public comment period, we are offering office hours so that you can share your feedback directly. [Sign up for office hours here.](#)
- If you are interested in holding a Discussion Group, either in your workplace or at an event, we strongly encourage you to use the Discussion Group Toolkit

available on the NAEYC website to capture and share the responses of your colleagues.

- If you are attending NAEYC's PLI in June, there will be a session on this draft, and opportunities at the NAECTE and ACCESS meetings to share your feedback.

We are counting on your support to make the final *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators* strong and meaningful. These will be foundational documents for the profession, and we will all be responsible for implementing them throughout the early childhood ecosystem.

Thank you for your continued contributions to this work!

Sincerely,  
Elisa Huss-Hage  
Chair, Early Learning System Committee  
NAEYC Governing Board

DRAFT

# Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

(Formerly NAEYC’s position statement on “NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation”, 2009)

Public Draft #2  
April 2019

## NAEYC Position Statement

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# Introduction

This update to the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation responds to the charge from the [Power to the Profession Task Force](#) to create nationally agreed-upon professional competencies (knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills) for early childhood educators. As such, it revises the NAEYC Position Statement on Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation (2009) and expands the intent of the standards and competencies to be applied across the early childhood field, not just in higher education professional preparation programs. It elevates diversity and equity and responds to the critical competencies identified and gaps in current competencies identified in the seminal 2015 Transforming the Workforce report. It levels the standards to the scopes of practice for each early childhood educator designation; ECE I, ECE II, ECE III. It lays out recommendations for implementation of the standards for multiple stakeholders in the early childhood education field.

Details about the history of NAEYC's standards and the context in which these updated standards were developed can be found in Appendices B and E.

**Relationship of this position statement to other NAEYC position statements:** This position statement is one of five foundational documents NAEYC has developed in stewardship for the early childhood profession. While its specific focus is on defining the core standards and competencies for early childhood educators, this statement complements and supports the other foundational documents that (1) define developmentally appropriate practice(LINK) , (2) advance equity in early childhood education (LINK), (3) define the profession's code of ethics (LINK), and (4) outline standards for early learning programs (LINK). The Standards in this position statement are aligned with the five areas of teacher decision making described in Developmentally Appropriate Practice:

- Using the core considerations of knowledge and twelve principles of child development and learning to create a caring community of learners (Standard 1),
- establishing reciprocal relationships with families (Standard 2),
- assessing children's development and learning (Standard 3),
- teaching to enhance development and learning (Standard 4),
- understanding and using the content areas in the birth through age 8 to plan curriculum to achieve important goals (Standard 5).

The key elements of Standard 6 Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator pull forward the knowledge, skills and dispositions that early educators need in order to make decisions that exemplify ethical, intentional and reflective professional judgment and practice.

These foundational statements are grounded in NAEYC's core values that emphasize diversity and inclusion by acknowledging dignity and worth of each individual. The statements are built upon a growing body of research and professional knowledge that underscores the complex and critical ways in which early childhood educators promote early learning through their

relationships—with children, families, and colleagues—that are embedded in a broader societal context.

## Purpose

The position statement presents the essential body of knowledge, skills, dispositions and practices required of **all early childhood educators** working with children **from birth through age eight, across all early learning settings**. It supports a sustained vision of excellence for early childhood educators. It is intentionally developed not only to guide the preparation and practice of the early childhood education profession but also for use by others in the early childhood field. It is intended to serve as the core early childhood standards and competencies for the field from which states can develop more detailed standards and competencies to address their specific contexts. Ideally, the field will use it to align critical professional and policy structures, including:

- State licensing for early childhood educators
- State and national early childhood educator credentials and related qualification recommendations or requirements
- Expectations of educator competency in early learning program settings through job descriptions and performance evaluation tools
- National accreditation of early childhood professional preparation programs
- State approval of early childhood educator preparation and training, and
- Articulation agreements between various levels and types of professional preparation and development programs.

## The Position

Early childhood educators are critical to realizing the early childhood profession’s vision for every young child, birth through age eight, to have equitable access to high-quality learning and care environments. As such, there is a core body of knowledge, skills, values and dispositions early childhood educators must demonstrate to effectively support the development, learning and well-being of all young children. These are captured in the “Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators” later in this statement. These standards will be updated regularly to respond to new developments in the early childhood field, new research, and changing social and policy contexts.

These standards and competencies are informed by:

- Research and practice that advances our understanding of what early childhood educators need to know and be able to do
- Early childhood standards as well as educator standards from other professional organizations
- The current context of the early childhood workforce and higher education
- The imperatives from the unified framework developed through Power to the Profession

The updated standards and competencies were informed by a broad-based workgroup (see Appendix F) and the early childhood field.

## Design and Structure of the Professional Standards and Competencies

**Comprehensive, not exhaustive:** These standards and competencies represent the core domains of knowledge and practice required of every early childhood educator and provide a baseline of expectations for mastery of these domains. They are not meant to represent an exhaustive list of what an early childhood educator should know and be able to do in order to serve young children, birth through age eight. For preparation programs, certification/licensure bodies, accrediting bodies, state early childhood career ladders, educator evaluation systems, etc., these competencies may be expanded upon, as needed, to address specific state and local contexts and include more discrete competencies.

**Aligned to the responsibilities of early childhood educators:** These standards and competencies align to the ECE responsibilities designated by the Power to the Profession framework:

- Planning and implementing intentional, developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate learning experiences that promote the Social-Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Cognitive Development, Language and Literacy Development, and General Learning Competencies of each child served (Standards 4 and 5);
- Establishing and maintaining a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy learning environment (Standards 1 and 4);
- Observing, documenting and assessing children’s learning and development using guidelines established by the profession (Standard 3 and 6);
- Developing reciprocal, culturally responsive relationships with families and communities (Standard 2);
- Advocating for the needs of children and their families (Standard 6);
- Advancing and advocating for an equitable, diverse, and effective early childhood education profession (Standard 6); and
- Engaging in reflective practice and continuous learning (Standards 4 and 6).

**Aligned to InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards:** Early childhood educators work in concert with the rest of the birth-12th grade teaching workforce. As such, the *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators* are aligned to the larger education field’s understanding of effective teaching as expressed through the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards. See Appendix B for an alignment chart.



**Integrated content:** Diversity, equity, inclusive practices and technology do not have separate standards; rather these important content areas are elevated and integrated in the context of each standard.

**Intentionally higher-level language:** The language used in the standards and competencies is based in the science of human learning and development and reflects the technical language of research and evidence used in this profession. In their preparation, early childhood educators will be introduced to the terminology and concepts found throughout this document.

**Simplified structure:** The major domains of competencies are captured in six core standards. Each standard describes in a few sentences what early childhood educators need to know and be able to do. It is important to note, then, that the standard is not just that early childhood educators know something “about” child development and the science of effective learning—the expectations are more specific and complex. Each standard comprises three to five “key competencies” to clarify the standard’s most important features. These key competencies break out components of each standard, highlighting what early childhood educators need to know, understand, and be able to do. There is a “supporting explanation” that is tied to each key competency that describes how candidates demonstrate that competency.

**Leveling of the standards and competencies to ECE I, II and III:** The draft recommendations in [Decision Cycle 345](#) of Power to the Profession lay out three designation levels, with associated scopes of practice, for early childhood educators – ECE I, ECE II and ECE III.

# Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

## Summary of Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

### **Standard 1. Child Development and Learning in Context**

**1a:** Understanding the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age eight across domains and areas such as physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and linguistic (including bilingual development)

**1b:** Understanding and valuing each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities

**1c:** Understanding the ways that child development and the learning process occur within multiple contexts, including family, culture, language, and community as well as within a larger societal context of structural inequities

**1d:** Using this multidimensional knowledge (developmental period of early childhood, individual child, development and learning in cultural context) to make evidence-based decisions that support each child

### **Standard 2. Family and Community Partnerships**

**2a:** Knowing about, understanding and valuing the diversity of families and communities

**2b:** Engaging as partners with families in young children's development and learning through respectful and reciprocal relationships

**2c:** Using community resources to support families and young children as well as working to support the community

### **Standard 3. Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment**

**3a:** Understanding that assessment (formal and informal, formative and summative) is conducted to make informed choices and for planning in early learning settings

**3b:** Knowing a wide range of types of assessments, their purposes, and their associated methods and tools

**3c:** Practicing assessment that is ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child

**3d:** Building assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues

### **Standard 4. Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Strategies**

**4a:** Understanding positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation of early childhood educators' work with young children

**4b:** Understanding that the science of learning and child development indicates the need for distinct teaching skills and strategies appropriate to early childhood, along with differentiated instruction to support children’s individual needs, including those of bilingual children and children with developmental delays or disabilities

**4c:** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias and evidence-based teaching skills and strategies that reflect universal design for learning principles

**4d:** Developing and sustaining reflective, responsive and intentional practice

### **Standard 5. Content Knowledge in Early Childhood Curriculum**

**5a:** Understanding *content knowledge* and resources—the central concepts, methods, inquiry and application tools, and structures—of the academic disciplines in an early education curriculum (e.g., science, math, language, social sciences)

**5b:** Understanding *pedagogical content knowledge*—how young children learn in each discipline—and how to use the teacher knowledge and practices described in Standards 1 through 4 to support young children’s learning in each content area

**5c:** Applying, expanding, integrating and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, knowledge of curriculum content resources, and pedagogical content knowledge to their teaching practice

### **Standard 6. Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator**

**6a:** Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field and serving as an informed advocate

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

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

**6d:** Integrating knowledgeable and critical perspectives on early childhood education and developing the habit of intentional, reflective practice

**6e.** Using strong communication skills to effectively support young children’s learning and development and work with families and colleagues

## Standard 1. Child Development and Learning in Context

Early childhood educators are grounded in an understanding of the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age eight across developmental domains (a). They understand each child as an individual with unique developmental variations (b). They understand that children develop within relationships, that learning is constructed by adults and children together and occurs within the context of families, cultures, languages, communities and society (c). They use this multidimensional knowledge to make evidence-based decisions to carry out their responsibilities (d).

### **Key competencies and supporting explanations of Standard 1**

#### **1a: Understanding the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age eight across domains and areas such as physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and linguistic (including bilingual development).**

Early childhood educators base their practice on sound understanding of the typical developmental processes and trajectories in early childhood development and learning from birth through age eight. They understand generally accepted principles of child development and learning. They are aware of the limitations of traditional child development theories and research based primarily on a normative perspective of white, middle-class children in educated families. Thus they consider multiple sources of evidence to expand their understanding of child development and learning. They have foundational knowledge of child development processes and trajectories across multiple, interrelated areas including physical, cognitive, social, and emotional domains; linguistic (including bilingual) development; early brain development including executive function; and the development of learning motivation and life skills. They understand the roles of biology and environment; the importance of interactions and relationships; the critical role of play; and the impact of stress and adversity on young children's development. They know about and can discuss theoretical perspectives and research that ground and continue to shape this knowledge.

#### **1b: Understanding and valuing each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities.**

Early childhood educators recognize that children develop and learn as individuals. They value and learn about each child's unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities. They understand the importance of responsive, reciprocal relationships with individual babies, toddlers, preschoolers and young children in early school grades. They learn about each child through observation, open-ended questions and conversation, reflection on children's work and play, and reciprocal communication with children's families. Early educators understand that developmental variations among children is the norm, that each child's progress will vary across domains and disciplines, and that some children will need individualized supports for identified

developmental delays and disabilities. They expect to work with colleagues and families to learn how to best support and scaffold development and learning for each and every child.

**1c: Understanding the ways that child development and the learning process occur within multiple contexts, including family, culture, language, and community as well as within a larger societal context of structural inequities.**

Early childhood educators understand that each child learns and grows in multiple cultural contexts including family, community, school, and society. They know that young children's learning and identity is shaped and supported by their close relationships with and attachments to adults and peers and by the cultural identities, languages, values and traditions of their families and communities. They recognize the benefits of growing up as a bilingual or multi-lingual learner and the importance of supporting the development of children's home languages. They know that young children are more likely to live in poverty than any other age group and understand how poverty and income inequality impacts children's development. Early childhood educators understand that all children and families are impacted by our society's persistent structural inequities related to race, language, gender, socioeconomic class, and other characteristics that can have long-term effects on children's learning and development. Early childhood educators also understand that early childhood programs themselves are communities of learners with the potential for long-term influence on children's lives. They understand that the social and cultural contexts of early learning settings and themselves, as early childhood educators, influence the delivery of early childhood education and care of the young children they serve.

**1d: Using this multidimensional knowledge (developmental period of early childhood, individual child, development and learning in cultural contexts) to make evidence-based decisions that support each child**

Early childhood educators engage in continuous decision making, integrating their knowledge of these three aspects of child development: (a. principles, processes and trajectories of early childhood development and learning; b. individual variations in child development and learning; and c. development and learning in context) to support each child and build a caring community of children and adults learning together. They know that young children are learning about the society in which they live and their place in it. They are developing **multiple social identities including race, language, culture, class, gender and others**. Early childhood educators apply this knowledge to develop and implement early childhood curriculum, select teaching practices, and create learning environments that are safe, healthy, respectful, culturally and linguistically responsive, supportive and challenging for each child. They recognize the role that early education plays in young children's short- and long-term physical, social, emotional and psychological health and its potential as a protective factor in their lives. They use this developmental knowledge as a foundation for their work related to family and community partnerships (Standard 2); child observation, documentation and assessment

(Standard 3), developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate teaching strategies (Standard 4), content knowledge in early childhood curriculum (Standard 5), and professionalism as an early childhood educator (Standard 6). In practicing this standard they:

- Apply their knowledge of contemporary theory, research, and birth-through-age-eight learning trajectories and processes in each curriculum area to construct safe and culturally and linguistically supportive learning environments that provide challenging and achievable experiences for each child through play, spontaneous interactions and exploration, and guided investigations.
- Understand that attention to continuity of care, secure relationships and support for transitions benefit all children.
- Respect each child as a feeling, thinking individual.
- Possess the skills needed to recognize and support the assets, strengths, and unique ways that young children make sense of the world, given variation in experiences, in abilities and social identities.
- Respect and value each child's culture, languages, abilities, temperament, family, and community, modeling
- Affirm an anti-bias approach to teaching and learning.
- Possess the knowledge and skills for healing-centered practices needed to support young children who have experienced adverse or traumatic experiences

#### **Sidebar**

##### **Related Resources**

This standard provides a general description of the importance of understanding and applying sound theoretical foundations in early child development. It also provides a general description of anti-bias education. See the following NAEYC publications as additional resources in understanding and expanding knowledge related to this standard.

- Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age eight (2009 and currently under revision)
- Advancing equity in early childhood education (in development)
- Anti-bias education

## Standard 2. Family Partnerships

Early childhood educators understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with young children’s families. They know about, understand, and value the importance of and diversity in family and community characteristics (a). They use this understanding to create respectful, culturally and linguistically responsive, reciprocal relationships and to engage as partners with families in young children’s development and learning (b). They use community resources to support young children’s learning and development and to support families as they also support partnerships with early learning settings, schools and community organizations and agencies (c).

### **Key competencies and supporting explanations of Standard 2**

#### **2a: Knowing about, understanding and valuing the diversity of families and communities**

Early childhood educators understand that each family is unique. They know about parental (or those serving in parental roles) and family development, the diversity of families and communities, and the many influences on families and communities. They have a knowledge base in family theory and research and the ways that various factors create the context for young children’s lives: socioeconomic conditions; family structures, relationships, stressors, adversity, and supports; home languages, and cultural values. Early childhood educators understand how to build on family assets and strengths within diverse settings. They reflect on their own values and potential biases in order to make professional decisions that affirm each family’s culture and language(s) (including dialects), respect various structures of families and different beliefs about parenting, and access community resources to support learning and development. They understand that young children thrive across various family structures.

#### **2b: Engaging as partners with families in young children’s development and learning through respectful and reciprocal relationships.**

Early childhood educators use their knowledge about diverse families and communities, demonstrating skills in building respectful, culturally and linguistically responsive, and reciprocal relationships with families to support young children’s development and learning. They take primary responsibility for initiating and sustaining respectful relations with families and caregivers and work with them to support their positive development. They learn with and from families, recognizing their expertise about their children for insight curriculum, program development, and assessment. They strive to honor families’ preferences, values, childrearing practices and goals when making decisions about young children’s development and care. They work with families to support children’s play in the curriculum, stable teacher-child relationships during early years, and transitions at home and at school. They share information about children in ways that families can understand and use. They use a variety of communication and engagement skills, including informal conversations and more formal conferences and technology seeking input from families’ regarding their preferred communication method and language as much as possible.

## **2c: Utilizing community resources to support families and young children as well as supporting respectful, reciprocal partnerships between early learning programs, schools and community organizations and agencies**

Early childhood educators demonstrate knowledge about and are skilled at using community resources to support young children’s learning and development and to support families’ well-being. They assist families in finding needed and high-quality resources and partnering with other early childhood experts (such as speech pathologists and school counselors) as needed to connect families to community cultural resources, mental health services, early childhood special education and early intervention services, health care, adult education, adult English as a second language courses, translation/interpretation services, and economic assistance. Regardless of their own work setting, all early educators support respectful, reciprocal partnerships among the various early learning programs and schools in their community as well as with community organizations and agencies.

### **Sidebar**

#### **Related Resources**

This standard provides a general description of the importance of building authentic, two-way partnerships with families and communities in early child education. See the following NAEYC publications as additional resources in understanding and expanding knowledge related to this standard.

- Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age eight (2009 and currently under revision)
- “Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education” (in development)



## Standard 3. Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

Early childhood educators understand that the primary purpose of assessment (formal and informal, formative and summative) is to inform instruction and planning in early learning settings. They understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals (a). They know how to use observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment approaches and tools (b). They are responsible and ethical in their use of assessment and assessment results (c). In partnership with families and professional colleagues, they document individual children's progress, and plan learning experiences that promote positive outcomes for each child (d).

### **Key competencies and supporting explanations of Standard 3**

#### **3a: Understanding that assessment (formal and informal, formative and summative) is conducted to make informed choices and for planning in early learning settings**

Early childhood educators understand that the primary purpose of assessment (both formal and informal, formative and summative) is to make informed choices and for planning in early learning settings. They are close observers of children who understand that effective, evidence-based teaching of young children is informed by thoughtful, appreciative, ongoing systematic observation and documentation of each child's learning process, qualities, strengths, interests and needs. They understand the importance of using assessments that are consistent with and connected to appropriate learning goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for individual young children. They understand assessment is a positive tool that supports continuity in young children's development and learning experiences. They understand the essentials of authentic and strengths-based assessment—such as age-appropriate approaches and culturally relevant assessment in a language the child understands and conducted by a speaker of that language—for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children in early grades across developmental domains and curriculum areas.

#### **3b: Knowing a wide-range of types of assessments, their purposes and their associated methods and tools.**

Early childhood educators are familiar with a wide range of types of assessments, their purposes, and the methods and tools used to conduct those assessments. They know a variety of types of assessment (formative, summative, qualitative, and quantitative standardized). They know a wide range of formal and informal observation methods, documentation strategies, screening tools, and other appropriate resources (including technology) and approaches to assess young children in order to help plan experiences that scaffold children's learning. They understand the strengths and limitations and of each assessment method and tool. They understand the components of the assessment cycle, concepts of assessment validity and reliability, the importance of systematic observations, interpreting those observations, and reflecting on their significance and impact on their teaching.

**3c: Practicing assessment that is ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child.**

Early childhood educators practice assessment that is ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child. This includes:

- Selecting developmentally, ability, culturally and linguistically appropriate approaches and tools; documenting each child's strengths and progress related to early learning trajectories and standards; and using assessment to evaluate and guide teaching practices and other supports to individualize strategies and goals for each child.
- Creating opportunities to observe young children in play and spontaneous conversation as well as in adult-structured assessment contexts.
- Understanding assessment issues and resources (such as technology) to identify and support young children with differing abilities, including children whose learning is advanced, those who are bilingual learners, and children with developmental delays and disabilities.
- Embedding assessment-related activities in curriculum and in daily routines to facilitate authentic assessment and to make assessment an integral part of professional practice.
- Analyzing data from a variety of assessment tools and using the data appropriately to inform teaching practices and to set learning and development goals for young children.
- Seeking assistance, when needed, on how to assess a particular child
- Knowing potentially harmful uses of inappropriate or inauthentic assessments and of inappropriate assessment policies in early education. If culturally or linguistically appropriate assessment tools are not available for particular young children, they are aware of the limitations of the available assessments. They use developmental screening to bring resources and supports to children and families and not to exclude children from educational programs and services.
- When not provided autonomy to create or select developmentally appropriate, authentic assessments due to the early learning setting policies (e.g. standardized assessments in PreK-3 settings) early childhood educators exercise professional judgement and work to minimize adverse impact on young children and on informing instructional practice. They advocate for and practice asset-based approaches to assessment and to the use of assessment information.
- Using assessment practices that reflect knowledge of legal and ethical issues, including confidentiality and current professional practices related to equity issues in the assessment of young children.
- In order to ensure fairness in their assessment of young children, they consider the potential for implicit bias in their use of assessment, their findings and their use of findings to plan for supporting young children's learning and development.

### 3d: Building assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues

Early childhood educators partner with families and other professionals to implement authentic asset-based assessments and develop individualized goals, curriculum plans and practices that support each child. This includes:

- Recognizing the assessment process as collaborative and open, benefitting from shared analysis and use of assessment results while respecting confidentiality and other professional guidelines.
- Encouraging self-assessment in children as appropriate, helping them to think about their own interests, goals, and accomplishments.
- Demonstrating essential knowledge and core skills in team building and in communicating with families (particularly ensuring that assessment results and planning based on those results is conveyed in a language understood by the families), teaching teams, and colleagues from other disciplines, including participating as professional partners in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams.

#### Sidebar

##### Related Resources

This standard provides a general description of developmentally appropriate assessment in early childhood education. See the following NAEYC publications as additional resources in understanding and expanding knowledge related to this standard.

- [Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age eight \(2009 and currently under revision\)](#)
- [Advancing equity in early childhood education \(in development\)](#)

## Standard 4. Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

Early childhood educators 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, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for their work with young children (a). They are able to differentiate instruction for individual children and for groups (b). They use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect universal design for learning principles. They understand the importance of play and inquiry in young children's learning and development and how to support play in early education (c). They develop and sustain reflective, responsive and intentional practice (d).

### **Key competencies and supporting explanations of Standard 4**

#### **4a: Understanding positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation of early childhood educators' work with young children**

Early childhood educators understand that all teaching and learning are facilitated by caring relationships and that lifelong dispositions, confidence, and approaches to learning are formed in early childhood. They know that positive and supportive relationships and interactions are the foundation for excellence in teaching practice with individual children as well as the foundation for creating a caring community of learners when working with groups of children. They know that how young children expect to be treated and how they treat others is significantly shaped in the early learning setting. They understand that each child brings his or her own experiences, knowledge, interests, motivations, abilities and culture and languages to the early learning setting and that part of the educator's role is to build a culture that respects and builds on this reality (Standard 1).

#### **4b: Understanding that the science of learning and child development indicates the need for distinct teaching skills and strategies appropriate to early childhood along with differentiated instruction to support children's individual needs, including bilingual children and children with developmental delays or disabilities**

Early childhood educators understand that young children require distinct teaching skills and strategies, appropriate to their age, development, individual characteristics, and the sociocultural, family context in which they live, and they can apply this knowledge in their instructional practice. They understand that differentiating instruction, based on professional judgment about individual children, including for bilingual children and children with developmental delays and disabilities and groups of young children to support important goals, is at the heart of developmentally appropriate practice.

#### **4c: Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias and evidence-based teaching skills and strategies that reflect universal design for learning principles**

Early childhood educators make purposeful use of a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflects universal design for learning principles, reflects understanding of young children from birth through age eight as individuals and as part of a group, and is in alignment with important educational and developmental goals. They understand the importance of both self-directed and guided play, as well as the role of inquiry, in young children's learning and development across domains and in the academic curriculum. They are familiar with the types and stages of play and with strategies to support and extend play across the full age and grade span of early education. They understand the development of executive function and life skills, including focus and self-control, perspective taking, critical thinking, communicating, making connections, taking on challenges, cooperation, conflict-resolution, problem solving, independence and confidence, planning, and self-directed engaged learning. They know that these skills develop through supportive, scaffolding interactions with adults and are an important part of the early childhood curriculum from birth through the early grades that leads to school readiness and success.

They apply knowledge about ages, abilities, cultures, languages, interests and experiences of individual young children to make professional judgments about the use of materials, the organization of indoor and outdoor physical space and materials, and the management of daily schedules and routines.

While not exhaustive, the repertoire of practices to draw upon across the birth through age 8 early childhood period includes:

- Supporting, stimulating and extending multiple forms of play as part of young children's learning (e.g., imitative play and social referencing in babies; solitary, parallel, social, cooperative, onlooker, fantasy, physical and constructive play in preschool and early grades), to develop symbolic and imaginative thinking, peer relationships, language, creative movement, and problem-solving skills.
- Creating environments that are physically and psychologically safe with consistent schedules and predictable routines;
- Designing teaching and learning environments that adhere to universal design for learning principles by incorporating a variety of ways for young children to gain access to the curriculum content, offer multiple methods to recruit children's active engagement, and include a range of formats for children to respond and demonstrate what they know and have learned.
- Differentiating teaching practices to respond to the individual strengths, needs, abilities, social identities, home cultures and languages, interests, motivations, and temperament, positive and adverse experiences of each child;

- Setting challenging and achievable goals for each child, helping children set their own goals as appropriate, and adjusting support to scaffold and/or extend young children's learning;
- Providing a secure, consistent, responsive relationship from which young children can explore and tackle challenging problems and develop self-regulation, social skills, independence, responsibility, perspective-taking skills, and cooperative learning to manage or regulate their expressions of emotion and, over time, to cope with frustration, develop resilience, learn to take on challenges, and manage impulses effectively;
- Responding to stress, adversity and trauma in young children's lives by providing consistent daily routines, learning which calming strategies work best for individual children, anticipating and offering support during experiences likely to be difficult for individual children, supporting the development of self-regulation and trust, and seeking support from colleagues as needed
- Using positive guidance strategies for individuals and groups, supporting transitions between activities, modeling kindness and respect, providing clear rules and predictable routines, giving clear direction and redirection of behavior when needed, and scaffolding peer conflict resolution that help children learn skills for self-regulation, resolving problems, develop empathy toward peers, trust in early childhood educators, and positive attitudes toward school
- Becoming aware of implicit biases and working with colleagues and families to use positive and supportive guidance strategies for all children; to help children navigate multiple home and school cultural codes, norms and expectations; and to prevent the suspensions and expulsions that disproportionately affect young African American children.
- Supporting and encouraging a wide range of interests and abilities in children of all genders, avoiding the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and countering sexism and gender bias
- Supporting young children's self-expression, respecting various modes of communication;
- Fostering oral language and communication as well as early literacy experiences in English and in other home languages;
- Engaging in genuine, reciprocal conversations with children; eliciting and exploring their ideas; asking questions that probe and stimulate children's thoughts, understanding, and theory-building and shared construction of meaning
- Leveraging the positive impact that multilingual children and families bring to the group and integrating young children's home languages and cultures into the environment through materials, music, visual arts, dance, literature, and storytelling;
- Using the indoor and outdoor environment, schedule and routines as part of the curriculum; providing time, space, and materials to support child- initiated play

and risk-taking; and allowing children space to roll, crawl, run, jump and engage in both small and gross motor skills.

- Integrating early childhood curriculum areas into play, projects and other experiences that reflect the specific interests and experiences of each child and that are meaningful to them;
- Encouraging and supporting young children’s problem solving and inquiry-based learning;
- Selecting materials and arranging the indoor and outdoor environment to support social and private spaces, restful and active spaces, fine and gross motor development, and exploration of foundational concepts in each curriculum area; and
- If using media and technology with young children, doing so in ways that are appropriate for the individual and the group, that are integrated into the curriculum, that provide equitable access, and that engage children in creative play, problem solving and interaction.

#### **4d: Developing and sustaining reflective, responsive and intentional practice**

Early childhood educators consistently engage in reflective, responsive and intentional practice, knowing when and how to reach out for new resources and consult with peers in related professions. They make intentional, professional judgments each day based on knowledge of child development and learning from birth through age eight, of individual children, and of the social and cultural contexts in which young children live. They consider multiple sources of evidence in decision-making including new and emerging research; professional expertise and opinion; and the interests, values, needs and choices of children, families and communities served. They take reflective approaches to their work, using supervisors’ and peer’s feedback and analyzing their own practices in a broader context to modify and improve their work with young children. They consider how their own social and cultural contexts and implicit bias influence their practice and equity in their early learning settings as they work to provide effective supports for each child. They are aware of the importance of their own self-care and well-being and have strategies to manage the physical, emotional and mental stress inherent in their work in order to better support children and families.

#### **Sidebar**

##### **Related Resources**

This standard provides a general description of developmentally appropriate and effective teaching strategies, tools and approaches for early childhood education. See the following NAEYC publications as additional resources in understanding and expanding knowledge related to this standard.

- Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age eight (2009 and currently under revision)
- Technology and interactive media as tools in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8 (year??)

## Standard 5. Knowledge, Application and Integration of Academic Discipline Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

Early childhood educators have and apply a solid understanding of the content of the academic disciplines. They understand content knowledge about the central concepts, methods, inquiry and application tools, and structures in each academic discipline (a). They understand pedagogical content knowledge about how young children learn and process information in each discipline including the learning trajectories for each discipline (b). They apply this knowledge in using early learning standards and other resources to make decisions about spontaneous and planned teaching practices, and about curriculum development, implementation and evaluation that will be stimulating, challenging, and meaningful to each child(c).

### Key competencies and supporting explanations of Standard 5

#### **5a: *Understanding content knowledge and resources—the central concepts, methods, inquiry and application tools, and structures—of the academic disciplines in an early education curriculum.***

Early childhood educators demonstrate solid knowledge of the concepts, methods, inquiry and application tools, and structures in each academic content area (e.g., math, science, social studies, language, the arts). They know how to continuously update and expand their own knowledge and skills, turning to the standards of professional organizations in each content area and relying on sound resources for their own development, for the development of curriculum, and for the selection of materials for young children in the following disciplines<sup>1</sup>. For example, early childhood educators understand that:

- Language and literacy are foundational not just for success in school but for lifelong communication, self-expression, understanding the perspectives of others, socialization,

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<sup>1</sup> Because NAEYC's standards are generalist standards that cross academic disciplines, they are informed by standards of those disciplines such as language and literacy, math, science, technology and engineering, social studies, visual arts, music, movement, dance and physical education. NAEYC turned to specialized professional organizations overseeing these disciplines to expand the knowledge base for the standards. In some cases, NAEYC has developed joint position statements with these organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, that describe how these academic discipline areas can best be taught and learned in the early childhood years<sup>1</sup>. NAEYC also encourages the profession to look to Zero to Three and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation's (CAEP) K-6 Elementary Teacher Preparation Standards and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Early Childhood Generalist standards for recommendations related to the breadth and depth of needed content knowledge for working with specific age groups within the birth through age eight continuum.



self-regulation skills and citizenship. They know that listening, speaking, reading, writing, storytelling, and visual representation of information are all methods of developing and applying language and literacy skills. They understand essential elements of language and literacy such as semantics, syntax, morphology, and phonology and of reading such as phonemic awareness, decoding phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. They understand the components and structures of informational texts as well as narrative including theme, character, plot and setting. They are aware that oral language, print, and storytelling are both similar and different across cultures and are familiar with literature from multiple cultures.

- The arts – music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts—are a primary media for human communication, inquiry, and insight. They understand that each of the arts has a set of basic elements such as rhythm, beat, expression, character, energy, color, balance, and harmony. They are familiar with a variety of materials and tools in each of the arts and with diverse styles and purposes of the arts across cultures. They know that engagement with the arts includes both self-expression and appreciation of art created by others. They value the arts as a way to express, communicate and reflect upon self and others, culture, language, family, community and history.
- Mathematical thinking is a language for abstract reasoning and critical thinking used throughout life to recognize patterns and categories, to make connections between what is the same and different, to solve real world problems, and to communicate relationships and concepts. They are familiar with the concepts that underlie counting and cardinality, number and operations. They understand algebraic and geometric concepts such as equality/inequality, lines and space, estimation and measurement. They know that the tools for mathematical inquiry include observation, comparison, reasoning, estimation and measurement, generating and testing theories, and documentation through writing, drawing, and graphical representation.
- Social studies is a science that humans use to understand and think about past, present and future, and about self and identity in society, place and time. They know that it includes the fields of history, geography, civics, economics, anthropology, archeology and psychology—and that all of these areas of inquiry support our human ability to experience, think about civic affairs, and make informed decisions as members of a group or society. They are familiar with central concepts including social systems and structures characterized by both change and continuity over time; the social construction of rules, rights and responsibilities that vary across diverse groups, communities and nations; and the development of structures of power, authority, and governance and related issues of social equity and justice. They know that oral storytelling, literature, art, technology, artifacts and the collection and representation of data are all tools for learning about and exploring social studies.
- Science is a practice based on observation, inquiry and investigation and that connects to and employs mathematical language. They understand basic science concepts such as patterns, cause and effect, analyzing and interpreting data, using critical thinking, constructing and testing explanations or solutions to problems based on evidence. They are familiar with the major concepts of earth science, physical science, and the life

sciences. They are familiar with and can use scientific tools including technology and print to document science projects in text, graphs, illustrations, and data charts.

- Technology and engineering integrate and employ concepts, language, principles and processes from science and mathematics to focus on the design and production of materials and devices for use in everyday life, school, the workplace, and the outdoor environment. They know that, from zippers to bridges to satellites, technology and engineering have a significant impact on society and culture. They are familiar with its tools and methods including imagining, data gathering, modeling, designing, evaluating, experimenting and modifying.
- Physical education, health and safety have significant effects on the current and future quality of life. Early educators understand basic human development of fine and large motor skills; neurological, executive function and brain development; the relationship of nutrition and physical activity to cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being. They know that the components of physical education include spatial awareness, agility, balance, coordination, endurance, and force. They know about health and safety guidelines and practices for the prevention and management of common illnesses, diseases and injuries and know how to promote wellness for adults and children. They are able to find and stay current regarding health, safety, and risk management standards and guidelines for young children from birth through age 8. They are familiar with the processes that develop fundamental competence, skillful practice, and fitness in physical education including games and sports, aquatics, dance and rhythmic activities, fitness activities, outdoor pursuits, individual-performance activities.

**5b: *Understanding pedagogical content knowledge—how young children learn in each discipline—and how to use the teacher knowledge and practices described in Standards 1 through 4 to support young children’s learning in each content area.***

Early childhood educators have a strong pedagogical content knowledge in each curriculum area. This includes an understanding of how young children learn in each content area and their common conceptions and misconceptions within content areas. They know how to engage young children in learning about essential and foundational concepts, principles and theories; in methods of investigation and inquiry; and in forms of representation that express ideas, relationships and patterns in each curriculum area. They know about and can access professional instructional resources, including those available from professional associations representing these disciplines. They understand early learning trajectories and related developmentally and culturally appropriate teaching and assessment strategies for each area of the early childhood curriculum. They know that each curriculum area develops from birth and builds increasing complexity during preschool and early grades. They understand the connections between young children’s learning in across disciplines and teacher knowledge and practices described in Standards 1 through 4, that young children learn in each of these content areas simultaneously, exploring and integrating them into their play, projects and conversation. They can sequence goals and know related strategies to support development in each discipline, understanding that:

- language and literacy – oral and written, expressive and receptive – begins with early gestures, vocalizations, babbling, single words, scribbling, book handling and dramatic play are the foundation for the acquisition of phonemic and phonological awareness, vocabulary, grammar and reading. They know children develop the concept of print with progressive understanding that print carries meaning, has directionality, that letters represent sounds and compose words which compose sentences and development of the writing process. They are familiar with young children’s literature and narrative and informational text and know how to select and use them in interactive and responsive ways based on children’s developmental, cultural and linguistic needs and interests. They have a deep understanding of the bilingual language development process in young children, including the strong role the home language plays as a foundation for academic success and the damaging effects of home language loss. They are aware that bilingual and multilingual development affects development in every other area and that teachers need to foster home language development as children are exposed to English. They know strategies for supporting the development of the home language in both the classroom and at home and they encourage the development of multiple languages for all children.
- the arts – music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts – are a primary way that young children express and explore their thoughts, ideas and feelings, making connections across the arts and to other curriculum areas and developmental domains. They know that creative and skillful expression and appreciation of the arts develops from birth throughout this age range, from melodic babbling to singing, from scribbling to drawing, from bouncing to dancing, from pretend play to dramatic performance. They are familiar with a range of materials, techniques and strategies to foster both an appreciation of the arts and confident, creative practice for young children. They also recognize the arts as an important pathway into learning across the curriculum especially as young children develop competence in language, literacy, mathematics and science.
- mathematics begins with the development of pre-numeracy and early numeracy skills such as recognition of faces and shapes, visual matching, knowledge of numbers, visual recognition of numbers, ordering, sorting, classifying, sequencing, one-to-one correspondence, visual and physical representation of objects and relationships between objects, including understanding similarities and differences. Early educators have mathematical language and know the importance of modeling it and of fostering positive mathematical dispositions in each child. They know the expected trajectories of learning including common misconceptions or errors. They consider this knowledge of expected trajectories to select scaffolding strategies to support children’s development of mathematical understanding. They know that children learn mathematical thinking through active exploration, conversation, observation and manipulation of both natural and manufactured materials. They know that play, stories, music, dance, and visual arts can all be used to illustrate and discuss mathematical ideas in ways that are more meaningful to young children than abstract exercises.
- social studies develops from birth with the understanding of self and other, individuals and families, neighborhoods and communities, time and patterns of time, past / present

/ future, and an awareness of own and other cultures and over time, develops into the intentional study of history, geography, economics, civics and politics. They are familiar with strategies to help young children in preschool and early grades to learn perspective taking skills, explore ideas of fairness, reflect on the past, experience the present, and plan for the future. They are familiar with some of the emerging understandings and misconceptions that preschoolers and children in early grades are likely to have related to this and other areas of the curriculum. They know about developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant strategies, materials and activities including the use of pretend play, games, stories, field trips, and the arts to support young children's increasing understanding of the social world and counter biases and fears in the context of a caring community of learners.

- scientific inquiry develops naturally in young children as they observe, ask questions and explore their world. They understand the importance of providing opportunities for very young children to engage in sensory exploration of their environments, supporting their progressive ability to ask questions, engage in scientific practices, collect data, think critically, solve problems and share ideas and reflect on their findings. They are familiar with materials that can be used to help young children conduct experiments, represent theories and ideas, document findings, and build confidence in and positive dispositions toward science.
- technology and engineering concepts are explored as young children play with cause and effect, fitting and stacking, dropping, pushing and pulling physical objects. Young children's abilities and understanding develop further as they build increasingly complex structures perhaps experimenting with balance, stability, speed and inclines in the block corner, dramatic play area, or outdoors. Early childhood educators model the use of science and the language of math to support the development of children's imagination, curiosity and wonder. They know that asking good questions and supporting young children to express and test their own ideas are often more effective teaching strategies than providing direct information and "right" answers.
- and physical activity, physical education, health and safety are important parts of the curriculum for young children and essential to their well-being. They know that young children "learn by doing" across disciplines, that active physical play supports brain development and is a primary means for learning about themselves, others and the world. They understand the trajectory of movement skills from infancy (e.g. roll, crawl, creep) through early grades (e.g. hop, throw, bend and stretch) that lays the foundation for a lifetime of enjoying physical activity. They provide opportunities for children to develop and maintain health-enhancing physical fitness, attain knowledge of movement concepts, and develop mature fundamental movement skills. They actively plan both daily adult-led physical activity and unstructured physical activity that will support the maximum participation of all children. They know the importance of healthy daily routines and daily practice of basic skills and habits related to active and quiet times, meals, rest and transitions in early childhood. They are familiar with young children's need for movement, play, rest, safety and nutrition and with individual and cultural variations in practices to meet these needs. They know developmentally and culturally

effective ways to help older children think about, express, and reflect on their needs and their choices in this area.

**5c: Applying, expanding, integrating and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, knowledge of curriculum content resources, and pedagogical content knowledge to their teaching practice.**

Early childhood educators apply, expand, integrate and update their content knowledge in the disciplines, knowledge of curriculum content resources and pedagogical content knowledge to their teaching practice. They engage in continuous development of their own abilities in each content area improving their knowledge and skills in each discipline. They use their own knowledge and skills, along with experiences and cultural assets that young children's and their families bring, to:

- use preschool and early elementary learning standards to support young children's learning and development;
- implement an integrated curriculum that makes connections across content areas through supported play and projects. The curriculum includes both planned and responsive experiences that are individualized to be developmentally appropriate, meaningful, engaging and challenging for each child, and that reflect cultural and linguistic diversities;
- develop and implement decisions about meaningful, challenging curriculum for each child using observation and assessment to scaffold new learning in each content area.
- design or select developmentally and culturally relevant curriculum that avoids and counters cultural or individual bias or stereotypes and fosters a positive learning disposition in each area of the curriculum and in each child.
- help children reflect upon and learn from their mistakes, fully understanding that making mistakes and learning from them in positive ways fuels learning.
- Support and scaffold every child's interests and abilities in each academic discipline, countering gender and racial expectations and biases that can limit children's opportunities and achievements.
- Foster each child's sense of efficacy and agency: their ability to make choices and decisions, to develop their own interests and learning dispositions, and to gradually gain a sense of control, intention and autonomy in their environment.

Early childhood educators apply what they have learned about curriculum content and about pedagogy—how young children learn and what teaching strategies are most likely to be effective based on the development of children as individuals and in groups. For example, educators of infants and toddlers model and responsively support development of early language, scribbling, music and movement; self and other, past, present and future; number and patterns; inquiry and discovery. Educators of children in preschool through early grades model engagement in challenging subject matter and support increasingly more complex knowledge and exploration. They respond to the developmental needs of individual children, building confidence in themselves as young learners and young citizens—as young readers,

writers, artists, musicians, mathematicians, scientists, engineers, dancers, athletes, historians, economists, and geographers. In developing curriculum, they use their own solid knowledge in each curriculum area while also supporting each child's construction of knowledge in personally and culturally meaningful ways. In addition, in order to make curriculum powerful and accessible to all, they develop culturally relevant curriculum; encourage and support bilingualism/multilingualism; and actively counter biases related to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or differing abilities.

#### **Sidebar**

##### **Related Resources**

This standard provides a general description of challenging and meaningful developmentally appropriate curriculum for early childhood education. See the following NAEYC publications as additional resources in understanding and expanding knowledge related to this standard.

- Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age eight (2009 and currently under revision)

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## Standard 6. Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

Early childhood educators identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession and serve as informed advocates for young children, families, and the early childhood profession (a). They know and use ethical guidelines and other early childhood professional guidelines (b). They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on early childhood education to inform their practice (c and d). They have strong communication skills that effectively support their relationships and work young children, families and colleagues (e).

### Key competencies and supporting explanations of Standard 6

#### **6a: Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field and serving as an informed advocate**

Early childhood educators have a strong identification and involvement with their profession, and this identity includes an understanding of their responsibility to serve as advocates and to advance equity in their practice. They understand the profession's distinctive values, history, knowledge base, and mission. They know about the many connections between the profession of early childhood education and other related disciplines and professions with which they collaborate while serving young children and families. They are aware of the broader contexts, challenges, current issues and trends that affect their profession and their work including challenges related to compensation and financing of the early education system; trends in standards setting and assessment of young children; and issues of equity, bias and social justice that affect children, families, communities and colleagues. They understand their responsibility as advocates to improve the lives of young children and their families as well as those serving in the profession. Early childhood educators understand advocacy within the early learning setting as well as at broader levels in a local, state, federal or national context including a basic understanding of how public policies are developed. They know that equity in education begins in early childhood and that early educators have a special opportunity and responsibility to advance equity in their own work with children, families and colleagues.

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

Early childhood professionals have compelling responsibilities to know about and uphold ethical guidelines, federal and state regulatory policies, and other professional standards 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 educators are very familiar with the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and guided by its ideals and principles. Early childhood educators 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. They uphold high standards of confidentiality and privacy; sensitivity; and respect for

young children and their families, and colleagues. They know and follow relevant federal and state laws such as reporting child abuse and neglect, health and safety practices, and the rights of young children with developmental delays and disabilities. They are familiar with professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards and regulations and position statements from their professional associations.

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

Early childhood educators engage in continuous, collaborative learning to inform and improve their own practice. This is a hallmark of a professional in any field. An attitude of inquiry is evident in early childhood educators' writing, discussion, and actions. They demonstrate self-motivated, purposeful learning and actively investigate ways to improve their own practices such as engaging in classroom-based research, participating in reflective and supportive supervision, participating in conferences, providing or receiving mentorship, and finding evidence-based resources. They engage in collaborative learning communities with other early childhood educators as well as with others in related disciplines and professions working together on common challenges with lively exchanges of ideas and benefiting from one another's perspectives and expertise. They know where to find resources and when to reach out to colleagues within and across professions. They demonstrate understanding of essential skills in collaboration as they work in teams to support individual children and their families, including, but not limited to, IEP/IFSP teams.

### **6d: Integrating knowledgeable and critical perspectives on early childhood education and developing the habit of intentional, reflective practice**

**6d.** Early childhood educators' practice is influenced by knowledgeable and critical perspectives. Their decisions are grounded in multiple sources of knowledge (including non-dominant sources) and multiple perspectives and informed by professional judgment, evidence-based knowledge, and values. They develop the habit of intentional, reflective practice and regularly examine their own work, sources of professional knowledge, and assumptions about the early childhood field with a spirit of inquiry. 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. They demonstrate an understanding that through dialogue and attention to differences, early childhood professionals will continue to reach new levels of shared knowledge. They recognize that their professional knowledge base is constantly evolving. They stay current in the field and realize that they can be contributors, through their own research and practice, to growing the profession's knowledge base. They integrate their knowledge and practices across all six standards as they plan activities and interact with children and families whose language, race, culture, or socio-economic status may differ from their own background.

### **6e. Using strong communication skills to effectively support young children's learning and development and work with families and colleagues**



Early childhood educators demonstrate strong communication skills and can effectively communicate with colleagues, families and young children to provide competent, safe, and high quality early childhood education. Strong communication skills also support early childhood educators in their own understanding and application of these standards and competencies, support their professional communications with families and colleagues, and facilitate their own professional development and academic success when pursuing post-secondary education. These skills include basic competency in formal and informal speaking, listening, reading and writing. For early educators, they also include consideration of the most respectful, sensitive and effective ways to communicate; attentive listening to young children, families and colleagues; skillful and supportive communication with families about their children’s development; using translators and other resources to communicate with speakers of other languages; the use of computers and the internet for communication and learning; and the use of assistive technology with children and adults as needed.

#### **Sidebar**

#### **Related Resources**

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 following NAEYC publications as additional resources in understanding and expanding knowledge related to this standard.

- Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age eight (2009 and currently under revision)
- Advancing equity in early childhood education (in development)
- NAEYC Code of Ethics (year?)

## Conclusion

Becoming a professional early childhood educator means developing the capacity to understand, reflect upon, and integrate all six of these professional standards. It is the integrated understanding of the following that defines a professional early childhood educator:

- child development;
- each individual child;
- family and community context and other influences on individual development and the ability to build respectful reciprocal relationships with families and communities;
- use of observation and assessment to learn what works for each child and for young children as a community learning together;
- use of a repertoire of appropriate pedagogical practices;
- application of a deep understanding of early childhood curriculum; and
- exercising professional knowledge, dispositions, and ethics.

Early childhood educators develop a habit of reflective practice that deepens their understanding of and ability to navigate complex situations, including integrating their knowledge and practices across all six standards as they plan activities and interact with children and families whose language, race, culture or socio-economic status may be very different from their own background. It is this knowledge and practice that will allow them to transform a new group of babies in the infant room or a group of second graders on the first day of school into a caring community of learners.

# Recommendations for Implementation

## Professional Preparation Programs

### 1. **Align preparation programs to these competencies and leveling**

The competencies should serve as the core learner outcomes for preparation programs. The learning opportunities, including field experiences, should be designed and scaffolded to support candidates in understanding and applying the competencies. (NAEYC 1996) With this revision, programs should carefully consider which level of early childhood educator they are preparing and ensure that the level of mastery of competencies is aligned with the breadth and depth of competency mastery recommended in the Power to the Profession framework for the profession.

### 2. **Ensure faculty are qualified to teach candidates in the competencies**

Faculty in early childhood educator preparation programs should have advanced graduate work and professional experience related to their teaching assignments. Faculty teaching methods courses should have early childhood education professional preparation, early childhood teaching experience, with current knowledge of child and adult development, the science of learning, and early childhood education professional practice gained through career-long participation in professional activities.(NAEYC 1982)

### 3. **Promote standards not standardization**

Programs should be responsive to their local workforce needs, their community context, and their institution's mission. These standards are intended to provide a vision of excellence--not to constrict innovative responses to the needs of young children, their families, or current and prospective early childhood educators (NAEYC 2003, 2009). This statement promotes standards for - not standardization of - preparation of early childhood educators. The competencies and accompanying leveling recommendations are meant to serve as a framework for preparation program design.

### 4. **Ensure competencies and leveling support transfer and articulation**

Programs should incorporate the leveling recommendations for the competencies, as defined by the profession, within each standard to facilitate articulation between and distinguish the level of depth and breadth of the competencies at each professional program level. As the profession works toward creating differentiated scopes of practice for each early childhood educator role, preparation programs should ensure that their programs are preparing candidates for a specific role while opening pathways that can lead to additional preparation and higher levels of responsibility as early childhood educators progress in their careers. These standards can be used as a unifying framework for progression in professional competency, and to develop articulation agreements and stackable, portable credentials that support workforce diversity, equity and access to higher levels of competence and new career opportunities.

### 5. **Ensure general education courses offer candidates the necessary content knowledge to meet expectations in Standard 5, as well as the skills needed to support candidates' demonstration of all standards**

In partnership with professional preparation program accrediting/recognizing bodies, consider the necessary general education content knowledge that supports mastery of Standard 5 at each ECE designation level.

**6. Commit to advancing equity and diversity**

Professional preparation programs should work to ensure that they reflect principles of equity and diversity throughout all aspects of their programs. This includes ensuring that the preparation program includes field experiences that provide opportunities to work effectively with diverse populations; employs a diverse faculty across multiple dimensions, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, language, ability, gender and sexual orientation; and provides time and space to foster a learning community among administrators, faculty, and staff that includes opportunities for reflection and learning regarding cultural respect and responsiveness, including potential issues of implicit bias.

## Higher Education Accreditation

**1. Ensure that programs are preparing candidates across and within competencies**

Accreditation of early childhood professional preparation programs must ensure that graduates of these programs have mastered the standards and competencies. Accreditation must require evidence from professional preparation programs that their learning opportunities support mastery of the standards and competencies and that programs are evaluating candidates' mastery of these.

**2. Ensure that program design and infrastructure facilitate candidate mastery of the competencies**

While the learning opportunities and assessment of candidates' knowledge and practice should be the central focus of accreditors, it is also important for accreditation to evaluate the program design and infrastructure supports that facilitate high-quality learning opportunities and effective assessments. Evidence of how the program's mission, responsiveness to local context, faculty qualifications and responsibilities, institutional resources (such as budgets, IT and libraries), academic and non-academic supports for candidates, field experiences, course design and sequencing, and teaching quality support candidates' mastery of the competencies should contribute to the accreditation decision.

**3. Ensure that programs are aligned to the leveling in the position statement**

Expectations for meeting accreditation standards should align with the leveling of the competencies recommended in this position statement. In particular, the learning opportunities and related assessments of programs should be evaluated against the recommended leveling of competency mastery.

## Early Learning Programs

**1. Ensure competencies are reflected in early childhood educators' responsibilities and level of autonomy in early learning settings**

Early childhood educators should be given appropriate autonomy in their settings to make sound professional judgments that are aligned with their level of mastery of these standards and competencies.

**2. Ensure job candidates have completed the appropriate level of professional preparation needed for the early childhood educator positions**

Graduation from or completion of a professional preparation program should be a requirement for job candidates, with preference for professional preparation programs that have demonstrated alignment with these standards and competencies through accreditation. Qualifications for specific positions should be based upon the scope of practice for the early childhood educator position (and associated level of mastery of competencies) as designated by the profession.

**3. Design and support professional development that advances educators' mastery of the competencies**

Professional development should be aligned to the competencies to build on and advance the depth and breadth of early childhood educators' mastery of them. Early learning programs should contribute to the preparation of future early childhood educators by serving as field sites where emerging professionals can develop their knowledge, skills, and dispositions under the mentorship of experienced early childhood educators. They should also provide professional development opportunities for their employees to advance their understanding and practice of the competencies.

**4. Design and conduct evaluations aligned to the competencies**

Early childhood educators should be supported and be held accountable for practices aligned to the appropriate level of mastery of these standards and competencies.

## Federal, State, and Local Policies

**1. Support professional preparation programs designated and accredited by the early childhood education profession as the core pathway for individuals to be prepared in the competencies**

Policies should identify the professional preparation programs that are designated by the profession, (will included citation for P2P Decision Cycle 7/8 here) as the core pathway for individuals preparing to be early childhood educators or who are advancing their early childhood education credentials. Given the breadth and depth of the competencies and the need for early childhood educators to have deep knowledge and understanding as well as applied practice with the competencies, these pathways are best positioned to prepare early childhood educators. This may happen in partnership with professional development schools, teacher residencies and apprenticeships or prior to post-baccalaureate preparation for specialized roles.

Policies and resources should ensure that all individuals are provided equitable opportunities to access and progress seamlessly through this core pathway.

**2. Align early childhood educator licensure, certification, and credentialing to the competencies**

Early childhood educator licensure, certification and credentialing systems should ensure that all young children, birth through age eight, have educators with sound understanding of the science of learning and child development birth-through-age-eight including learning trajectories, approaches to learning, the multiple influences on young children’s development, and competence in the most effective teaching strategies for this stage of life using this statement as the set of national essential knowledge and competencies that may be expanded as needed to support state and local contexts.

**3. Build professional development and QRIS systems aligned to the competencies**

Content of professional development systems and QRIS systems should be driven by the competencies and recommended leveling for each early childhood educator designation.

**4. Align all early childhood workforce supports to the competencies**

The competencies should inform all policies and systems that support early childhood workforce recruitment, development and retention. This includes states’ professional standards, professional preparation programs, licensing and certification bodies, induction/mentoring/coaching programs, legislative policies, leadership in early learning programs, financing of the workforce, working conditions, and professional networks and associations. (Lutton, 2011)

**5. Ensure financing of the early childhood educator workforce supports higher education capacity-building for preparing high quality educators**

Financing should include support for individuals seeking to attain or advance the specialized knowledge and competencies included in this position statement as well as support for higher education programs to demonstrate alignment with the competencies through earning and maintaining accreditation. Early childhood educators who demonstrate effective practice in the competencies should be fairly compensated.

## Researchers

**1. Create research agendas that examine the connections between the competencies and their impact on young children’s development and learning**

Ongoing research is needed to more directly connect how the competencies support young children’s development and learning. In addition, the field would benefit from more applied research through partnerships between the research and practice community.

**2. Identify key features of preparation programs that effectively prepare candidates in the competencies**

The research community can play an important role in helping the profession better understand how design, content, field experiences, assessments, and other features of professional preparation programs support candidates’ understanding of the competencies. In addition, this research should advance the field’s understanding of the educator preparation program landscape and the availability and effectiveness of faculty development and pipelines.

**3. Inform the profession with new research on young children’s development, educator quality, dimensions of effective teaching, etc. that should influence the next revision of the competencies**

Given that the research and practice that informs the early childhood educator competencies is always evolving, the research community plays an important role in leading and synthesizing research on child development across multiple social, cultural, and linguistic contexts; educator quality; effective teaching, etc. that is most relevant and informative to incorporate in the next iteration of the competencies.

DRAFT

## Appendix A: Standards and Competencies Leveling

To advance clarity, cohesion, and quality in the early childhood profession, the Power to the Profession Framework recommends three levels of early childhood educators (ECE I, ECE II, and ECE III), each with a distinct scope of practice. Individuals at each level are expected to have mastery of the standards and competencies to the depth and breadth needed to effectively work within their scope of practice. The intention of the following leveling guide is to help the early childhood ecosystem (practitioners, professional preparation programs, accreditors, licensing bodies, etc.) understand the necessary breadth and depth of the standards and competencies they need to master or align to in their professional roles.

Given that the scopes of practice for each designated level determine the necessary depth and breadth of mastery of the competencies, the ECE I is expected to demonstrate introductory knowledge and application of the standards and competencies, while the ECE II and ECE III are expected to have enough mastery to be responsible for lead roles in a birth through age 5 settings and for birth through age 8 settings, respectively. **Thus, while expectations regarding mastery of the standards and competencies are similar for ECE II and ECE III, there are distinct differences at the ECE III level in terms of preparation.**

- 1) Because individuals at the ECE III level must be prepared to serve as lead educators across the birth through age eight age band, their preparation must include additional early childhood courses and more field experiences with young children across the full age band.
- 2) Because individuals at the ECE III will have supervisory responsibility for individuals in ECE I and ECE II roles, their preparation must include supervision skills and team building.
- 3) Because the ECE III level represents baccalaureate/initial master's degree preparation, these individuals will have more general education knowledge across and within disciplines, which will contribute to their ability to create more nuanced curriculum in their settings.

In some cases, members of the ecosystem must work together to further define and support competence at each level. For example, accreditors of professional preparation programs might work with higher education to designate general education requirements that would support individuals in gaining competency in Standard 5 *Knowledge, Application and Integration of Academic Discipline Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum*. Accreditors and professional preparation programs might also set requirements for programs related to field experiences at each designation level.

The leveling also reflects the current complexity within and across professional preparation program pathways in terms of the depth and breadth of early childhood content, field experiences, and general education offered in those programs. In many instances, early childhood content looks very similar across the pathways preparing ECE II and III individuals (in some cases the ECE II preparation programs offer more early childhood content than the ECE III programs), while at the same time there is significant variation in the early childhood content within each pathway. Within this complexity, though, this leveling pushes professional programs to better address the standards and competencies



within the scopes of practice for ECE I, ECE II and ECE III roles laid out in this document and offers an opportunity to advance consistency within and across pathways. For example, the expectations in the leveling represent a significant push for baccalaureate programs, which typically either focus on birth through age five content or PK (or K)-3 content, to expand their content to prepare candidates across the birth through age eight continuum. Likewise, for programs preparing individuals for ECE I roles, currently the content in these programs focus on birth through age five; now they will need to include content on K-3.

This leveling guide is a first iteration that will change over time as distinctions, particularly related to early childhood content and field experiences, change; as the programs preparing ECE I, ECE II and ECE III become clearer; and as the scopes of practice for each designation are refined and updated to reflect the context of the profession at that time.

Following is a chart that summarizes the rationale that informs the leveling of the standards and competencies.

### **Framework for Setting the Levels (from Decision Cycle 345+6 of Power to the Profession)**

To best understand the leveling of the Standards and Competencies and the implications they may have from your perspective in the field, it is recommended that you start by reviewing this framework. It provides the underlying explanation for the distinctions between ECE I, ECE II and ECE III.

|  | <b>ECE I</b>   | <b>ECE II</b>  | <b>ECE III</b>   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Formula used to guide leveling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- age of focus</li> <li>- depth of practice</li> <li>- theoretical/ research base</li> </ul> | <p><b>Age of focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Introductory understanding</a> of key concepts for <b>birth through age eight settings</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Depth of practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Introductory practices</a> for <b>birth through age eight settings</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>Age of focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Essential understanding</a> of key concepts for <b>birth through age five settings.</b></li> <li>• <a href="#">Introductory understanding</a> of key concepts for <b>kindergarten through age eight settings</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Depth of practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Essential practices</a> for <b>birth through age five settings</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>Age of focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Essential understanding</a> of key concepts for <b>birth through age eight settings</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Depth of practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Essential practices</a> for <b>birth through age eight settings</b></li> </ul> |

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|  | <p><b>Theory/Research Base:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Elemental understanding</a> of theoretical and research base supporting each standard</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Introductory practices</a> for <b>kindergarten through age eight settings</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Theory/Research Base:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Working understanding</a> of theoretical and research base supporting each standard</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Theory/Research Base:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Applied understanding</a> of theoretical and research base supporting each standard</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Expectations during preparation regarding depth of mastery of the competencies</b></p> | <p><b>Professional Training Program (at least 120 hours) completers</b> are introduced to all professional standards and competency areas.</p> <p><b>Professional Training Program (at least 120 hours) completers</b> can apply their <i>introductory</i> knowledge and understanding of all the professional standards and competency areas.</p> | <p><b>Associate degree graduates</b> know and understand the <i>essential</i> aspects of all professional standards and competency areas <i>with a dedicated focus on young children in birth through age 5 settings</i>.</p> <p><b>Associate degree graduate</b> can apply their <i>essential</i> knowledge and understanding of all the professional standards and competency areas, including age-appropriate content pedagogy, <i>with a dedicated focus on young children in birth through age 5 settings</i>.</p> | <p><b>Bachelor’s degree graduate or Master’s degree graduate (initial prep)</b> know and understand the <i>essential</i> aspects of all professional standards and competency areas <i>with a dedicated focus on young children in birth through age 8 settings</i>.</p> <p><b>Bachelor’s degree graduate or Master’s degree graduate (initial prep)</b> can apply their <i>essential</i> knowledge and understanding of all the professional standards and competency areas, including age-appropriate content pedagogy, <i>with a dedicated focus on young children in birth through age 8 settings</i>.</p> |
| <p><b>Expectations regarding</b></p>   | <p><b>Birth–age 8 Settings: Professional Training Program (at least 120 hours)</b></p>   | <p><b>Birth-age 5 Settings:* Associate degree graduate</b> can be responsible for developing and sustaining high-</p>   | <p><b>Birth–age 8 Settings: Bachelor’s degree graduate or Master’s degree graduate (initial prep)</b> can</p>  |

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| <p><b><i>responsibilities for practice</i></b></p> | <p>completers can <i>help</i> develop and sustain high-quality development and learning environments. Completers can serve as effective members of early childhood education teaching teams.</p> | <p>quality development and learning environments <i>with staffing models that provide frequent access to ECE IIs for guidance.</i></p> <p><b>Kindergarten*–age 8 Settings:</b><br/> <b>Associate degree graduate</b> can help develop and sustain high quality development and learning environments.</p> <p><b>Associate degree graduate</b> can serve as effective members of ECE teaching teams and <i>can guide the practice of ECE I.</i></p> <p>* In state-funded preschool programs (as defined by NIEER), provided in mixed delivery settings and explicitly aligned with the K–12 public school system, ECE II graduates can serve in the support educator role. ECE III graduates must serve in the lead educator role.</p> | <p>be responsible for developing and sustaining high-quality development and learning environments without the need for guidance.</p> <p><b>Bachelor’s degree graduate or Master’s degree graduate (initial prep)</b> can serve as effective members of ECE teaching teams and can guide the practice of ECE I’s and II’s.</p> |
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## STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES BY LEVEL

NOTE: It is important to understand that the expectations of the depth and breadth for the mastery of competencies build on each level (mastery of listed competencies in ECE I would be expected of ECE II, mastery of listed competencies in ECE I and ECE II would be expected of ECE III). This is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

**When competencies are duplicated from one level to the next, the expectation exists that the deep and breadth of that competency would be more fully developed to reflect the knowledge and skill acquisition commensurate with the level of education earned.**

|   | ECE I  | ECE II  | ECE III   |
|---|--|---|---|
|   | <p>Mastery of competencies in this column address <b>introductory knowledge and practice</b> expected for <b>working with children birth through age eight</b> as would be commensurate to the skill and knowledge acquisition of a <b>professional training program</b> (minimum 120 hours)</p> | <p>Mastery of competencies in this column address <b>essential knowledge and practice</b> expected for <b>working with children birth through age five</b> and <b>introductory knowledge and practice</b> for <b>working with children kindergarten through age eight</b> as would be commensurate to the knowledge and skill acquisition of an <b>associate degree program</b></p> | <p>Mastery of competencies in this column address <b>essential knowledge and practice</b> expected for <b>working with children birth through age eight</b> as would be commensurate to the knowledge and skill acquisition of a <b>bachelor's degree or master's degree (initial prep) program</b></p> |
| <p><b>1a:</b> Understanding the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age eight across domains and areas such as</p> | <p><i>Identify and define</i> the developmental periods of early childhood across physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic domains</p>   | <p><i>Understand the theoretical perspectives and research base</i> of the developmental periods of early childhood and how development and</p>   | <p>Understand the theoretical perspectives and research base of the developmental periods of early childhood and how development and</p>  |

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| <p>physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic (including bilingual development)</p>   | <p><i>Identify and define</i> critical aspects of brain development including executive function, learning motivation, and life skills</p> <p>Identify that biology, environment, stress and adversity impact children’s development and learning</p> <p>Identify the importance of social interaction and play</p> | <p>learning intersect across the domains</p> <p>Understand the limitations of child development theories and research based primarily on a normative perspective of white, middle-class children in educated families</p> <p>Understand and explain brain development in young children as well as the development of learning motivation and life skills</p> <p>Explain how and why biology, environment, stress and adversity impact children’s development and learning</p> <p>Explain why social interaction and play are central to children’s development and learning</p> | <p>learning intersect across the domains</p> <p>Understand the limitations of child development theories and research based primarily on a normative perspective of white, middle-class children in educated families</p> <p>Understand and explain brain development in young children as well as the development of learning motivation and life skills</p> <p>Explain how and why biology, environment, stress and adversity impact children’s development and learning</p> <p>Explain why social interaction and play are central to children’s development and learning</p> |
| <p><b>1b:</b> Understanding and valuing each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities</p> | <p>Identify how each child is an individual with unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities</p> <p>Engage in responsive, reciprocal relationships with babies, toddlers,</p>  | <p>Use research and professionally recognized terminology to understand and articulate how each child is an individual with unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities</p>   | <p>Use research and professionally recognized terminology to understand and articulate how each child is an individual with unique developmental variations, agency, strengths, interests, challenges, approaches to learning, experiences and abilities</p>   |

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|  | <p>preschoolers and children in early school grades</p> <p>Identify individual characteristics of each child through family and community relationships (Standard 2), observation and reflection (Standard 3)</p> <p>Support young children in ways that respond to their individual developmental, cultural and linguistic variations</p> | <p>Understand and articulate ways to learn about children (e.g. through observation, play, etc.)</p> <p>Understand developmentally appropriate decisions, plans and adjustments to practice in response to individual, developmental, cultural and linguistic variations of young children</p>   | <p>Understand and articulate ways to learn about children (e.g. through observation, play, etc.)</p> <p>Understand developmentally appropriate decisions, plans and adjustments to practice in response to individual, developmental, cultural and linguistic variations of young children</p>   |
| <p><b>1c:</b> Understanding the ways that child development and the learning process occur within multiple contexts including family, culture, language, and community as well as within a larger societal context of structural inequities.</p> | <p>Identify family, social, cultural and community influences on children’s learning and development</p> <p>Identify how quality early childhood education influences children’s lives</p>   | <p>Understand the theoretical perspectives and research base that shows that family and societal contexts influence young children’s development and learning</p> <p>Understand that children’s learning is shaped by cultural and linguistic contexts for development, their close relationships with adults and peers, economic conditions of families and communities, adverse and protective childhood experiences, ample opportunities to play and learn, experiences with technology and media, and family and community characteristics</p> | <p>Understand the theoretical perspectives and research base that shows that family and societal contexts influence young children’s development and learning</p> <p>Understand that children’s learning is shaped by cultural and linguistic contexts for development, their close relationships with adults and peers, economic conditions of families and communities, adverse and protective childhood experiences, ample opportunities to play and learn, experiences with technology and media, and family and community characteristics</p> |

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|   | Identify structural inequities that adversely impact young children’s learning and development  | Understand and articulate how structural inequities adversely impact young children’s learning and development   | Understand and articulate how structural inequities adversely impact young children’s learning and development  |
| <b>1d:</b> Using this multidimensional knowledge (developmental period of early childhood, individual child, context of development, and multiple social identities (race, language, culture, class, gender and others)) to make evidence-based decisions | <p>Use introductory knowledge (developmental period of early childhood, individual child, family, and multiple social identities, race, language, culture, class, gender and others) to support young children</p> <p>Support the implementation of early childhood curriculum, teaching practices, and learning environments that are safe, healthy, respectful, culturally and linguistically responsive, supportive and challenging for each child</p> | <p>Use multidimensional knowledge (developmental period of early childhood, individual child, family, and multiple social identities, ability, race, language, culture, class, gender and others) to intentionally support the development of young children</p> <p>Use available research evidence, professional judgments and families’ knowledge and preferences — for identifying and implementing early childhood curriculum, teaching practices, and learning environments that are safe, healthy, respectful, culturally and linguistically responsive, supportive and challenging for each child</p> | <p>Use multidimensional knowledge (developmental period of early childhood, individual child, family, and multiple social identities, race, language, culture, class, gender and others) to intentionally support the development of young children</p> <p>Use available research evidence, professional judgments and families’ knowledge and preferences — for identifying and implementing early childhood curriculum, teaching practices, and learning environments that are safe, healthy, respectful, culturally and linguistically responsive, supportive and challenging for each child</p> |
| <b>2a:</b> Knowing about, understanding and valuing the diversity of families and communities   | <p>Identify diverse characteristics of families and communities and the many influences on families and communities</p> <p>Identify stages of parental development</p> <p>Identify some of the ways that various socioeconomic conditions;</p>  | Understand family theory and research and the ways that various socioeconomic conditions; family structures, relationships, stressors, adversity, and supports; home languages, cultural values and ethnicities create the context for young children’s lives  | Understand family theory and research and the ways that various socioeconomic conditions; family structures, relationships, stressors, adversity, and supports; home languages, cultural values and ethnicities create the context for young children’s lives   |

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|  | <p>family structures, relationships, stressors, adversity, and supports; home languages, cultural values and ethnicities create the context for young children’s lives</p> <p>Affirm the families’ culture and language(s) (including dialects) and respect various structures of families and different beliefs about parenting</p> <p>Understand that children can thrive across various family structures</p>  | <p>Understand the importance of building on the assets and strengths that families bring</p>   | <p>Understand the importance of building on the assets and strengths that families bring</p>   |
| <p><b>2b:</b> Engaging as partners with families in young children’s development and learning through respectful and reciprocal relationships.</p> | <p>Identify the importance of having respectful, reciprocal relationships with families</p> <p>Recognize families as partners in their children’s learning and development</p> <p>Identify strategies for building reciprocal relationships and use those to learn with and from family members</p> <p>Initiate and begin to sustain respectful relations with families and caregivers that take families’ preferences, values and goals into account</p> | <p>Take primary responsibility for initiating and sustaining respectful relations with families and caregivers</p> <p>Use strategies to support positive parental development</p> <p>Understand a broad repertoire of strategies for building reciprocal relationships and use those to learn with and from family members</p> <p>Engage families as resources for insight into their children for curriculum, program development, and assessment; and as partners in planning for children’s transitions to new programs</p> | <p>Take primary responsibility for initiating and sustaining respectful relations with families and caregivers</p> <p>Use strategies to support positive parental development</p> <p>Understand a broad repertoire of strategies for building reciprocal relationships and use those to learn with and from family members</p> <p>Engage families as resources for insight into their children for curriculum, program development, and assessment; and as partners in planning for children’s transitions to new programs</p> |



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|   | They use a variety of communication and engagement skills with families and use (or can find resources) to communicate in families' preferred languages when possible.   |  |  |
| <b>2c:</b> Utilizing community resources to support families and young children   | <p>Identify types of community resources that can support young children's learning and development and to support families</p> <p>Partner with colleagues to help assist families in finding needed community resources</p> | <p>Assist families with young children in finding needed resources, access and leverage technology tools, and partner with other early childhood experts (such as speech pathologists and school counselors) as needed to connect families to community cultural resources, mental health services, early childhood special education and early intervention services, health care, adult education, English language instruction, translation/interpretation services, and economic assistance</p> <p>Collaborate with early learning programs in the community to support a continuum of quality early learning care and education</p> | <p>Assist families with young children in finding needed resources, access and leverage technology tools, and partner with other early childhood experts (such as speech pathologists and school counselors) as needed to connect families to community cultural resources, mental health services, early childhood special education and early intervention services, health care, adult education, English language instruction, translation/interpretation services, and economic assistance</p> <p>Collaborate with early learning programs in the community to support a continuum of quality early learning care and education</p> |
| <b>3a:</b> Understanding that assessment (formal and informal, formative and summative) is conducted to make informed choices and for planning in early learning settings | <p>Identify the central purposes of assessment</p> <p>Understand that observation and documentation are central practices in assessment</p>  | <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives on the purposes and use of assessment</p> <p>Understand the essentials of authentic assessment—such as age-appropriate approaches and culturally relevant assessment in a</p>   | <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives on the purposes and use of assessment</p> <p>Understand the essentials of authentic assessment—such as age-appropriate approaches and culturally relevant assessment in a</p>   |

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|  | Understand assessment as a positive tool to support young children’s learning and development                                       | language the child understand—for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children in early grades across developmental domains and curriculum areas<br><br>Articulate and apply the concept of alignment— assessment consistent with and connected to appropriate learning goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children  | language the child understand—for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children in early grades across developmental domains and curriculum areas<br><br>Articulate and apply the concept of alignment— assessment consistent with and connected to appropriate learning goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children  |
| <b>3b:</b> Knowing a wide-range of types of assessments, their purposes, and their associated methods and tools. | Identify common types of assessments -formative, summative, qualitative and quantitative - that are used in early learning settings | Understand the structure, strengths, limitations, validity and reliability of a variety of assessment methods and tools, including formative and summative, qualitative and quantitative standardized assessment tools and strategies for young children*<br><br>Understand the basics of conducting systematic observations, interpreting those observations, and reflecting on their significance and impact on their teaching*<br><br>Understand the components of an assessment cycle | Understand the structure, strengths, limitations, validity and reliability of a variety of assessment methods and tools, including formative and summative, qualitative and quantitative standardized assessment tools and strategies for young children<br><br>Understand the basics of conducting systematic observations, interpreting those observations, and reflecting on their significance and impact on their teaching<br><br>Understand the components of an assessment cycle |
| <b>3c:</b> Practicing assessment that is ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, and                 | Identify features of developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate assessments   | Select and use developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate assessments   | Select and use developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate assessments   |

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| <p>linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child.</p> | <p>Understand that assessments must be selected or modified to identify and support children with differing abilities</p> <p>Support the use of assessment-related activities in curriculum and in daily routines to facilitate authentic assessment and to make assessment an integral part of professional practice</p> | <p>Create opportunities to observe young children in play and spontaneous conversation as well as in adult-structured assessment contexts</p> <p>Embed assessment-related activities in curriculum and in daily routines to facilitate authentic assessment and to make assessment an integral part of professional practice</p> <p>Use assessment resources (such as technology) to identify and support children with differing abilities, including children whose learning is advanced as well as those whose home language is not English, and children with developmental delays and disabilities</p> <p>Analyze data from assessment tools to make instructional decisions and set learning goals for children</p> <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives behind harmful uses of inappropriate assessments</p> <p>Understand limitations of developmentally, culturally or linguistically inappropriate assessment tools and minimize their impact on young children</p> | <p>Create opportunities to observe young children in play and spontaneous conversation as well as in adult-structured assessment contexts</p> <p>Embed assessment-related activities in curriculum and in daily routines to facilitate authentic assessment and to make assessment an integral part of professional practice</p> <p>Use assessment resources (such as technology) to identify and support children with differing abilities, including children whose learning is advanced as well as those whose home language is not English, and children with developmental delays and disabilities</p> <p>Analyze data from assessment tools to make instructional decisions and set learning goals for children</p> <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives behind harmful uses of inappropriate assessments</p> <p><b>Understand assessments used in K-3 settings</b>, possible limitations of such assessments, and strategies for mitigating the impact of these assessments on young children</p> |
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|  |  | <p>Understand legal and ethical issues connected to assessment practices</p> <p>Identify implicit bias or the potential for implicit bias in their own assessment practices and use of assessment data</p>  | <p>Understand legal and ethical issues connected to assessment practices</p> <p>Identify implicit bias or the potential for implicit bias in their own assessment practices and use of assessment data</p>  |
| <p><b>3d:</b> Building assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues</p>   | <p>Partner with families and other professionals to support assessment-related activities</p> <p>Support young children as part of ISFP and IEP teams</p>  | <p>Partner with families and other professionals to analyze assessment findings and create individualized goals and curricular practices for young children</p> <p>Know when to call on professional colleagues when assessment findings indicate young children may need additional supports or further assessments to identify developmental or learning needs</p> <p>Work with colleagues to conduct assessments as part of ISFP and IEP teams</p> | <p>Partner with families and other professionals to analyze assessment findings and create individualized goals and curricular practices for young children</p> <p>Know when to call on professional colleagues when assessment findings indicate young children may need additional supports or further assessments to identify developmental or learning needs</p> <p>Work with colleagues to conduct assessments as part of ISFP and IEP teams</p> |
| <p><b>4a:</b> Understanding positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation of early childhood educators' work with young children</p> | <p>Understand that positive and supportive relationships and interactions are the foundation for excellence in teaching practice with individual children as well as the foundation for creating a caring community of learners when working with groups of children</p> | <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives related to facilitating positive, supportive relationships and interactions with young children and creating a caring community of learners when working with groups of children</p>   | <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives related to facilitating positive, supportive relationships and interactions with young children and creating a caring community of learners when working with groups of children</p>   |

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|   | <p>Understand that each child brings his or her own experiences, knowledge, interests, abilities, culture and languages to the early learning setting</p> <p>Support a classroom culture that respects and builds on all that children bring to the early learning setting</p>   |   |   |
| <p><b>4b:</b> Understanding that the science of learning and child development indicates the need for distinct teaching skills and strategies appropriate to early childhood along with differentiated instruction to support children’s individual needs, including children with developmental delays or disabilities</p> | <p>Understand the importance of differentiating instruction for individual children and groups of children</p> <p>Identify basic instructional practices to use with young children that are appropriate to their level of development, their individual characteristics, and the sociocultural context in which they live</p> | <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives about various teaching strategies used with young children</p> <p>Differentiate instruction based on the level of development, individual characteristics, and sociocultural context of young children</p> | <p>Understand the research base and theoretical perspectives about various instructional practices used with young children</p> <p>Differentiate instruction based on the level of development, individual characteristics, and sociocultural context of young children</p> |
| <p><b>4c:</b> Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias and evidence-based teaching skills and strategies that reflect</p>   | <p>Use a basic repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant teaching approaches to facilitate development and learning and classroom management</p> <p>Understand that play is foundational to supporting young</p>   | <p>Use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant teaching approaches to facilitate development and learning and classroom management</p>  | <p>Use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant teaching approaches to facilitate development and learning and classroom management</p>  |

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| <p>universal design for learning principles</p>   | <p>children’s learning and development</p> <p>Use instructional practices that facilitate the development of young children’s skills in the areas of executive function, learning cooperation, conflict-resolution skills, independence, and critical thinking</p>   | <p>Understand the various types and stages of play that support young children’s development</p> <p>Apply knowledge about age levels, abilities, developmental status, cultures and language, and experiences of children in the group to make professional judgments about the use of materials, the organization of indoor and outdoor physical space and materials, and the management of daily schedules and routines</p>                          | <p>Understand the various types and stages of play that support young children’s development</p> <p>Apply knowledge about age levels, abilities, developmental status, cultures and language, and experiences of children in the group to make professional judgements about the use of materials, the organization of indoor and outdoor physical space and materials, and the management of daily schedules and routines</p>                         |
| <p><b>4d:</b> Developing and sustaining reflective, responsive and intentional practice</p> | <p>Regularly reflect on their instructional practice and their own biases as they work to provide effective supports for each child</p> <p>Determine when it is appropriate to reach out for new resources and consult with peers in related professions and other members of their teaching team</p> <p>Incorporates self-care into routines to maintain positive engagement with young children and professionalism with families and colleagues</p> | <p>Regularly reflect on their instructional practice and their own biases as they work to provide effective supports for each child</p> <p>Determine when it is appropriate to reach out for new resources and consult with peers in related professions and other members of their teaching team</p> <p>Incorporates self-care into routines to maintain positive engagement with young children and professionalism with families and colleagues</p> | <p>Regularly reflect on their instructional practice and their own biases as they work to provide effective supports for each child</p> <p>Determine when it is appropriate to reach out for new resources and consult with peers in related professions and other members of their teaching team</p> <p>Incorporates self-care into routines to maintain positive engagement with young children and professionalism with families and colleagues</p> |
| <p><b>5a:</b> Understanding content knowledge and resources—the central</p>                 | <p>Have <b>an elemental knowledge</b> in core content areas of math, science, English, social</p>  | <p>Have <b>working knowledge</b> of content areas (linguistics, literature, the arts, mathematics, science and social</p>  | <p>Have <b>an applied knowledge</b> of content areas (linguistics, literature, the arts, mathematics, science and social</p>   |

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| <p>concepts, methods, inquiry and application tools, and structures—of the academic disciplines in an early education curriculum.</p>   | <p>studies/history, physical education, visual arts, performing arts</p>   | <p>studies) through dedicated general education courses</p>  | <p>studies) through dedicated general education courses</p>   |
| <p><b>5b:</b> Understanding pedagogical content knowledge—how young children learn in each discipline—and how to use the educator knowledge and practices described in Standards One through Four to support young children’s learning in each content area</p> | <p>Have an <b>elemental understanding</b> of pedagogical content knowledge to make instructional decisions<br/>Identify resources from professional organizations representing content areas to support instructional practice</p> | <p>Have a <b>working level of understanding</b> of the research base and theoretical perspectives undergirding pedagogical content knowledge and understand how young children learn across content areas</p> <p>Use understanding of pedagogical content knowledge to make instructional decisions</p> <p>Use resources from professional organizations representing content areas to support instructional practice</p> <p>Understand how to engage children in learning about essential and foundational concepts, principles, and theories; in methods of investigations and inquiry; and in forms of representation that express ideas, relationships, and patterns in each curriculum area</p> | <p>Have an <b>applied level of understanding</b> of the research base and theoretical perspectives undergirding pedagogical content knowledge and understand how young children learn across content areas</p> <p>Use understanding of pedagogical content knowledge to make instructional decisions</p> <p>Use resources from professional organizations representing content areas to support instructional practice</p> <p>Understand how to engage children in learning about essential and foundational concepts, principles, and theories; in methods of investigations and inquiry; and in forms of representation that express ideas, relationships, and patterns in each curriculum area</p> |

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| <p><b>5c:</b> Applying, expanding, integrating and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, knowledge of curriculum content resources, and pedagogical content knowledge to their teaching practice.</p> | <p>Identify early learning standards relevant to their state and/or early learning setting</p> <p>Support implementation of curriculum across content areas</p>  | <p>Integrate their understanding of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and early learning standards to select and create curriculum across content areas for young children</p>   | <p>Integrate their understanding of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and early learning standards to select and create curriculum across content areas for young children</p>   |
| <p><b>6a:</b> Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field and serving as an informed advocate</p>   | <p>Identify as a member of the early childhood profession</p> <p>Identify connections between the disciplines and professions that collaborate in the early childhood field</p> <p>Identify basic policy issues in the profession, including compensation and financing of the early education system; standards setting and assessment in young children; and issues of equity, bias and social justice that affect young children, families, communities and colleagues</p> <p>Advocate for resources and policies that support young children and their families as well as for early childhood educators, with a primary focus on advocacy within the early learning setting</p> | <p>Understand distinctive history, knowledge base, and mission of the early childhood education profession and the early childhood field as a whole</p> <p>Understand the broader contexts and challenges, current issues and trends that affect the profession including compensation and financing of the early education system; standards setting and assessment in young children; and issues of equity, bias and social justice that affect young children, families, communities and colleagues</p> <p>Understand the basics of how public policies are developed</p> <p>Advocate for resources and policies that support young children and their families as well as for early</p> | <p>Understand distinctive history, knowledge base, and mission of the early childhood education profession and the early childhood field as a whole</p> <p>Understand the broader contexts and challenges, current issues and trends that affect the profession including compensation and financing of the early education system; standards setting and assessment in young children; and issues of equity, bias and social justice that affect young children, families, communities and colleagues</p> <p>Understand the basics of how public policies are developed</p> <p>Advocate for resources and policies that support young children and their families as well as for early</p> |



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|  |   | childhood educators, within early learning settings as well as in broader contexts such as at the local, state, federal or national levels   | childhood educators, within early learning settings as well as in broader contexts such as at the local, state, federal or national levels   |
| <b>6b:</b> Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines | <p>Understand the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and be guided by its ideals and principles</p> <p>Practice confidentiality, sensitivity and respect for young children, their families, and colleagues</p> <p>Understand and follow relevant laws such as reporting child abuse and neglect, health and safety practices, and the rights of children with developmental delays and disabilities</p> <p>Understand the basic elements of professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards and regulations and position statement from professional associations</p> | <p>Use the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to analyze and resolve professional ethical dilemmas and give defensible justifications for resolutions of those dilemmas</p> <p>Understand the content and development process that undergirds professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards and regulations and position statements from professional associations</p> <p>Understand, reflect upon, and integrate professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards and regulations and position statement from professional associations as appropriate for the role/designation in the profession</p> | <p>Use the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to analyze and resolve professional ethical dilemmas and give defensible justifications for resolutions of those dilemmas</p> <p>Understand the content and development process that undergirds professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards and regulations and position statements from professional associations</p> <p>Understand, reflect upon, and integrate professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards and regulations and position statement from professional associations as appropriate for the role/designation in the profession</p> |
| <b>6c:</b> Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice                               | Demonstrate self-motivated commitment to continuous learning that directly influences the quality of their work with young children   | <b>Working understanding</b> of the research-based and theoretical perspectives related to continuous and collaborative learning   | <b>Applied understanding</b> of the research-based and theoretical perspectives related to continuous and collaborative learning   |

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|   | Participate in collaborative learning communities, informal or formal, with colleagues and with professionals in related disciplines  | Lead learning communities and teaching teams <b>in birth through age 5 settings</b><br><br><b>Working understanding</b> of the evidence-based and theoretical perspectives related to effective communication and team leadership | Lead learning communities and teaching teams <b>in birth through age 8 settings</b><br><br><b>Applied understanding</b> of the evidence-based and theoretical perspectives related to effective communication and team leadership |
| <b>6d:</b> Integrating knowledgeable and critical perspectives on early education and developing the habit of intentional reflective practice | Examine their own work, sources of professional knowledge, and assumptions about the early childhood field with a spirit of inquiry<br><br>Engage in dialogue with colleagues with attention to differences in perspectives and values<br><br>Understand that their professional knowledge base is constantly evolving.<br><br>Identify non-dominant sources of information to supplement their knowledge | <b>Working understanding</b> of strengths-based approaches to research and practice   | <b>Applied understanding</b> of strengths-based approaches to research and practice   |
| <b>6e.</b> Using strong communication skills to effectively support young children’s learning and development and to work                     | Apply proper grammar, spelling, and usage of terms when communicating with young children, families and colleagues equivalent to the expected level of a U.S. high school graduate  | Apply proper grammar, spelling, and usage of terms when communicating with young children, families and colleagues equivalent <b>to the expected level of an associate degree graduate</b>  | Apply proper grammar, spelling, and usage of terms when communicating with young children, families and colleagues equivalent <b>to the expected level of a baccalaureate degree graduate or a</b>                                |

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| <p>with families and colleagues</p> | <p>Use clear and positive language and gestures with young children</p> <p>Use a positive, professional tone to communicate verbally and in writing with families and colleagues</p> <p>Use technology with facility to support communication with colleagues and families, as appropriate</p> |  | <p><b>master's degree (initial prep) graduate</b></p> |
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## Appendix B: Critical Issues and Research Informing the Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

The following sections summarize research findings and contextual issues facing the early childhood field that informed the revisions to this position statement.

### A Response to Research and Practice

Since the publication of the 2009 Position Statement, significant research, much of it synthesized in the *2015 Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, has informed our understanding of young children and of the workforce that supports their learning and care. It has confirmed the importance of high-quality early learning experiences for young children, confirmed that from birth young children are actively developing across many domains, and helped the public and the early childhood field better understand the neuroscience that drives young children's cognitive development, particularly during the child's earliest years. This research runs parallel to contextual factors and research findings such as:

- Early childhood educators' knowledge and practice influences young children's educational outcomes;
- [Placeholder for bullet on the impact of quality tied to the practice of interactions with children]
- Early childhood educators having specialized knowledge of child development and early childhood education is correlated with better educational outcomes for young children<sup>2</sup>;
- The relationship between an early childhood educator's degree level and impact on young children's learning and development is mixed; however, there is consensus among researchers that higher education is one important component of educator quality<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>; Whitebook, Marcy and Sharon Ryan. *Degrees in Context: Asking the Right Questions about Preparing Skilled and Effective Teachers of Young Children*. Preschool Policy Brief. NIEER and CSCCE, April 2011, Issue 22; Manning M, Garvis S, Fleming C, Wong T. W. G. The relationship between teacher qualification and the quality of the early childhood care and learning environment. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2017:1 DOI: 10.4073/csr.2017.1

- Professional learning systems for early childhood educators, those entering and those already serving in the profession, should be aligned to the knowledge and competencies shown to have a positive influence on young children’s outcomes;
- A large segment of the early childhood workforce does not have a college degree;<sup>4</sup>
- The large segment of early childhood educators pursue initial postsecondary credentials at community colleges, not baccalaureate-granting institutions<sup>5</sup>;
- Those pursuing postsecondary credentials in this profession often have challenges which can result in stopping out or dropping out of the credential program – such as low wages, needing to work full- or part-time while going to school, family responsibilities, language barriers, lack of academic readiness for postsecondary education, etc., and that these barriers are particularly burdensome and disproportionately affect individuals of low socio-economic status, people of color, and for those who are English language learners;<sup>6</sup>
- The racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the young child population to the early childhood workforce is more comparable than the diversity of the K-12 student population to that of the K-12 workforce; however, the diversity in the early childhood workforce is racially stratified, with white educators over-represented among higher status and higher paying positions.<sup>7</sup> ; and
- There are benefits associated with having a teaching workforce that reflects the ethnic, linguistic and racial identities of the children it serves – including strong evidence that educators of color have a positive impact on child outcomes<sup>8</sup>.

## The Need for Clarity and Coherence

Currently the early childhood workforce is fragmented – there are a variety of early education and care settings; individuals with varying credentials and qualifications provide education and care for young children; and a compensation structure that, for the most part, does not enable nor encourage individuals in the field to pursue specialized early childhood postsecondary credentials. This fragmentation, for most, has an adverse impact on the effectiveness of early

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<sup>4</sup> Early Childhood Workforce Index 2016, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley; Characteristics of Home-based Early Care and Education Providers: Initial Findings from the National Survey of Early Care and Education. (2016) OPRE Report #2016-13, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<sup>5</sup> [Term Enrollment Estimates: Spring 2018](#). National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Table 9 and Table 10.

<sup>6</sup> T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center; Accessing Career Pathways to Education and Training for Early Childhood Professionals October 2016, Manhattan Strategy Group.

<sup>7</sup> Immigrant and Refugee Workers in the Early Childhood Field: Taking a Closer Look. Migrant Policy Institute; Early Childhood Workforce Index 2016, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

<sup>8</sup> Seth Gershenson American University and IZA Cassandra M. D. Hart University of California, Davis Constance A. Lindsay American University Nicholas W. Papageorge Johns Hopkins University and IZA. The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers, A Discussion Paper. Institute of Labor Economics, March 2017.

childhood educators and on developmental and educational outcomes for young children. The fragmentation is connected to a long history of inadequate and disconnected public policies and financing that has undervalued the care and education of young children. Furthermore, this system is characterized by systemic racism that has resulted in a predominance of women of color serving in the lowest-paid sectors and settings in the profession.

Each state and U.S. territory has its own set of standards or competencies for early childhood educators and its own certification/licensure systems that in most cases only license/certify at the pre-K level or older. There is wide variation across professional preparation programs in terms of course content and availability and in terms of quality of field experiences as related to the specialized knowledge and practice needed to be an effective early childhood educator.

In many cases, there are also significant divisions in wages and benefits, career advancement opportunities, professional preparation and development and working conditions between early childhood educators working with particular age groups and among those working in home-based programs, center-based programs, and elementary schools.

The profession took the lead to address this fragmentation with a clear call for the agency we have to create and enact a vision for an effective, respected, and fairly compensated early childhood workforce, modeling the cohesiveness we desire, developing a unified definition of the profession, and reaffirming that all early childhood educators must have specialized knowledge and competencies, across a birth-through-age-eight continuum to be effective.

This cohesive response was developed under the auspices of Power to the Profession, an initiative led by 15 national organizations comprised of early childhood professionals, over 30 stakeholder organizations that influence and/or support the early childhood profession, and hundreds of thousands of early childhood educators. The initiative built on guidelines, frameworks, and standards currently operating across programs, organizations, and states to establish a shared, uniform framework of career pathways, knowledge and competencies, qualifications, standards, and compensation to unify the entire profession. This will provide clarity and cohesion needed to advance and implement a comprehensive policy and financing strategy for the early childhood profession. This will further ensure that the profession takes ownership of our practice and commitment to society.

One of the major recommendations in Decision Cycle 2 made by the Power to the Profession Task Force was that NAEYC's Standards for Professional Preparation should serve as the foundation for the profession's core knowledge and competencies with some key revisions:

- The revision will be an inclusive and collaborative process, ensuring representation by subject matter experts as well as the organizations whose competency documents will be considered.
- The revised standards are reframed as "Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators." These standards will then be intended for wide use and adoption by the profession to develop individual licensing, professional preparation program accreditation, credentialing, and other core components of the profession.

- The standards are reviewed in light of the most recent science, research, and evidence, with particular consideration to:
  - Potential missing elements identified in the *Transforming the Workforce* report, including teaching subject matter specific content, addressing stress and adversity, fostering socioemotional development, working with bilingual learners, and integrating technology in teaching practices and curricula.
  - The following documents: (i) Council for Exceptional Children - Special Educator Professional Preparation initial and Advanced Standards, the Early Childhood Special Education/Early Intervention Specialty Set (Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education standards) (ii) DEC Recommended Practices (Evidence based practices necessary for high-quality inclusive programs for all children birth to age eight) (iii) Council for Professional Recognition - Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards for center-based: Infant/Toddler and Preschool; Family Child Care; and Home Visitor (iv) National Board for Professional Teaching Standards - Early Childhood Generalist Standards (for Teachers of Students Ages 3 to eight) (v) ZERO TO THREE - Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators (for educators supporting children birth through age three)
  - Elevation of inclusion, diversity, and equity beyond the currently integrated approach to fully capture the depth and breadth of these issues

Thus, using the imperatives from Decision Cycle 2 as well as the findings from current research and practice, NAEYC, informed by a workgroup comprised of faculty, researchers, practitioners, and subject matter experts, has revised the standards.



## Appendix C: Glossary

*Definitions may be organized for logical rather than alphabetical flow.*

**Aesthetic Domain** - The aesthetic domain addresses visual arts, sensory and kinesthetic exploration, art media, music and movement, storytelling, play, song, and dance as a means for exploring interests, emotions, and creativity.

**Agency** - a person's ability to make choices and influence events. In this position statement, there is an emphasis on each child's agency, especially a child's ability to make choices and influence events in the context of learning activities, also referred to as autonomy or child-directed. See Adair, 2014; and *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (2009).

**Anti-Bias Education** - an anti-bias approach to education explicitly works to end all forms of bias and discrimination (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2009).

**Assessment** - a systematic procedure for obtaining information from observations, interviews, portfolios, projects, and other sources that can be used to make informed judgments about learner's characteristics, understanding and development to implement improved curriculum and teaching practices.

- **Assessment Cycle** – periodic, ongoing evaluation to track performance, support and improve student learning outcomes, and monitor progress of programs.
- **Authentic Assessment** - age-appropriate approaches and culturally relevant assessment in a language the child understands—for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children in early grades across developmental domains and curriculum areas.
- **Formal and Informal Assessment** –formal assessment is cumulative and used to measure what a student has learned. Formal assessments include standardized tests, screenings, and diagnostic evaluation. Informal assessment is ongoing and includes children's work samples, observation, audio or video recordings, or quizzes.
- **Formative and Summative Assessment** - formative assessment refers to teacher practice of monitoring student learning used to inform and modify real time instruction to improve student outcomes. Whereas summative assessment takes place at the end of the instructional period to measure student learning or concept retention.

**Candidate** - refers to college students who are candidates for completion in early childhood professional preparation programs. In some cases, these candidates are also candidates for professional licensure or certification. *NAEYC Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs: Policies and Procedures Handbook*, (2017, p. 41).

**Child Observation** – is observation of a child to gather information on development, behavior, levels of learning, interests, and preferences.

**Competencies** - are the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to support high-quality practice across all early childhood education sectors, settings, and roles. (Build It Better, p 12).

**Content Knowledge** - the knowledge of subject areas in the early childhood curriculum to be taught and the ability to implement effective instructional strategies.

**Code of Ethics** - The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood care and education. Refer to the NAEYC Position Statement Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment.

**Child Development Associate® (CDA) Competency Standards** - The **CDA Competency Standards** are the national standards used to evaluate a caregiver's performance with children and families during the CDA assessment process. Council for Professional Recognition

**Culture** - patterns of beliefs, practices, and traditions associated with a particular group of people. Culture is increasingly understood as inseparable from development (Reid, Kagan, and Scott-Little, 2017; Rogoff 2009). Individuals both learn from and contribute to the culture of the groups to which they belong. Cultures evolve over time, reflecting the lived experiences of their members in particular times and places.

**Culturally Relevant** - culturally relevant curriculum and practice emphasizes content and interactions that are meaningful to the social and cultural norms, traditions, values, and experiences of the learners.

**Culturally Responsive** - “A culturally responsive teaching approach values all children’s cultures and experiences and uses them as a springboard for learning. A culturally responsive early childhood teacher learns about others’ values, traditions, and ways of thinking”. Bohart, H. & Procopio, R. (Eds.) (2018, p. 56)

**Curriculum** - consists of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and understanding children are to acquire and the plans for the learning experiences through which these gains occur. In developmentally appropriate practice, the curriculum helps young children achieve goals that are developmentally and educationally significant.

**Degree Program/Program of Study/Higher Education Programs** – are defined in the Higher Education Act as “postsecondary education programs offered by an institution of higher education that leads to an academic or professional degree, certificate, other recognized educational credential.” (Higher Education Act of 2008, section 602.3) (PD Glossary, Part 2: Adult Education, pp. 5-6)

- Associate Degree - a degree granted for the successful completion of a sub-baccalaureate program of studies, usually requiring at least 2 years (or equivalent) of full-time college-level study. This includes degrees granted in a cooperative or work-study program. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/glossary.asp>
- Bachelor's Degree - A degree granted for the successful completion of a baccalaureate program of studies, usually requiring at least 4 years (or equivalent) of full-time college-level study. This includes degrees granted in a cooperative or work-study program. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/glossary.asp>

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice** - the NAEYC Position Statement 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 general processes of child development and learning, 2) what is known about the child as an individual who is a member of a particular family and community, and 3) what is known about the social and cultural contexts in which the learning occurs.

**Differentiated Instruction** - is an approach whereby teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to maximize the learning of all students: average learners, English language learners, struggling students, students with learning disabilities, and gifted and talented students. Differentiated instruction is not a single strategy but rather a framework that teachers can use to implement a variety of strategies, many of which are evidence-based. (The IRIS Center. Retrieved from <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/di/cresource/q1/p01/#content>)

**Dispositions** - individual attitudes, beliefs, values, habits, and tendencies toward particular actions. Professional dispositions are those dispositions that are considered important for effective work in a specific profession and expected of all members of that profession. Critical dispositions for educators have been defined in the CCSSO's Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards (CCSSO, 2013) and, in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). NBPTS dispositions for early childhood educators include dispositions toward collaboration, respect, integrity, honesty, fairness, compassion and to promote equity, fairness and appreciation of diversity in their classrooms. (NBPTS, 2012) Council of Chief State School Officers. (2013, April). Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium InTASC *Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions for Teachers 1.0: A Resource for Ongoing Teacher Development*. Washington, DC: Author.

**Diversity**—variation among individuals, as well as within and across groups of individuals in terms of their backgrounds and lived experiences. These experiences are related to social identities, including race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, social and economic status, religion, ability status, and country of origin. “Diverse” or “diversity” are sometimes used as euphemisms for “nonwhite.” NAEYC specifically rejects this usage as it implies whiteness as the norm.

**Early Childhood** - the first period in human development. Although developmental periods do not rigidly correspond to chronological age, early childhood is generally defined as including all children from birth through age 8.

**Early Childhood Education (ECE)** - is defined using the developmental definition of birth through approximately age 8 regardless of programmatic regulatory, funding, and delivery sectors and mechanisms. (Build It Better, 2016, p. 12)

**Early Childhood Educator** – individuals who care for and promote the learning, development and well-being of children birth through age eight in all early childhood education settings while meeting the qualifications of the profession and having mastery of its specialized knowledge, skills, and competencies.

**Early Childhood Education Profession** - The Early Childhood Education Profession cares for and promotes the learning, development and wellbeing of children birth through age eight to establish a foundation for lifelong learning and development.

Members of the Early Childhood Education Profession are prepared to be accountable for the following responsibilities:

1. Planning and implementing intentional, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that promote the Social-Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Cognitive Development and General Learning Competencies of each child served.
2. Establishing and maintaining a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy learning environment
3. Observing, documenting and assessing children’s learning and development using guidelines established by the profession
4. Developing reciprocal, culturally responsive relationships with families and communities
5. Advocating for the needs of children and their families
6. Advancing and advocating for an equitable, diverse, and effective early childhood education profession
7. Engaging in reflective practice and continuous learning

Power to the Profession Decision Cycle 1 & 2

Influenced by Head Start definition of classroom teacher:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/head-start-act/sec-648a-staff-qualifications-development>

**Early Childhood Education Workforce** - includes those working with young children (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children in centers, homes, and schools) and their families or on their behalf (in agencies, organizations, institutions of higher education, etc.), with a primary mission of supporting children’s development and learning. (PD Glossary)

**Early Learning Settings** – include programs serving children from birth through age five (or the age at which states mandate school attendance). Setting refers to the locations in which early childhood education takes place and includes child care centers, child care homes, and schools that are state licensed or registered, public or private, for-profit or nonprofit.

**Equity**—the state that would be achieved if how one fares in society was no longer predictable by race, gender, class, language or any other social/cultural characteristic. Equity in practice is each student/family receiving necessary supports in a timely fashion, to develop their full intellectual, social and physical potential. Advancing equity requires remediating differences in outcomes that can be traced to biased treatment of individuals because of their social identities.

*Equity* is not the same as *equality*. Equal treatment, laid upon unequal starting points, is inequitable. Instead of equal treatment, we aim for equal opportunity. That requires considering individuals' and groups' starting points, then distributing resources equitably (not equally) to meet needs. Attempting to achieve equality of opportunity, without consideration of historic and present inequities is ineffective, unjust, and unfair. (See National Equity Project resource for NAEYC training and forthcoming publication.)

**Evidence-based practice** – is the integration of multiple sources of evidence, information and knowledge to make day-to-day professional decisions in the best interest of children and families. Those sources of evidence include best available research; professional wisdom, values, knowledge and expertise; and knowledge about the interests, values, culture, needs and choices of children, families and communities served. (Buysse & Wesley, 2006)  
Buysse, V. & Wesley, P. (eds). 2006. Evidence-Based Practice in the Early Childhood Field. Washington DC: Zero To Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers & Families.

**Executive Function Skills** - mental processes that develop early and are crucial to children's learning and development. Their development requires supportive scaffolding from adults and is endangered by toxic stress and adversity, which can interfere with healthy development of the brain. Executive function skills include the ability remember and use information; to sustain and shift mental focus and flexibility; and to exercise self-control, set priorities and resist impulsive actions. (Center on the Developing Child) Related **life skills** include developing focus and self-control, perspective taking, communicating, making connections, critical thinking, taking on challenges, and self-directed engaged learning. (Galinsky, 2010)  
Galinsky, Ellen. (2010) Mind In the Making: the Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs. New York: Harper <http://mindinthemaking.org/7-essential-skills/>  
Shonkoff, J. Center on the Developing Child. retrieved February 21, 2019  
from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/executive-function/>

**Field Experience** - Includes informal and formal opportunities for field observations, field work, practica, student teaching, residencies, internships, clinical practice and other learning experiences that take place in an early education setting with guidance from a skilled mentor, coach or early childhood instructor. A planned sequence of these experiences supports candidate development of understanding, competence and dispositions in a specialized area of practice. 2017 NAEYC Accreditation Handbook (p. 42)

**Framework for Early Childhood Preparation, Duration and Award**

- **Early Childhood Education Professional Training Program** - Training is a learning experience, or series of experiences, specific to an area of inquiry and related set of skills or dispositions, delivered by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills. A planned sequence of training sessions comprises a training program. Planned and conducted based on the standards of the profession and an assessment of individual, group, and/or system needs. Standards, needs assessment, and other evidence are also used to define learning outcomes for training session(s). (PD Glossary, Training, pp. 7-8)
- **Early Childhood Education Associate Degree Programs** - Associate degree programs normally require at least two years but less than four years of full-time equivalent college work. An associate degree is at least 60 credit hours of college-level course work. Power to the Profession, Discussion Draft 2: Decision Cycles 345+6, (p. 13).
- **Early Childhood Education Bachelor's Degree Programs** - Bachelor's degree programs normally require at least four years but no more than five years of full-time equivalent college work. A bachelor's degree is at least 120 credit hours of college-level coursework. Power to the Profession, Discussion Draft 2: Decision Cycles 345+6, (p. 13).
- **Early Childhood Education Master's Degree Programs (initial preparation)** - Master's degree programs normally require at least one, but not more than two, full-time academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree. Initial-level master's degree programs are designed for individuals with non-early childhood education bachelor's degrees. Power to the Profession, Discussion Draft 2: Decision Cycles 345+6, (p. 13).

**Funds of Knowledge** - essential cultural practices and bodies of knowledge embedded in the daily practices and routines of families (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005.).

**Healing Centered Practices** – intervention focused on the individual drawing on experience, culture, personal strength, and well-being. The approach is holistic with a shift from a lens on trauma and deficiency. The individual is an active participant in acquiring tools for healing.

**Implicit Bias**- bias that affects one's understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

**Inclusion** The practice and legal requirement to include children with delays and disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment possible, making accommodations and adaptations to teaching practices and learning environments as needed. Also see Universal Designs for Learning.

Retrieved from [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)

Retrieved from <https://www.deccecpersonnelstandards.org/>

**Indicators** - are measurable, objective, and valid markers toward a goal. In this document indicators may be policies or strategies for implementing policies that lead to outcomes that can be benchmarked. They are intentionally written in an open-ended way to respect differing state approaches to policy development and implementation. (Build It Better, 2016, 13) In



NAEYC higher education accreditation systems indicators may be program descriptors or data that indicate strength in a particular accreditation standard or criterion.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)** - a plan to ensure free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with developmental delays aged three to 21 years, in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part B. NAEYC Early Learning Standards Glossary, (2018, p. 12).

**Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)** - a plan to ensure free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with developmental delays aged birth to three years, in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C. NAEYC Early Learning Standards Glossary, (2018, p. 12).

**Induction programs** - are comprehensive staff development programs designed by a school or other employer to support, train and retain first year teachers. Induction programs may be part of professional or leadership development plans and can include peer-to-peer networks, teacher learning communities, mentoring, and coaching. Induction programs are often a partnership between the Institution of Higher Education and school or other early education setting, supporting the college students' transition from clinical practice as part of degree completion to first years of work in a new professional role. (PD Glossary, Part, 2 Adult Education, p. 7)

**Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards** - the model core teaching standards outline what all teachers across all content and grade levels should know and be able to do to be effective in today's learning contexts.

**Integrated Curriculum** planned curriculum experiences that integrate children's learning within and across the domains (physical, social, emotional, cognitive) and the disciplines (including language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical education, and health). DAP Position Statement, (2009, p. 21).

**Learning Communities** - provide a space and a structure for people to align around a shared goal. Effective communities are both aspirational and practical. They connect people, organizations, and systems that are eager to learn and work across boundaries, all the while holding members accountable to a common agenda, metrics, and outcomes. These communities enable participants to share results and learn from each other, thereby improving their ability to achieve rapid yet significant progress. Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University: Learning communities. Retrieved from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/collective-change/key-concepts/learning-communities/>

**Leveling** - a structure in which the labels and roles are reduced to three distinct and meaningful designations: Early Childhood Educator I (ECE I), Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II), and Early Childhood Educator III (ECE III). Power to the Profession, Decision 345+6 (p. 9). Retrieved from

[https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/initiatives/power\\_to\\_the\\_profession\\_01302019.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/initiatives/power_to_the_profession_01302019.pdf)

APPENDIX B Unifying Framework for Preparation, Competence, Responsibilities, and Compensation (p. 27)

**Life Skills** – critical fostered abilities that help children successfully navigate the joy and challenging complexities of life. These seven critical areas are: 1.) focus and self-control; 2.) perspective taking; 3.) communicating; 4.) making connections; 5.) critical thinking; 6.) taking on challenges, and, 7.) self-directed, engaged learning (Galinsky, 2010).

**NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards** - NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs represents a sustained vision for the early childhood field and more specifically for the programs that prepare the professionals working in the field. The Standards 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. NAEYC (2009). Position Statement: NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation. Retrieved from [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/2009%20Professional%20Prep%20stdsRevised%204\\_12.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/2009%20Professional%20Prep%20stdsRevised%204_12.pdf)

**National Accreditation or Recognition** - public recognition of Institutions of Higher Education and professional degree programs awarded by non-governmental agencies through a process of standard setting, self-study, peer review, accreditation decision, and ongoing reporting. (PD Glossary, part 2 Adult Education, p 6)

**National Board for Professional Teaching Standards** - the early childhood generalist standards are for teachers of students ages 3 – 8. National Board Certification was designed to develop, retain and recognize accomplished teachers and to generate ongoing improvement in schools nationwide. Retrieved from <http://www.nbpts.org/wp-content/uploads/EC-GEN.pdf>  
Retrieved from <https://www.nbpts.org/national-board-certification/>

**Pedagogical Content Knowledge** - Knowledge of academic disciplines and the ability to create meaningful learning experiences for each child utilizing effective teaching strategies.

**Play** - a universal, innate and essential human activity that children engage in for pleasure, enjoyment and recreation. Play may be solitary or social, begins during infancy, and develops increasing complexity through childhood. Play integrates and supports children’s development and learning across cognitive, physical, social and emotional domains, and across curriculum content areas. While there are multiple and evolving theories about the types and stages of play as well as the teacher’s role in play, the professions of child psychology and of early childhood education have long recognized play as essential for young children's development of symbolic and representational thinking, construction and organization of mental concepts, social expression and communication, imagination and problem-solving.



**Position Statement** - NAEYC Position Statements are adopted by the Governing Board to state the Association's position on issues related to early childhood education practice, policy, and/or professional development for which there are controversial or critical opinions. Position statements are developed through a consensus-building approach that seeks to convene diverse perspectives and areas of expertise related to the issue and provide opportunities for members and others to provide input and feedback. Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/about-position-statements>

**Professional Development** – is a continuum of learning and support opportunities designed to prepare individuals with the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions needed in a specific profession. Professional development for early childhood educators includes both professional preparation and ongoing professional development; training, education, and technical assistance; university/college credit-bearing coursework, preservice and in-service training sessions; observation with feedback from a colleague and peer learning communities; and mentoring, coaching, and other forms of job-related technical assistance. (PD glossary, p. 5; Build It Better, 2016, p. 13)

National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies. (2011) Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary. Washington, DC: Author  
[https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/glossarytraining\\_ta.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/glossarytraining_ta.pdf)

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2016) Build It Better: Indicators of Progress to Support Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development Systems. Washington, DC: Author  
[https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/Build%20It%20Better\\_For%20Web.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/Build%20It%20Better_For%20Web.pdf)

**Professional Judgement** - is the ability to apply professional knowledge, professional experience, and ethical standards in context with understanding, analysis and reflection. Early childhood educators exercise professional judgement to make intentional, informed decisions about appropriate practice in specific circumstances.

**Early Childhood Professional Training Programs** - Professional training programs normally require less than one year to complete. Completers may meet the educational requirements for industry-recognized national credentials and other portable credentials. These programs are a minimum 120 clock hours.

**Preparation Program** - Programs that culminate in a degree, certificate, or credential that provides candidates with the appropriate level of mastery of the agreed upon standards and competencies. These programs are responsible for preparing early childhood educators caring

for children birth through third grade across settings, including for-profit and non-profit child care, family child care homes, schools, Head Start, and military child care.

**Reciprocal Relationships** - in reciprocal relationships between practitioners and families, there is a mutual respect, cooperation, shared responsibilities, and negotiation of conflicts toward achievement of shared goals (DAP Position Statement, p. 23). Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/PSDAP.pdf>

**Specialized Professional Organizations** - represent the members of specialized professions. They typically define the profession's core body of knowledge and professional code of ethical conduct and set standards for professional preparation and credentials.

**Standards** - Standards of the profession are the national standards formally adopted by a profession to define the essentials of high-quality practice for all members of the profession. They may be applied in the development of national accreditation, state program approval, individual licensing, and other aspects of professional development systems. They provide the unifying framework for core as well as specialized or advanced knowledge and competencies. The NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs (2009) are the national standards for knowledge, skills, and dispositions for all early childhood education professionals in all birth through age 8 early education settings, sectors, and roles. They are research-based, regularly updated, and adopted by the NAEYC Governing Board, and the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) national accrediting body for schools of teacher education.

**Technology** - The tools, devices, and other machines or equipment that deliver media, including televisions, computers, smart phones, radios, MP3 players, video game consoles, eReaders, and tablets. Beyond Remote-Controlled Childhood: Teaching Young Children in the Media Age (2013).

**Interactive Media** - refers to digital and analog materials, including software programs, applications (apps) broadcast and streaming media, some children's television programming, e-books, the internet, and other forms of content designed to facilitate active and creative use by young children and to encourage social engagement with other children and adults. p. 1. Joint position statement of NAEYC and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College (2012). Retrieved from [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/topics/PS\\_technology\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/topics/PS_technology_WEB.pdf)

**Universal Design** - is a concept that can be used to support access to environments in many different types of settings through the removal of physical and structural barriers. Universal design for Learning (UDL) reflects practices that provide multiple and varied formats for instruction and learning. UDL principles and practices help to ensure that every young child has access to learning environments, to typical home or educational routines and activities, and to

the general education curriculum. Retrieved from [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)

**Young Children** - young child/children refers to **young children** in the period of early childhood development, from birth through approximately age 8. Although developmental periods do not rigidly correspond to chronological age, early childhood is generally defined as including all children from birth through age 8.”

### **Organizations**

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees +

<https://www.afscme.org/>

American Federation of Teachers +

<https://www.aft.org/>

Associate Degree Early Childhood Teacher Educators (ACCESS) +

<https://accessece.org/>

Child Care Aware of America +

<http://childcareaware.org/>

Council for Professional Recognition +

[www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)

[Council of Chief State School Officers](http://www.cdacouncil.org) (CCSSO)

The InTASC standards were developed by and adopted by CCSSO

[Council for the Accreditation of Educator Programs](http://www.ccaep.org/) (CAEP)

Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) +

<http://www.dec-sped.org/>

Early Care and Education Consortium +

<http://www.ececonsortium.org/>

High Scope Educational Research Foundation

<https://highscope.org/home>

National Association for Family Child Care +

<https://www.nafcc.org/>

[National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](http://www.nbtstandards.org/)<sup>®</sup>

National Education Association +

<http://www.nea.org/>

National Head Start Association +

<https://www.nhsa.org/>

The Nicholson Foundation

<https://thenicholsonfoundation.org/>

Service Employees International Union +

<https://www.seiu.org/about>

[WestEd](http://www.wested.org/)

ZERO TO THREE

<https://www.zerotothree.org/> +

- \* Early Learning Systems Committee of the NAEYC Governing Board
- ^Member of the NAEYC Governing Board
- + Power to the Profession Task Force

### **National stakeholder organizations that have confirmed P2P participation**

<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/initiatives/profession/national-organizations>

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### **Additional Resources**

[Association for Childhood Education International](#) (ACEI)

[Association of Children's Museums](#) (ACM)

[Council for Exceptional Children](#) (CEC)

[Early Childhood Art Educators](#) (ECAE)

[Early Childhood Art Educators](#)

[InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers](#)

[International Society for Technology in Education](#) (ISTE)

[National Association for Gifted Children](#) (NAGC)

[National Association for Music Education \(NAFME\) Early Childhood Music Education](#) (ECEA)

[National Council of Teachers of Mathematics](#) (NCTM)

[National Council for the Social Studies](#)(NCSS)

[National Science Teachers Association](#) (NSTA)

[Society of Health and Physical Educators](#) (SHAPE). Shape America.

DRAFT

## Appendix E: The History of NAEYC Standards for Professional Preparation

NAEYC has a long-standing commitment to collaborative standard setting for early childhood teacher preparation and credentialing. The first NAEYC statement on standards (then called guidelines) for professional preparation was developed by a 22-member Commission of national leaders that included Millie Almy, Elizabeth H Brady, Barbara T. Bowman, Josue Cruz, Asa Hilliard III, Lilian G. Katz and Bernard Spodek. They were adopted by the NAEYC Governing Board in 1981 and published in 1982. That same year they were adopted as the national standards for early childhood teacher education by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Each update to this position statement responded to current developments in the profession, changing federal and state policy contexts, and new research. Each revision solicited input from appointed advisory groups; professional conference sessions; related early childhood and specialty organizations; other accrediting, credentialing and standard setting groups; NAEYC members; and the public. Each revision reflects both the continuity that sustains the profession's identity and role and also the reality that the profession must engage with and prepare for change in the field, in research, and in the social and political context in which early educators practice.

Updates: defining professional preparation levels and specializations. The first decade of updates reflected a need to define shared professional knowledge and practices at varying professional levels, to propose optional specializations, and to promote articulation pathways that connect them.

- 1982: Early Childhood Teacher Education Guidelines: for four- and five-year programs affirmed that
  - Four year teacher education programs are sufficient to “provide an education leading to the development of knowledgeable, flexible, and creative people capable of meeting the present and anticipated needs of children and families.” (p xi)
  - Teacher development is continuous. Teacher education programs provide “the foundation for a philosophy of teaching, a broad base of knowledge of child development from birth through age eight, and special competence in working with children in at least one period of that age span (infant/toddler, pre-primary, or primary school age). Competence in working with all young children is attained through further study and experience.” (p xi)
- 1985: Guidelines for Associate Degree Programs described this level as
  - Including “the basic core of educational and professional preparation”
  - With variations “that meet the specific needs of their community and student population.”
  - Providing “sufficient competence to enter directly into a specific occupation and/or to prepare for upper-division collegiate work in a four-year program. ...Therefore, NAEYC’s Guidelines for baccalaureate programs may be applied to students who begin their education in two-year institutions and subsequently transfer to four-year programs.”

- The statement encouraged a higher education pathway that supported associate degree graduates who decide to further their education. “Because of this potential, the articulation of two- and four-year programs is highly desirable.” (NAEYC, 1985, p 1-2)
- 1991: Early Childhood Teacher Education Guidelines: Basic and Advanced was developed in collaboration with NAECTE and approved by NCATE in 1998. This update clarified that Advanced preparation is not defined simply as graduate level but as preparation that
  - ensures graduates meet the shared competencies at higher, advanced levels, beyond what was then called the “basic” standards.
  - provides increased professional development for a specialized career role,
  - assures that the graduate demonstrates capacity to evaluate and apply research to improve practices. (NAEYC 1996 p 3)
- 1996: Guidelines for Preparation of Early Childhood Professionals. This update consolidated expectations for associate, baccalaureate and advanced levels of preparation into one publication. NAEYC guidelines were published alongside those of CEC/DEC and NBPTS. NAEYC and DEC endorsed each other’s statements and ATE endorsed both. The introduction summarized:
  - at the associate level, the graduate demonstrates knowledge of theory and practice necessary to plan and implement curriculum...
  - at the baccalaureate level, the graduate demonstrates the ability to apply and analyze the core knowledge and to systematically develop curriculum and develop and conduct assessments of individual children and groups
  - at the master’s level, the graduate demonstrates greater capacity to analyze and refine core knowledge and evaluate and apply research to improve practices
  - at the doctoral level the graduate conducts research and studies practice to expand the knowledge base and influence system change
  - at each of these levels, the professional is expected to reflect on his or her practice and to advocate for policies designed to improve conditions for children, families and the profession. (NAEYC 1996, p 3).
- 2003: Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC’s Standards for Programs. This revision
  - expanded upon the importance of associate degrees, community colleges, and articulation agreements in supporting and increasing teacher diversity at all levels of the profession and
  - emphasized current challenges related to teacher recruitment, retention, education, diversity and compensation.
  - added detail to core knowledge areas to guide student assessment, reflecting a general shift from inputs to student outcomes in higher education evaluation, reform and quality improvement.
- 2006: NAEYC Commission On Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation Standards. This document summarized the Commission’s full program standards including
  - knowledge and competencies expected of associate degree program graduates using the 2003 NAEYC standards as the framework for required student assessment
  - structural characteristics expected of programs
- 2009: Standards for Early Childhood Preparation. This update separated
  - the 2009 position statement intended for the field adopted by the NAEYC governing board “designed for use in a variety of ways by different sectors of the field while also supporting 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.” (NAEYC, 2009, p 1)



- the 2010 program standards adopted for implementation by NAEYC and NCATE higher education accreditation governing boards. In 2010, the NAEYC higher education accreditation commission adopted the position statement as its standards framework and defined accreditation expectations at two levels of preparation program standards--Initial and Advanced, using the 1991 definition Basic/Initial and Advanced levels of professional knowledge and practice.
- 2015 The Commission on the Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs expanded under a new name and developed distinct accreditation expectations for associate, baccalaureate, and master's programs that offer initial level preparation.

Updates: revising the content of essential professional knowledge and competencies to reflect new developments in the profession, changing federal and state policy contexts, and new research.

- 1982: Early Childhood Teacher Education Guidelines: for four- and five-year programs affirmed that the early childhood teacher education curriculum
  - is integrative and interdisciplinary. It “integrates relevant principles from several disciplines into both general education and professional studies. Therefore, the curriculum objectives and standards that follow are not a list of courses. Instead, the general areas of knowledge which should be addressed in an early childhood teacher education program are identified.” (1982, p 2)
  - includes preparation to support diversity and to counter discrimination and inequity. The program prepares teachers “to function in a pluralistic society” and “to eliminate practices and materials that discriminate against children and their families on the basis of race, sex, ethnic origin, language, religion or physical handicap.” (NAEYC 1982 p 13)
- 1996: Guidelines for Preparation of Early Childhood Professionals. This revision
  - updated language on preparing all early educators to support children with differing abilities in inclusive early childhood programs
  - reframed guidelines for program content and field experience as preparation program outcomes—statements of what all early childhood educators (and so all program graduates) should know and be able to do.
- 2003 Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC’s Standards for Programs. This revision
  - changed terminology from program guidelines to program standards with assessment of graduates’ knowledge and competencies related to these standards as the primary measure of program quality
  - added rubrics to illustrate meeting the expectations at associate, Initial Licensure and advanced levels.
- 2009: Standards for Early Childhood Preparation This position statement
  - separated the two aspects of previous Standard 4 into new Standard 4 focused on teaching practices and Standard 5 focused on content knowledge in academic disciplines in order to elevate the importance of college level content and competency in academic disciplines or curriculum areas and their application in early childhood curriculum and assessment.
  - updated content to more intentionally address inclusion, cultural competence and technology across all standards.
  - moved the leveling of core standards or competencies across specific degree or preparation levels from the multiuse position statement to the 2010 accreditation standards used and governed by the NAEYC higher education commission and the NCATE Specialty Area Standards Board.

## History of Changes to the NAEYC Position Statement

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>1996 Update</b> | <p>1) updated language on preparing all early childhood educators to support young children with differing abilities in inclusive early childhood programs</p> <p>2) reframed guidelines for program content and field experience as preparation program outcomes--what early childhood educators should know and be able to do. The purpose statement included use of these standards to guide state early childhood educator licensure, preparation program approval, articulation agreements, and related professional development policies. NAEYC guidelines were published alongside those of CEC/DEC and NBPTS. NAEYC and DEC endorsed each other's statements and ATE endorsed both.</p>   |
| <b>2001 Update</b> | <p>1) changed terminology from program guidelines to standards with assessment of graduates' knowledge and competencies related to these standards as the primary measure of program quality</p> <p>2) expanded upon the importance of associate degrees, community colleges and articulation agreements in supporting and increasing educator diversity at all levels of the profession</p> <p>3) emphasized current challenges related to educator recruitment, retention, education, diversity and compensation.</p>   |
| <b>2009 Update</b> | <p>1) separated the two aspects of previous Standard 4 Teaching and Learning into Standard 4 focused on teaching practice and Standard 5 focused on understanding and applying content knowledge in academic disciplines.</p> <p>2) updated content to more intentionally address inclusion, cultural competence and technology across all standards. The purpose statement included use by a broad audience, across various levels and types of professional development programs, and in the credentialing, accreditation and articulation structures that compose a professional career pathway. A separate 2010 accreditation standards document was adopted by the NAEYC higher education commission and the NCATE Specialty Area Standards Board for specific use in higher education program and accreditation systems. The Commission's 2010 standards affirmed this position statement as the profession's core body of knowledge and practice and added guidance for higher education programs seeking NAEYC accreditation, Peer Reviewers and Commissioners.</p> |
| <b>2018 Update</b> | <p>1) Shifts focus from expectations for professional preparation programs to expectations for early childhood educators' competencies</p> <p>2) Elevates diversity and equity</p> <p>3) Levels the standards to the scopes of practice for each early childhood educator designation; ECE I, ECE II, ECE III</p> <p>4) Lays out recommendations for implementation of the standards for multiple stakeholders in the early childhood education field</p>   |

## Appendix F: Professional Standards and Competencies Workgroup

A workgroup comprised of the Early Learning Systems Committee of the NAEYC Governing Board, early childhood practitioners, researchers, faculty, and subject matter experts informed the revisions to this position statement.

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