

Core Knowledge
and
Core Competencies
for
Early Childhood
Care and Education
Professionals

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Acknowledgements

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Michigan Early Childhood Professionals Core Knowledge and Core Competencies

History and Process

This document was crafted by a subcommittee of the Early Childhood Care and Education Professional Development System, coordinated by Grand Rapids Community College and funded by the Frey Foundation. The Training Consortium members have been representatives from Child Day Care Licensing, 4C, Head Start, MSU Extension, and both public and private two and four year colleges and universities.

This group has met bi-monthly for two years to draft, research, debate and prepare this working document of Core Knowledge and Core Competencies. Primary resources have been the work done in New Mexico on the *Common Core Content*, NAEYC's *Guidelines for the Preparation of Early Childhood Professionals*, the *CDA Competency Manual*, and the State of Michigan *Early Childhood Endorsement Standards* as resources. Feedback has been received by the state subcommittee of Core Knowledge and Core Competencies, statewide conference attendees, a diverse group of early childhood professionals in Grand Rapids, and responses from individuals to the Core Knowledge and Core Competencies on the web site.

Content

The Core Knowledge Areas are:

1. Child Development and Learning
2. Health, Safety, and Nutrition
3. Family and Community Collaboration
4. Program management
5. Teaching and Learning
6. Observation, Documentation and Assessment
7. Interactions and Guidance
8. Professionalism

An overriding goal throughout the document is to thread diversity and special needs through all areas. When the phrase “developmentally appropriate” is used, it refers to the process of professionals making decisions based on:

1. Knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permit general predictions within an age range
2. Knowledge of the strengths, interests and needs of each individual child in the group
3. Knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live

(Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Bredekamp, 1997)

Each Core Knowledge Area has five to eight Core Competency Areas. Each of these competency areas is divided into five levels that follow a progression of knowledge, skills and abilities. The levels build on one another, with the belief that a person working on competencies at Level III has already achieved the competencies at Level I and II. (See page, *Levels of Competence*.)

The levels of competence also relate to the Professional Development Steps that are based on education/training and experience. (See pages 4-5, *Professional Development Steps*.)

In developing the core competencies used at each level, the group used established standards for that level whenever possible. For example, Level II is based on the CDA competencies and Level IV is based on the new NAEYC standards adopted by NCATE in October of 2001. Some additions were made to provide consistency throughout the levels. For example, the NAEYC standards only minimally address Program Management. In general, the group also aligned the levels with Bloom's taxonomy as follows:

Levels of Competence

Levels of Competence refer to a progression of knowledge, skills, and abilities important to the provision of quality care for children. These levels of competence, however, are not necessarily aligned with the Professional Development Steps. Some of the competencies may not be addressed at all in the earlier steps. These levels of Competence have been aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy.

Awareness Level-~~KNOWLEDGE~~:

Professionals are developing an awareness of the Core Knowledge Areas. Competence may be reflected by knowledge, skills and abilities such as: recognizing, identifying, labeling and observing.

Developing Level-~~COMPREHENSION~~:

Professionals are able to articulate Core Knowledge Areas. Competence may be reflected by knowledge, skills and abilities such as: describing, discussing, explaining and paraphrasing.

Achieving Level-~~APPLICATION~~:

Professionals are able to apply Core Knowledge Areas. Competence may be reflected by knowledge, skills and abilities such as: demonstrating, illustrating, implementing and applying.

Extending Level-~~ANALYSIS and SYNTHESIS~~:

Professionals are able to analyze and create based upon Core Knowledge Areas. Competence may be reflected by knowledge, skills and abilities such as: comparing, contrasting, developing, relating, creating, constructing,, designing and modifying.

Advanced Level-~~EVALUTION~~:

Professionals are able to judge and advocate for Core Knowledge Areas. Competence may be reflected by knowledge, skills and abilities such as: critiquing, assessing, appraising, revising, justifying and advocating.

This document is being presented as a working document in December 2001 to the Michigan Early Childhood Professionals Consortium. It is expected that as the subgroups begin to work with it, further modification may need to be made.

Professional Development Steps

Professional Step	Education/Certification or Training	Recommended Roles and Responsibilities
I.	45 hours in Foundations of Early Childhood Education (Must cover all of the competencies listed in Level I) —or— Vocational Education Certificate	Entry Level – Works under direct supervision of a professional at a higher step. NOTE: For Family/Group Child Care Homes, supervision provided may be in the form of a licensing consultant, CACFP consulting or mentors.
II.	CDA	May work under direct supervision of a professional at a higher step. May plan and implement program with guidance.
III.	A.A.A.S. or A.A. in Early Childhood Care and Education, Special Education, or B.A. in unrelated field with 18 credit in Early Childhood Care and Education	Develops curriculum, responsible for classroom management, may include program administration.
IV.	B.A. with major or minor in Early Childhood Care and Education or ZA Endorsement, or related field conforming to NAEYC standards.	Develops curriculum, responsible for classroom management, administers program, and functions as a child and family advocate.
V.	M.A. or M.S. in Early Childhood Care and Education or related field conforming to NAEYC standards.	Develops curriculum, supervises program administration, and functions as child and family advocate. Provides training to other professionals.

The Kent County Professional Development System Training Consortium recognizes the importance of experience in the Professional Steps. The following chart is presented as a guide of recommended experience at each step in the Professional Development System. The number of hours for each level represent the 480 hours required by CDA, with an equal number of hours to represent a program year (based on a 9 month calendar).

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Related NAEYC Standard: Promoting child development and learning

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

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates understanding of development, maturation, learning and child development theories and how they connect to developmentally appropriate practice.
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of how young children differ in their development and learning styles and uses that knowledge to support the development and learning of individual children.
- C. Demonstrates knowledge of the interaction between maturation and environmental factors such as physical, social, psychological and cultural factors on the healthy growth and development of the child.
- D.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of children with special needs including disabilities, developmental delays, emotional disorders and special abilities.
- F. Demonstrates knowledge of and sensitivity towards cultural/linguistic diversity.
- G. Demonstrates understanding that children are best understood in the contexts of family, community, culture and society.

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Competency A: Demonstrates understanding of development, maturation, learning and child development theories and how they connect to developmentally appropriate practice.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Describes how children develop including the roles of both maturation and learning.➤ Observes children of various ages and describes general characteristics of their growth and development.➤ Recognizes developmental domains: physical, social, emotional, language, cognitive and aesthetic development.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Observes and describes major milestones, typical behaviors and general learning processes for children birth through 8 years with respect for familial, cultural, linguistic, environmental and developmental variations.➤ Provides opportunities to support the physical, social, emotional, language, cognitive and aesthetic development of all young children from birth through age eight.➤ Reviews developmentally appropriate practices as illustrated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Employs knowledge of developmental stages, processes and theories of development and learning as the basis of planning decisions and implementing practices.➤ Explains the connection between theory and practice in early childhood care and education.➤ Implements programs that are developmentally appropriate.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Creates programs that are developmentally appropriate for each child and family by utilizing personal observation of individual children and families, professional experiences and recognized theories of child growth and development as the basis for all planning decisions and implementation practices.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Evaluates and revises programs and services that are optimally appropriate for all children and families by utilizing critical analysis of personal observations, experiences, learning and current research theories of child growth and development as the basis of all planning decisions and implementation practices.

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Competency B: Demonstrates knowledge of how young children differ in their development and learning styles and uses that knowledge to support the development and learning of individual children.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes differences and similarities both in abilities and skills in developmental domains within each individual child and among children. ➤ Recognizes variability in learning styles and existence of multiple modes of intelligence.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Articulates the similarities and differences in abilities and skills in developmental domains within each individual child and among children. ➤ Interprets the differences in abilities and skills of children and recognizes the role of the caregiver in providing appropriately supportive learning environments. ➤ Describes and discusses how differences in abilities and skills require a variety of responses from caregivers and environments.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Structures learning experiences to accommodate the individual child’s varying patterns of growth and development. ➤ Demonstrates understanding of children’s varying patterns of growth and development by providing appropriately supportive learning environments. ➤ Implements learning environments and projects that support development of different learning styles and multiple modes of intelligence.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs learning experiences to enhance the development of the individual child’s unique abilities. ➤ Creates learning environments based on observation and assessment, which stimulate the optimal development of children who display a wide range of abilities. ➤ Develops programs that encourage a holistic approach in supporting the development of all learning styles and multiple modes of intelligence in each child.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates the effectiveness of experiences intended to enhance the development of the individual child’s unique abilities and recommends changes as needed. ➤ Assesses the effectiveness of learning environments in stimulating the optimal development of children who display a wide range of abilities. ➤ Advocates to the larger community implementation of programs that adopt a holistic approach in supporting the optimal development of all the learning styles and multiple modes of intelligence in each child.

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Competency C: Demonstrates knowledge of the interaction between maturation and environmental factors such as physical, social, psychological and cultural factors on the healthy growth and development of children.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knows that there are maturational and environmental factors that contribute to and influence the development of each child. ➤ Recognizes some specific environmental factors that support healthy growth and development of children.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describes how various maturational and environmental factors might interact and influence children's healthy growth and development. ➤ Discusses ways to influence the effects of these factors to promote healthy growth and development of children. ➤ Utilizes knowledge of how maturational and environmental factors can reduce negative and support positive interactions and influences.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transfers knowledge of maturational and environmental factors that contribute to and influence development of each child to the planning of programs and management of groups of children. ➤ Shares knowledge with families about the influence of maturational and environmental factors on healthy growth and development of children.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING LEVEL, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Modifies learning environments to reduce negative factors and support positive interactions and influences. ➤ Designs programs based on knowledge of maturational and environmental factors to support healthy growth and development of children. ➤ Supports the family through education and discussion to foster healthy growth and development of each child.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Informs the larger community about issues related to maturational and environmental factors that effect the healthy growth and development of children. ➤ Advocates for legislation and child education and care practices that promote positive interactions and influences from maturational and environmental factors. ➤ Researches and evaluates activities and practices that influence the interaction between maturational and environmental factors.

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Competency D: Demonstrates knowledge of children with special needs including disabilities, developmental delays, emotional disorders and special abilities.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes significant variations in development and learning. ➤ Knows there are similarities between children who are developing typically and those with special needs. ➤ Models acceptance of and respect for all children. ➤ Understands the importance of early intervention for children with significant variations in developing and learning.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Observes and describes significant variations in development and learning of an individual child. ➤ Communicates the need for early intervention and seeks appropriate support to begin the process. ➤ Implements activities designed by a professional at a higher step to meet an individual child's special needs.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes and describes specific disabilities, developmental delays and special abilities. ➤ Develops activities designed to meet an individual child's special needs. ➤ Participates in implementing Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP). ➤ Learns and conducts basic medical procedures requested for specific children's needs such as tube feeding, administering prescribed breathing treatments, applying a brace, etc...
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops and articulates a personal philosophy of acceptance and respect for all children. ➤ Assesses the development of all children making referrals to appropriate resources. ➤ Participates in the planning, implementing and monitoring of Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP). ➤ Creates and adapts strategies and learning environments to meet the special needs of children. ➤ Informs others about the importance of early identification and intervention.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates and recommends changes to environments that will reduce risk factors and are likely to deter development. ➤ Designs and implements programs informing others about the importance of early identification and intervention. ➤ Advocates for programs and legislation that support children with special needs.

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Competency E: Demonstrates knowledge of and sensitivity towards cultural/linguistic diversity.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes the role of home language (including first language, dialect and idiosyncratic language) and culture in children’s development.➤ Models respect for cultural/linguistic diversity.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Articulates the role and importance of home language and culture.➤ Describes how programs demonstrate recognition and understanding of children’s home language and culture in order to support the use and development of young children’s home language.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Fosters the development of the whole child during the formative years by supporting children and families’ use of home language and cultural practices.➤ Implements curriculum to support cultural/linguistic diversity.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Relates the significance of cultural/linguistic influences to development of children.➤ Creates learning environments that reflect these cultural/linguistic influences.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Evaluates and revises learning environments to affirm and reflect cultural/linguistic influences.➤ Assesses early childhood programs for their inclusion of cultural/linguistic diversity and makes recommendations as needed.

Core Knowledge Area: Child Development and Learning

Competency F: Demonstrates understanding that children are best understood in the contexts of family, community, culture and society.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes the role of family and community contexts in influencing the child's development and learning.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Explains the significance of family and community contexts in influencing the child's development and learning.➤ Recognizes the role of cultural and societal contexts in influencing the child's development and learning.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Fosters the development of the whole child by supporting children and families' cultural practices.➤ Recognizes that politics influence family, community, culture and society.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Relates the significance of cultural and political influences in the child's development and learning.➤ Creates learning environments that reflect these influences.➤ Educates families about how they can impact social institutions such as: educational programs and governmental entities.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Evaluates and revises learning environments to affirm and reflect cultural and political influences.➤ Assesses early childhood programs for responsiveness to family, community, cultural and societal changes and makes recommendations as needed.➤ Advocates for systems changes and legislation that support families.

Core Knowledge Area: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Standard: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to provide a safe environment, which promotes good health, safety and nutrition. Basic health and safety procedures aid in preventing childhood illness and communicable diseases and reducing injuries. Understanding nutritional needs and eating practices is important for promoting physical, social, language and cognitive development.

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates knowledge of principles and environmental factors, which promote good health in young children.
- B. Demonstrates understanding of safety principles and environmental factors that prevent and reduce injuries.
- C. Demonstrates understanding of nutritional needs of young children and appropriate food practices relevant to caring for them.
- D. Demonstrates knowledge of health care and educational activities that reflect cultural variations in health and nutritional practices.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of signs of emotional distress and child abuse and neglect in young children and follows appropriate procedures to report suspected abuse and neglect to designated authorities.

Core Knowledge Area: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Competency A: Demonstrates knowledge of principles and environmental factors, which promote good health in young children.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Practices careful hand washing techniques and caregiving procedures in meeting the physical needs of young children. ➤ Follows specified Standard Precaution procedures. ➤ Follows the specified practices in dealing with common diseases. ➤ Recognizes and responds to individual children’s health needs. ➤ Recognizes the importance of rest and sleep in promoting good health. ➤ Practices basic first aid in emergency situations. ➤ Reports symptoms of illness or injury to supervisor. ➤ Follows specified guidelines in administering prescribed medications. ➤ Possesses current Red Cross or comparable age appropriate CPR and First Aid Certification.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes symptoms of common diseases and encourages parents to obtain appropriate treatment. ➤ Recognizes behavioral symptoms of stress in young children. ➤ Recognizes the relationship among stress, protective factors and resistance to disease. ➤ Initiates wellness activities that will promote good health and hygiene among children. ➤ Understands developmental rest and sleep requirements of individual children. ➤ Reviews health information and recommends referrals as necessary.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understands the developmental consequences of stress and trauma. ➤ Designs schedules for children that allow for appropriate periods of rest and activity. ➤ Provides learning environments that will reduce stressors for children. ➤ Designs learning environments that will promote good health and hygiene practices. ➤ Assist young children in developing decision-making skills that enable them to make healthy choices.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches parents how to implement good health and hygiene practices and provide appropriate rest and sleep in their home environments. ➤ Educates parents and the larger community about the role of stress in the development of young children. ➤ Evaluates the effectiveness of health and hygiene practices in individual programs.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches others how to promote good health and hygiene practices and respond to the effects of stress on development. ➤ Advocates for children and their families in the area of programs and legislation that promote good health and hygiene practices.

Core Knowledge Area: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Competency B: Demonstrates understanding of safety principles and environmental factors that prevent and reduce injuries.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Follows established safety procedures.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Explains established safety procedures. ➤ Recognizes and identifies possible dangers and takes actions to ensure children's safety. ➤ Describes toys and materials, which are developmentally appropriate for safe use by each age group of children.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Structures the environment so that equipment and space matches the developmental level of the children and is used safely. ➤ Establishes safety rules cooperatively with children when appropriate. ➤ Arranges and evaluates the learning environment to ensure that it is free of all possible risks and hazards.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Analyzes the appropriateness of all environments and activities based on professional knowledge, observation and assessment of individual children and groups of children, input from family and community members and policies and regulations. ➤ Adapts and modifies the learning environment to provide the greatest access, least restriction and greatest safety for all children.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Evaluates the appropriateness of all environments and activities, as well as the potential hazards and risks, and assures that actions are taken to ensure children's safety. ➤ Critiques established safety procedures and makes recommendations for change, as necessary.

Core Knowledge Area: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Competency C: Demonstrates understanding of nutritional needs of young children and appropriate food practices relevant to caring for them.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Practices appropriate hand washing and food handling techniques. ➤ Recognizes that the nutritional needs of infants, toddlers and preschoolers are different. ➤ Prepares meals and snacks that reflect a nutritionally balanced diet, based on plans provided by professionals at a higher step. ➤ Follows instructions for providing appropriate meals for children with special dietary needs. ➤ Recognizes the need to serve food in a positive, relaxed and social atmosphere. ➤ Identifies spoiled and contaminated foods.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies foods that are appropriate and inappropriate for infants and toddlers. ➤ Describes the relationship between a nutritionally balanced diet and children’s physical and intellectual development. ➤ Recognizes some foods may be dangerous for children with certain physical conditions such as food allergies, PKU, or celiac sprue and follows parental guidelines. ➤ Teaches children the components of a nutritionally balanced diet. ➤ Serves food in a positive, relaxed and social atmosphere to promote positive self-esteem and attitudes.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plans and prepares meals and snacks that reflect a nutritionally balanced diet based on the Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines, including meeting the special dietary needs of individual children. ➤ Explains to parents and other caregivers the importance of good nutrition in optimizing healthy development, including meeting the special dietary needs of individual children. ➤ Discusses individual children’s food preferences with parents and accommodates when possible. ➤ Describes the relationship between food handling practices and prevention of food borne illness and food spoilage. ➤ Structures the environment to serve food in a positive, relaxed and social atmosphere.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches parents and other Early Childhood Professionals the components of a nutritionally balanced diet using the Child and Adult Care Food Program Guidelines. ➤ Teaches parents and other Early Childhood Professionals strategies for serving food in a positive, relaxed and social atmosphere. ➤ Recognizes physical indications of poor nutrition. ➤ Educates parents and other early childhood professionals about the causes of food spoilage and contamination and the conditions under which they occur. ➤ Formulates procedures for proper handling of foods to prevent food spoilage and contamination.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for public policies to ensure availability of a nutritionally balanced diet for all children, and in other areas related to their nutritional needs and food safety issues (e.g., advocating on behalf of food supplement programs such as WIC). ➤ Interprets research relating food intake to dietary diseases and conditions. ➤ Designs strategies to support parents and Early Childhood Professionals in serving food in a positive, relaxed and social atmosphere. ➤ Designs programs about young children’s nutritional needs and food safety issues. ➤ Evaluates individual program to determine how well the nutritional or special dietary needs of young children are being met.

Core Knowledge Area: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Competency D: Demonstrates knowledge of health care and educational activities that reflect cultural variations in health and nutritional practices.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Identifies different cultures represented within an individual childcare program.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Recognizes that variations of health and nutritional practices might be related to culture. ➤ Seeks out appropriate resources to develop knowledge of cultures found in an individual childcare program.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Utilizes appropriate resources to meet cultural needs of individuals in the program. ➤ Discusses health and nutritional practices of local cultures. ➤ Promotes children's health and nutrition with activities that are individually and culturally relevant. ➤ Seeks and follows parental guidelines for meals and snacks related to different ethnic and religious backgrounds.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Adds to current health and nutritional practices by including known traditions from local cultures. ➤ Creates opportunities for children and their families to learn about practices from cultures found in Michigan.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: ➤ Networks and collaborates with other community agencies that provide service to various cultural populations. ➤ Organizes health care and education activities for families and the community using local resources.

Core Knowledge Area: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Competency E: Demonstrates knowledge of signs of emotional distress and child abuse and neglect in young children and follows appropriate procedures to report suspected abuse and neglect to designated authorities.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes signs of abuse and neglect of children. ➤ Consults with more experienced program staff and protective services staff if there is a suspicion of child abuse and neglect. ➤ Knows and follows program and state guidelines for reporting child abuse and neglect to protective services.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies local resources available to children and families that deal with problems of ongoing emotional distress and abuse and neglect. ➤ Explains program and state guidelines for reporting child abuse and neglect.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes signs of emotional distress in children. ➤ Articulates the importance of recognizing and responding to signs of emotional distress. ➤ Explains the importance of recognizing, responding to and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. ➤ Responds sensitively to children and families' needs and cooperates in carrying out treatment plans.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches others to recognize possible signs of abuse and neglect. ➤ Supports others in the reporting process. ➤ Provides staff, families and others with information on methods for relieving stress and aggression. ➤ Assists families in obtaining counseling and other services to alleviate stress and aggression and to deal with cases of abuse and neglect. ➤ Develops program policy and procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates program policies and procedures for accurate reflection of state reporting guidelines. ➤ Functions in an advocacy role in cases of abuse and neglect. ➤ Advocates for the protection of children from abuse and neglect.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Related NAEYC Standard: Building family and community relationships

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

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates an understanding of the influence of family relationships on the development of the child with an emphasis on the reciprocal nature of parent/child relationships.
- B. Demonstrates knowledge and respects variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations and values.
- C. Seeks and maintains a collaborative relationship with parents, families, community agencies, educational institutions and other professionals to meet the needs of the child.
- D. Establishes and maintains frequent contact with parents/guardians through a variety of communication strategies, providing on-going, relevant information to families about child development, learning and family life.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of community assets and resources, and actively assists family in seeking those resources.
- F. Demonstrates knowledge of effects of laws, media, societal values and technology on families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Competency A: Demonstrates an understanding of the influence of family relationships on the development of the child with an emphasis on the reciprocal nature of parent/child relationships.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes various types of families and how their members relate to one another. ➤ Identifies credible resources that families can access. ➤ Describes different parenting styles.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discusses how family relationships affect the child in the family. ➤ Explains how parenting styles affect a child’s behavior. ➤ Identifies how family relationships may be affected by and may affect a child with special needs. ➤ Recognizes influences and stressors affecting families, the relationships within the family and children’s behaviors. ➤ Compiles resources, written and electronic materials, and lists of community agencies and organizations that families can access to maintain or improve healthy relationships.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describes influences and stressors and how they affect families, the relationships within the family and children’s behaviors. ➤ Explains the importance of social supports for families, especially families with special needs.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analyzes children’s behaviors as they relate to family stress and collaborates with parents to respond to the behaviors and reduce stress when possible. ➤ Educates families about the effects of family relationships, including the parental one, on children’s development.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates programs and staff at early childhood facilities for effective environments and interactions that support appropriate parent/child relationships. ➤ Advises children and families when professional guidance is recommended for changing relationships and behaviors. ➤ Educates professionals and community members about the effects of family relationships on children’s development. ➤ Advocates for societal changes that reduce stressors and improve family relationships.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Competency B: Demonstrates knowledge and respects variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations and values.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes that the structure and form of family varies greatly.➤ Respects diversity in family values and cultural backgrounds.➤ Knows the importance of building trust in relationships between parents and staff.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Provides for the inclusion of a variety of beliefs and values in the curriculum and environment.➤ Uses communication strategies to build relationships between parents and staff.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Offers parents' opportunities to identify their strengths, needs and interests.➤ Explains the impact of family members values on the family functioning.➤ Demonstrates knowledge of the criteria for judging a curriculum's anti-bias content.➤ Designs a learning environment that reflects sensitivity and acceptance of cultural diversity and family strengths.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Demonstrates knowledge of theories of family systems and their application.➤ Evaluates program sensitivity, acceptance and effectiveness in addressing issues of cultural diversity and family strengths.➤ Implements needed changes for program to ensure respect for and acceptance of variation across culture and within families.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Advocates for the understanding and appreciation of cultural and individual variations in family systems.➤ Designs professional development strategies and opportunities to ensure respect for and acceptance of variation across culture and within families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Competency C: Seeks and maintains a collaborative relationship with parents, families, community agencies, educational institutions and other professionals to meet the needs of the child.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knows that many people are involved in the life of a child. ➤ Recognizes the need for collaborative relationships with families and community agencies. ➤ Initiates interactions leading to cooperative, trusting relationships with families from a variety of backgrounds. ➤ Respects parents and the choices they make for their children.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and discusses the role of parents, families, community agencies and other professionals in fully meeting the needs of young children. ➤ Builds cooperative, trusting relationships with families from a variety of backgrounds. ➤ Cooperates with a variety of agencies and professionals who enter the early childhood setting. ➤ Involves families in assessing and planning for individual children, including children with disabilities, developmental delays or special abilities. ➤ Communicates effectively with parents about curriculum and children's progress.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicates the value of collaborative relationships with parents, families, community agencies, educational institutions and their families. ➤ Supports parents in making decisions related to their child's development and their parenting. ➤ Links with community agencies to develop and maintain collaborative relationships to meet the needs of the child. ➤ Integrates family values and goals into the early childhood program to reflect the diversity of the family and community.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops policies designed to facilitate collaborative relationships with parents, families, community agencies, educational institutions and other professionals. ➤ Empower families to advocate for policies and agencies to support their children.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Educates others about the value of collaborative relationships with parents, families, community agencies, educational institutions and other professionals. ➤ Advocates for a comprehensive collaborative system of effective community agencies to support children and their families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Competency D: Establishes and maintains frequent contact with parents/guardians through a variety of communication strategies, providing on-going, relevant information to families about child development, learning and family life.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Greets parents/guardians and children and assists during arrival and departure transitions. ➤ Distributes developmentally appropriate materials and activities that families can use at home with their children. ➤ Answers or seeks out information to respond to parents' questions.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describes child development information that is relevant to meeting parents' needs. ➤ Identifies developmentally appropriate materials and activities that families can use at home with their children. ➤ Relates why it is important for programs to provide information in the family's home language. ➤ Writes and distributes parent newsletters regularly. ➤ Conducts regularly scheduled parent conferences and home visits when possible.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicates effectively with parents from diverse backgrounds who have various levels of education by providing communication in various languages, formats (written, audio, video, personal), and contexts (school, home or other). ➤ Develops developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive materials and activities that families can use at home with their children. ➤ Creates and maintains updated information in a parent resource area such as a bulletin board, library or lounge area.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plans and implements parent meetings addressing relevant topics and incorporating community resource people. ➤ Ensures school to home communication is on going, appropriate for each individual family, relevant to the needs of the family and respectful of cultural/linguistic and familial diversity.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops materials for publication. ➤ Teaches other professionals strategies for communicating effectively with families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Competency E: Demonstrates knowledge of community assets and resources, and actively assists family in seeking those resources.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Seeks out available community resources.➤ Compiles file or list of community resources.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Describes and expands file or list of community resources.➤ Provides families with information to access appropriate community resources based on their self-identified concerns, priorities and needs.➤ Assists families in contacting and reaching resources.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Communicates frequently with families to determine their need and desire for additional services, and provides them with relevant information.➤ Assists families in reducing barriers to accessing needed resources and services.➤ Recognizes gaps in available community resources.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Supports families as they seek, secure and use resources in a manner that is respectful of the family's culture, language and special needs.➤ Assists families in coordinating direct services that address their concerns and needs.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Analyzes community assets, including resources available for families.➤ Develops a plan to improve community assets to fill the gaps.➤ Advocates for needed services and resources for families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family and Community Collaboration

Competency F: Demonstrates knowledge of effects of laws, media, societal values and technology on families.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learns and follows the laws governing the protection of children such as abuse, neglect and exploitation, Americans with Disabilities Act and Early On mandates. ➤ Recognizes the negative and positive impacts of media and technology on children and their families.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Articulates the laws governing the protection of children. ➤ Describes the negative and positive impacts of media and technology on children and their families. ➤ Recognizes that there are negative and positive influences on children and families from societal values.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explains how the laws governing the protection of children impact families. ➤ Models appropriate use of media and technology in the childcare environment to enhance the development of children (different forms of music, educational TV and plays). ➤ Educates children and families about the negative and positive impacts of media and technology. ➤ Uses media and technology to encourage family involvement in the childcare environment such as video tapes of activities, displays of photographs, email and voicemail communication, Internet, cameras etc. ➤ Describes how family and societal values may interact to influence and conflict with one another.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates laws at the local, state and national levels for their positive impact on children and families. ➤ Develops programs for the childcare environment that reflect the appropriate use of various media and technology. ➤ Plans educational opportunities to teach families the positive use of media and technology in the home. ➤ Teaches strategies to enable families to recognize and evaluate how family and societal values interact.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for laws at the local, state and national levels, which will have a positive impact on children and families. ➤ Evaluates the impact of media and technology. ➤ Advocates for appropriate content of media and technology and its use in the childcare setting and in families. ➤ Empowers families and communities to positively influence societal values.

Core Knowledge Area: Program Management

Standard: Program Management

Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to effectively manage early care and education programs. Successful program management involves focusing on business practices such as operations, financial planning and staff management while meeting standards of quality as identified by national accreditation.

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates knowledge of program organization including principles, policies and procedures.
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of licensing standards and components of quality identified by national accreditation.
- C. Demonstrates knowledge of program operations such as record keeping, scheduling facilities, equipment and communication.
- D. Demonstrates knowledge of financial planning and management.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of staff management and professional development.

Core Knowledge Area: Program Management

Competency A: Demonstrates knowledge of program organization including principles, policies and procedures.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ States the mission of the program.➤ Recognizes the need for basic program policies.➤ Seeks out resources to aid in establishing policies and procedures.➤ Follows program procedures.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Explains the mission statement and the philosophy of the program.➤ Describes the program's policies and procedures.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Develops mission statement and philosophy reflecting a consistent theoretical knowledge base.➤ Writes program policies consistent with the mission and philosophy statement.➤ Participates in assessing policies and procedures to comply with local, state and federal regulations and to reflect program philosophy.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Integrates mission statement and philosophy according to national standards and current early childhood research on best practices.➤ Evaluates how the mission and goals of the program are met.➤ Assesses policies and procedures and makes recommendations as needed.➤ Modifies procedures to accommodate cultural differences and special needs of children and families.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Critiques mission statement and philosophy according to national standards and current early childhood research on best practices.➤ Revises or validates mission statement and philosophy on a regular basis.➤ Advocates for policies and procedures that support quality programming for children and families.

Core Knowledge Area: Program Management

Competency B: Demonstrates knowledge of licensing standards and components of quality identified by national accreditation.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes and complies with legal and regulatory program requirements.➤ Uses the expertise of licensing consultants to obtain clarification of the rules.➤ Observes the basic elements of quality program models.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Understands and practices all legal and regulatory mandates related to program management.➤ Identifies components of quality and best practices in program models.➤ Participates in a program of self-study using accreditation criteria.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Oversees and supports the staff in maintaining compliance with regulatory mandates for the program.➤ Describes and implements components of quality and best practice in program models.➤ Recommends program changes to meet the accreditation criteria.➤ Seeks and/or maintains the accreditation of a program.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Critiques regulatory mandates as they relate to best practices.➤ Evaluates a program based on accreditation criteria and procedures.➤ Mentors other programs considering accreditation.➤ Networks and builds community support for quality programming.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Advocates for changes in regulatory policies, when necessary, to promote high quality programs for children.➤ Advocates for high quality accredited programs for children and families at the local, state and national levels.

Core Knowledge Area: Program Management

Competency C: Demonstrates knowledge of program operations such as record keeping, scheduling, facilities, equipment and communication.

Professional Step:	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Records required information related to daily operations. ➤ Follows staffing schedule and works with others to meet legal ratios and children’s needs. ➤ Follows scheduling plan for classroom and playground use. ➤ Maintains facility to meet licensing requirements. ➤ Knows locations of child information cards with current emergency telephone numbers and medical providers. ➤ Communicates information to parents about the program in daily verbal interactions.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Locates appropriate record keeping forms for program use. ➤ Schedules classroom and playground use to make sure they meet children’s needs. ➤ Structures space to make best use of the facility and resources. ➤ Reviews children’s records to make sure information is complete and up to date. ➤ Provides written feedback about the program through newsletters and other appropriate forms of written communication.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops and adapts record keeping forms to meet program needs. ➤ Plans and analyzes children’s attendance patterns to make the best use of available staff and provide opportunities for planning time. ➤ Prepares staffing schedules and monitors to make sure they meet legal ratios and children’s needs. ➤ Monitors classroom and facility scheduling to make the best use of available space and resources. ➤ Communicates the factors and changes that influence the daily operation of the program to parents and staff.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates and revises processes for record keeping to ensure effectiveness and accuracy. ➤ Identifies community, state and federal resources to enhance the program.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for licensing rules and accreditation standards that improve processes relating to the daily operation of program. ➤ Mentors other professionals in effective program operation.

Core Knowledge Area: Program Management

Competency D: Demonstrates knowledge of financial planning and management.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knows that childcare and education is a business. ➤ Identifies income and expenses related to the childcare business. * ➤ Employs a basic record keeping system to track income and expenses. * ➤ Accurately records Child and Adult Care Food program information. *
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Selects, adapts or creates an easily accessed bookkeeping system. ➤ Reconciles incomes and expenses monthly. ➤ Writes policies related to financial matters, such as late payment fees, etc. ➤ Applies the Time-Space formula in a family/group childcare home setting in accordance with IRS standards to calculate accurate expenses. ➤ Uses knowledge of income and expenses to determine if business is breaking even.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analyzes and selects a computer program to use for financial management. ➤ Explains bookkeeping practices to others. * ➤ Uses knowledge of income and expenses to predict a “break even” point and the cash flow for the coming year. ➤ Creates an annual budget.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analyzes financial data to recommend purchasing efficiency. ➤ Calculates breakeven point when considering additional staff or children or making other changes. ➤ Proposes a three-or five-year financial plan.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates and makes recommendations on fiscal management to childcare programs. ➤ Advocates for higher wages and benefits for the childcare and education industry. ➤ Advocates for creative and inclusive funding of childcare and education for all children and their families.

*These competencies are needed by owners/directors of all types of childcare facilities.

Core Knowledge Area: Program Management

Competency E: Demonstrates knowledge of staff management and professional development.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes he/she is a part of a professional childcare and educational team. ➤ Follows established lines of communication and the written personnel policies. ➤ Participates in professional development activities.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that staff roles, responsibilities and program functions are organized to meet specific standards, goals and the mission of the program. ➤ Understands the role of teamwork in effective staff relationships. ➤ Assists staff in understanding roles, responsibilities and program procedures. ➤ Offers input and ideas for staff professional development.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assesses staff performance and provides guidance to ensure appropriate activities and interactions that support quality programming. ➤ Facilitates team building through participatory leadership techniques. ➤ Explains and implements all local, state and federal rules and regulations pertaining to employment. ➤ Identifies professional development opportunities that support staff's professional growth needs.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analyzes and revises organizational structure, job descriptions and personnel policies and procedures. ➤ Responds appropriately to resolve staff conflicts and to improve team relationships. ➤ Develops strategies for professional development of staff to reflect the program mission and goals. ➤ Designs and implements a variety of learning opportunities for professional development and advancement of staff.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches early childhood professionals. ➤ Advocates for systems to support effective staff development and staff management skills for early childhood professionals with institutions for higher education, legislators and governmental organizations. ➤ Networks with other professional colleagues to share resources and current research to ensure quality programs for the development of early childhood professionals.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Related NAEYC Standard: Teaching and learning

Candidates integrate their understanding of relationships with children and families; their understanding of developmentally effective approaches to teaching and learning; and their knowledge of academic disciplines, to design, implement and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for all children.

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of play, exploration and social interactions in children's development focusing on providing experiences that emphasize the role of process as children construct knowledge.
- B. Demonstrates the ability to design and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum and a continuum of teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interests and needs of individual children and the social and cultural contexts in which children live.
- C. Demonstrates the ability to provide meaningful, challenging integrated learning experiences within and across disciplines for all children.
- D. Demonstrates an understanding of the content of the various academic disciplines including the essential concepts and methods of investigation and expression, as well as the structures of content areas and resources to deepen their understanding
- E. Demonstrates an understanding of developmentally and culturally appropriate routines, materials, equipment, technology and environments for indoors.
- F. Demonstrates an understanding of developmentally and culturally appropriate routines, materials, equipment and environments for outdoors.
- G. Demonstrates and incorporates knowledge of strategies from multiple systems and environments to integrate goals from Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and Individual Family Support Plans (IFSP) into daily activities and routines that meet the specific needs of all children, including those with developmental delays or special abilities.
- H. Demonstrates knowledge and use of anti-bias materials, literature and experiences in all of the curriculum content areas focusing on children's needs and interests and reflective of the children's culture, language and the community.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency A: Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of play, exploration and social interactions in children's development focusing on providing experiences that emphasize the role of process as children construct knowledge.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides uninterrupted playtime to encourage exploration. ➤ Describes in general terms that young children can learn through play and exploration. ➤ Identifies ways adults can facilitate play in early learning environments. ➤ Observes curriculum emphasizing play, active manipulation of concrete objects, child choice and decision-making, exploration of the environment and interaction with others. ➤ Discovers that young children, including infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children learn, as they are actively involved in the process of creating. ➤ Recognizes teachable moments and follows the child's interests. ➤ Recognizes how children of various ages choose their own activities and toys.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explains the role of play and exploration in young children's growth, development and learning in terms of developmental domains, multiple intelligences and learning styles. ➤ Fosters young children's play and exploration by interacting with them in a positive and responsive manner. ➤ Knows that children construct knowledge by interacting with the environment and others. ➤ Designs and implements a daily schedule including uninterrupted blocks of free play when children can persist at self-selected activities. ➤ Plans and implements activities, environments and interactions with young children, which encourage play, exploration and social interactions. ➤ Facilitates children's creative development by providing daily opportunities for children to be involved in the process of creating without expecting an end product.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Integrates play in the curriculum at all levels of early childhood programs/classrooms. ➤ Uses a variety of strategies to encourage children's growth, development and learning in terms of developmental domains, multiple intelligences and learning styles. ➤ Relates how children construct knowledge through play, exploration and social interactions. ➤ Evaluates daily schedules to ensure inclusion of uninterrupted blocks of free play that support persistence at self-selected activities. ➤ Supports children's creative development by interacting with children during play and exploration in a manner that enhances learning and validates the process of creating. ➤ Analyzes observations of children involved in play and exploration as valid measures of ability and development for the purpose of curriculum design.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Critiques curriculum design to ensure an emphasis on play, exploration and social interactions. ➤ Informs families, colleagues, administrators and community members of the importance of play in children's development focusing on providing experiences that emphasize the role of process as children construct knowledge. ➤ Structures a collaborative planning process to ensure continuity of curriculum that supports children's construction of knowledge.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates at community, state and national levels for designing curriculum emphasizing the importance of play, exploration and social interactions in children's early development and early learning environments. ➤ Collaborates with other Early Childhood Professionals and community, state and national leaders to effect policies and mandates related to appropriate curriculum development. ➤ Advocates for resources for the development of curriculum that supports construction of knowledge.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency B: Demonstrates the ability to design and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum and a continuum of teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interests and needs of individual children and the social and cultural contexts in which children live.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes the need to match curriculum to the developmental level of a particular age group. ➤ Understands the importance of planning daily activities for children ➤ Discovers that individual children have differing curricular needs.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uses developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interest and needs of individual children and the social and cultural context in which children live. ➤ Recognizes the need for planning, experiencing and adapting curriculum based on the individual developmental needs of children. ➤ Uses curriculum to meet program goals and content.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plans developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, results of assessing children’s strengths, interests and needs and the social and cultural context in which they live. ➤ Designs and implements curriculum using program goals and content.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Critiques and adapts the appropriateness of prepared curriculum for specific classroom use. ➤ Creates developmentally appropriate curriculum models and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interests and needs of individual children, and the social and cultural context in which children live.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates and revises curriculum models and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interests and needs of individual children, and the social and cultural context in which children live. ➤ Advocates for developmentally appropriate curriculum and a continuum of teaching strategies.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency C: Demonstrates the ability to provide meaningful, challenging integrated learning experiences within and across disciplines for all children.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and uses activities that build on children’s natural curiosity and desire to explore. ➤ Identifies and uses integrated learning experiences that include language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama and movement. ➤ Knows that children need a variety of opportunities and activities to encourage curiosity, exploration and problem solving appropriate to their developmental levels and learning styles.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that integrated learning experiences reflect the uniqueness of each child’s learning styles and patterns of growth and development. ➤ Plans integrated learning experiences that include language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama and movement.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explains the inter-relatedness and mutually reinforcing nature of reading, writing, speaking and listening in emergent literacy skills. ➤ Designs and selects materials, assesses children’s progress, and individualizes children’s programming based on knowledge of how children develop cognitive concepts and thought processes. ➤ Educates families about play-based learning experiences and how to choose materials based on the developmental age of the child. ➤ Uses the systematic use of appropriate, responsible developmental assessment to drive meaningful, challenging integrated learning experiences within and across disciplines for all children.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops and selects learning experiences and strategies that affirm and respect family, cultural and societal diversity including language differences. ➤ Evaluates curriculum, activities and materials to ensure that they are integrated in approach and relevant to the children’s’ interests and abilities. ➤ Articulates an understanding of major theories of early childhood curriculum and related research, as well as the controversies about developmentally appropriate practices that impact early childhood programming. ➤ Develops the systematic use of appropriate, responsible developmental assessment to drive meaningful, challenging integrated learning experiences within and across disciplines for all children.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates integrated learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate for early childhood programming. ➤ Advocates for inclusiveness in learning experiences with the family and community. ➤ Analyzes the systematic use of appropriate, responsible development assessment to drive meaningful challenging integrated learning experiences within and across discipline for all children.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency D: Demonstrates an understanding of the content of the various academic disciplines including the essential concepts and methods of investigation and expression, as well as the structures of content areas and resources to deepen their understanding.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that children need to have experiences in a variety of content areas. ➤ Identifies basic math and language/literacy experiences as essential in the daily routine.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies the academic disciplines and content areas: language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama and movement. ➤ Locates resources to use to deepen their understanding of content areas. ➤ Provides basic math and language/literacy experiences in the daily routine. ➤ Employs methods of investigation and expression reflecting the various academic disciplines.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describes reciprocal relationships between development and outcomes for children in all the academic disciplines. ➤ Uses integrated teaching and learning units, lessons and activities that reflect the essential foundational concepts of each discipline. ➤ Compares and contrasts resources and chooses appropriate content for their setting. ➤ Uses quality learning experiences in all the academic disciplines that lead to and the development of positive dispositions.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs, implements and evaluates learning experiences so that they reflect the reciprocal relationship between development and outcomes for children in all the academic disciplines. ➤ Designs, implements and evaluates learning experiences in all the academic disciplines that are developmentally appropriate, meaningful and challenging for all young children. ➤ Prepares quality learning experiences in all the academic disciplines that lead to the development of positive dispositions. ➤ Prepares quality learning experiences based on the recommended standards of the various academic disciplines. ➤ Skillfully designs integrated, interdisciplinary teaching and learning units, lessons, and activities.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Critiques the standards of the various academic disciplines for developmental appropriateness. ➤ Justifies the essential content from the academic disciplines for developmental appropriateness. ➤ Advocates for the inclusion of thoughtful, essential content from the academic discipline in the interdisciplinary learning activities.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency E: Demonstrates an understanding of developmentally and culturally appropriate routines, materials, equipment, technology and environments for indoors.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Observes how children interact with available materials indoors. ➤ Matches appropriate routines and materials to the developmental stages, abilities and interests of the children. ➤ Identifies equipment that is appropriate to the developmental stage of the children. ➤ Knows appropriate technology, including computer software, available for young children. ➤ Recognizes the need to plan the routines and environment for children considering factors such as age, stage of development and learning style.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and uses developmentally appropriate routines and materials for children that show awareness of each child's interest, language and culture. ➤ Demonstrates appropriate use of equipment to maximize children's development. ➤ Describes how the environment is arranged to allow for development in all domains by individual children. ➤ Applies knowledge and skills in using technology. ➤ Uses assistive technology to enhance the learning of all children including those with disabilities.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates routines and materials for their appropriateness for children based on age, stage of development and learning style. ➤ Creates arrangements of equipment to maximize children's development. ➤ Explains how the environment is being used and/or adapted to meet the developmental needs of individual children, including those with special needs. ➤ Expands young children's learning through the appropriate use of technology.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creates materials that are developmentally and culturally appropriate for the children. ➤ Evaluates selection, use and arrangement of software technology and equipment for developmental appropriateness. ➤ Utilizes current research, observations of children and knowledge about specific disabilities and conditions to develop environments that are <u>least restrictive</u>. ➤ Combines appropriate software with other teaching tools to integrate and reinforce learning.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates a program for integration of materials, equipment and environment for developmentally and culturally appropriate practice. ➤ Influences policy for the selection and use of software and technology. ➤ Teaches others about the importance of routines, materials, equipment and environment for developmentally and culturally appropriate practice. ➤ Advocates for the licensure and use of appropriate environments for the care and education of children. ➤ Advocates for economic and gender equity in distribution of technology resources.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency F: Demonstrates an understanding of developmentally and culturally appropriate routines, materials, equipment and environments for outdoors.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knows of local, state and national standards for outdoor environment. ➤ Observes how children interact with natural materials in the outdoor setting. ➤ Matches outdoor equipment appropriately to children based on developmental stages, abilities and interests. ➤ Recognizes the importance of scheduling and providing outdoor time for all children.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describes ways to use different materials outdoors to facilitate development in all domains. ➤ Explains the importance of appropriate-sized and safe equipment for young children. ➤ Identifies the need to plan the routines and outdoor environment for children considering the children’s developmental stages, abilities, culture and interests. ➤ Utilizes the outdoor environment so children can learn through both quiet and active play.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creates new ways for all children, including those with special needs, to use materials in and from the outdoors. ➤ Analyzes equipment placement and use for safety and appropriateness reflecting compliance with local, state and national standards. ➤ Plans learning activities that utilize outdoor equipment and space to maximize children’s development in all domains.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creates integrated learning activities using materials, equipment and other aspects of the outdoor environment. ➤ Recommends modifications to the routines and outdoor environment based on current research to make it accessible for all. ➤ Evaluates use of the outdoor environment for integration of materials and equipment and for developmental and cultural appropriateness.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches about the importance of integrating the outdoor environment as a part of the total program for young children. ➤ Advocates for resources to facilitate the development of high quality outdoor learning environments.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency G: Demonstrates and incorporates knowledge of strategies from multiple systems and environments to integrate goals from Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and Individual Family Supportive Plans (IFSP) into daily activities and routines that meet the specific needs of all children, including those with developmental delays or special abilities.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that children are unique in their ability to learn and in their patterns of growth and development.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and matches materials appropriate to children with consideration given to developmental levels and special needs. ➤ Identifies ways to include all children in early childhood program curriculum activities.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interprets why certain learning materials might be appropriate or inappropriate for children with special needs. ➤ Follows the IEP/IFSP to plan and implement educational curriculum to meet the needs of each child. ➤ Develops specific ways in which curriculum might be adapted to meet the needs of each child.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analyzes goals from IEP/IFSP and writes plans for daily activities that incorporate these goals. ➤ Supports teachers in developing plans and obtaining materials and resources to meet IEP/IFSP goals.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Educates parents and other professionals of the importance of adapting curriculum to ensure the inclusion of all young children. ➤ Analyzes the selection, creation and use of learning materials in meeting all children's developmental needs.

Core Knowledge Area: Teaching and Learning

Competency H: Demonstrates knowledge and use of anti-bias materials, literature and experiences in all of the curriculum content areas focusing on children’s needs and interests and reflective of the children’s culture, language and the community.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that bias exists in various areas of society. ➤ Describes anti-bias materials, literature and experiences.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies the various areas and examples of bias such as cultural/ linguistic, gender and racial. ➤ Nurtures anti-bias views. ➤ Selects and utilizes curriculum that is anti-bias and reflective of children’s culture, language and community. ➤ Values families as resources to enhance culturally integrated curriculum.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discusses the effects of bias on children, families and communities. ➤ Identifies and utilizes programs and services that minimize the effects of bias on young children, families and communities. ➤ Surveys various early childhood materials, literature and experiences for possible bias. ➤ Provides anti-bias materials, literature and experiences in all of the curriculum content areas.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates programs and services that minimize the effects of bias on young children, families and communities. ➤ Evaluates materials and literature for possible bias and organizes the use of anti-bias materials. ➤ Designs and implements curriculum that reflects the child’s culture, language and community.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develops and designs programs and services that minimize the effects of bias on young children, families and communities. ➤ Designs and develops materials and literature that are bias free. ➤ Advocates for an anti-bias view in early care and education settings, schools and community. ➤ Teaches parents and other professionals to examine personal beliefs, feelings, attitudes and actions toward diversity and determine methods for reducing personal bias.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Related NAEYC Standard: Observing, documenting and assessing to support young children and families

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

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates the importance of observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment strategies to plan and individualize programming that meet the needs of children and ensures their continuous physical, social, emotional, aesthetic, language and cognitive development.
- B. Demonstrates knowledge in assessing developmental strengths and needs to set goals and determine outcomes for individual children and families.
- C. Demonstrates an understanding of family involvement in the assessment process for both individual children and the overall program.
- D. Demonstrates understanding and knowledge of cultural/linguistic influences, other environmental influences and varying learning styles on responsible assessment practices and results.
- E. Demonstrates the ability to utilize an assessment partnership in the evaluation of children.
- F. Demonstrates knowledge of responsible assessment including formal and informal tools and strategies and the role of standardized assessment.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Competency A: Demonstrates the importance of observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment strategies to plan and individualize programming that meet the needs of children and ensures their continuous physical, social, emotional, aesthetic, language and cognitive development.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes the importance of observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment tools and strategies in early care and education programs. ➤ Recognizes that assessments are used for individualized program planning. ➤ Uses checklists to assess the health and safety components of the program. ➤ Observes and records children’s behavior in exploration and play in anecdotal form.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uses assessment tools and strategies that address all domains of children’s development. ➤ Uses assessment results to individualize program planning. ➤ Evaluates current practice to determine if programming addresses all domains of children’s development.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engages young children in self-assessment for the purpose of individualizing program planning. ➤ Identifies possible problems and/or barriers associated with specific methods of evaluating program goals. ➤ Describes possible ways to overcome problems and/or barriers to evaluating program goals. ➤ Selects and uses appropriate assessment tools and strategies based on goals and objectives of a specific program.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs and uses many appropriate assessment tools and strategies to evaluate the goals and objectives of the program. ➤ Creates program plans based on assessments made. ➤ Knows strengths and weaknesses of various assessment methodologies. ➤ Ensures participation of staff, family and community members in program evaluation.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates and modifies assessment tools and strategies used for determining program goals for validity and reliability. ➤ Advocates for developmentally appropriate responsible assessment tools and strategies. ➤ Designs and disseminates responsible assessment tools and strategies based on research.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Competency B: Demonstrates knowledge in assessing developmental strengths and needs to set goals and determine outcomes for individual children and families.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understands that children’s assessments include determining children’s strengths, needs, interests, family systems and life situations. ➤ Recognizes that assessment for young children includes observation in the natural setting. ➤ Recognizes that children’s developmental stages are benchmarked and indicators of developmentally appropriate growth.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understands that assessment is an on-going daily activity. ➤ Uses multiple sources to identify growth and development in physical, language, social, cognitive and emotional domains. ➤ Creates written records that indicate the growth and development of each child. ➤ Understands the intent and mandates of special education laws. ➤ Recognizes atypical variations in development and makes appropriate referrals.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demonstrates ability to create a developmental profile for each child using observations, anecdotal notes, and formal and informal assessments. ➤ Relates children’s growth and development patterns to families in a clear, supportive manner. ➤ Uses appropriate assessment tools and strategies to collect data that will identify the strengths and needs of individual children.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knows strengths and weaknesses of various assessment tools and strategies for evaluating the growth and development of children. ➤ Designs methods for improving assessment procedures based upon a review of information collected. ➤ Critiques learning environments to ensure alignment with developmental assessments of the strength and needs of each child.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for responsible assessment early childhood programming. ➤ Provides information to public sector for the strength and weaknesses of assessment methodologies for early childhood programming. ➤ Advocates for early identification and intervention for children with special needs.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Competency C: Demonstrates an understanding of family involvement in the assessment process for both individual children and the overall program.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Believes families are the “best experts on their child” during all assessment and goal setting procedures. ➤ Recognizes the importance of family input in determining the goals for the child. ➤ Understands the impact of parent involvement on the child. ➤ Demonstrates an awareness of legal and regulatory requirements for special education assessments. ➤ Understands the importance of following through with activities prescribed in the Individual Family Service Plans and Individual Educational Plans.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and discusses ways in which programs and professionals can involve families in assessing children’s developmental strengths and needs and in setting individual and program goals. ➤ Collaborates with families throughout the assessment and goal setting process. ➤ Describes the basic elements of an IEP and IFSP, highlighting parental rights and rationale of the special education assessment.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and discusses possible consideration and/or barriers for involving families in the assessment process. ➤ Works with families to identify children with special needs. ➤ Involves each family in assessing the child’s needs, setting individual goals and updating the child’s progress in an ongoing manner. ➤ Participates in the planning, implementation and monitoring of IEP’s and IFSP’s.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Includes family members in all procedures and respects their input for setting both program and individual goals. ➤ Interprets test results and relates information to families to formulate the individual child’s goals. ➤ Analyzes and evaluates the IEP’s and IFSP’s to ensure implementation and family involvement.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for the ongoing involvement of families in the assessment and goal setting process at the community and state level. ➤ Facilitates the involvement of families in advancing public policy in the assessment process.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Competency D: Demonstrates understanding and knowledge of cultural/linguistic influences, other environmental influences and varying learning styles on responsible assessment practices and results.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes his/her own personal bias. ➤ Recognizes that language and culture can influence the assessment process and results. ➤ Identifies environmental factors that influence assessment process and results.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explains how personal biases influence the assessment process. ➤ Identifies ways in which a child’s language and culture can influence the assessment process and results. ➤ Discusses how general environmental factors can influence the assessment process and results. ➤ Recognizes that learning styles exist and may influence the assessment process and results.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigates ways to reduce and/or eliminate negative influences on the assessment process and results. ➤ Implements responsible assessment processes that reduce and/or eliminate negative influences. ➤ Describes learning styles and how they might influence the assessment process and results.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures that consideration is given to cultural/linguistic and environmental influences during the planning, selecting, adapting, modifying and implementing of all assessment procedures. ➤ Creates models for implementing responsible assessment processes that reduce and/or eliminate negative influences on the assessment results.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for responsible assessment processes that reflect cultural/linguistic and environmental influences. ➤ Debates the use of inappropriate assessment processes. ➤ Advocates for the appropriate use of assessment results.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Competency E: Demonstrates the ability to utilize an assessment partnership in the evaluation of children.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes the importance of using an assessment partnership approach to evaluation.➤ Understands that children with significant variations in development and learning require referrals for further assessment.➤ Represents the interest of the child in the assessment partnership.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Knows the expectation of the teams' goals, purposes and outcomes .➤ Actively participates in team functions as needed.➤ Identifies specific resources to assist an assessment partnership, such as: licensing consultant, health care providers, childcare food program consultants, etc.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Develops the teams' goals, purposes and outcomes.➤ Understands the components of the evaluation process.➤ Contributes to the design of the evaluation process.➤ Initiates the development of the assessment partnership and facilitates the evaluation process.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Monitors the implementation of the educational plan.➤ Evaluates the design and the implementation of the evaluation process.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Advocates for an assessment partnership approach in the evaluation of children.➤ Collaborates with community partners to initiate systems that support assessment partnerships in evaluations of children.

Core Knowledge Area: Observation, Documentation and Assessment

Competency F: Demonstrates knowledge of responsible assessment including formal and informal tools and strategies and the role of standardized assessment.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes the importance of using responsible assessment in evaluating the development and needs of young children.➤ Understands that children with significant variations in development and learning require an assessment partnership approach for responsible assessment.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Describes and uses a variety of informal assessment tools and strategies appropriate for use in evaluating young children's development and needs.➤ Recognizes that some standardized assessment is important in evaluating the development and needs of young children.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Selects and uses a variety of informal assessment tools and strategies for evaluating the development and needs of young children➤ Uses selected formal assessment tools and strategies in the evaluation process.➤ Compares and contrasts selected standardized assessment tools and strategies.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Designs and uses a variety of informal assessment tools and strategies for evaluating the development and needs of young children.➤ Relates information regarding the appropriate and inappropriate use of both informal and standardized assessment tools and strategies to parents, peers and community.➤ Critiques the use of formal assessment tools and strategies.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Critiques the design of informal and formal tools and strategies.➤ Advocates for developmentally appropriate use of standardized assessment tools and strategies.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions and Guidance

Related NAEYC Standard: Connecting with children and families

Candidates know, understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children.

*Note: This core knowledge area is embedded in the NAEYC Teaching and Learning standard

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates the ability to understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions with each child and helps all children to know, accept and take pride in themselves.
- B. Demonstrates knowledge and skill in using developmentally appropriate guidance approaches, such as redirection, positive reinforcement, effective praise and encouragement and problem solving.
- C. Demonstrates how positive guidance and for social skills opportunities assist children in the development of responsibility, autonomy and positive social skills.
- D. Demonstrates the ability to plan routines, transitions, room arrangement and activities to support social/emotional development and diminish challenging behaviors.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of the relationship among emotions, actions and communication skills.
- F. Demonstrates effective communication techniques between and among children, adults and adults and children, from varied cultural, socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions and Guidance

Competency A: Demonstrates the ability to understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions with each child and helps all children to know, accept and take pride in themselves.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes the need to be respectful, nurturing and show mutual consideration with each child. ➤ Shows warmth and respect toward children in all interactions ➤ Recognizes that adult interactions influence children’s perceptions of self. ➤ Recognizes that each child has a unique social/emotional development pattern. ➤ Demonstrates physical attentiveness toward children in distress, such as making eye contact and moving to the child’s physical level. ➤ Recognizes cultural and ethnic differences in children and their families.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uses courteous, supportive and attentive interactions with children. ➤ Relates to each child matching his/her temperament, personality and social/emotional development pattern. ➤ Describes how adult interactions influence children’s perceptions of self and their learning disposition. ➤ Shows sensitivity to the diversity of children’s ethnic and cultural backgrounds, disabilities or other learning challenges.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uses reflective communication techniques to identify children’s emotions. ➤ Teaches individual children coping skills for dealing with their own emotions and feelings. ➤ Provides an emotionally safe environment that celebrates diversity.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches staff and parents reflective communication techniques and how to help individual children develop coping skills. ➤ Identifies situations in which comprehensive assessment and intervention strategies are required for dealing with children’s emotions or feelings.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for community, state and national policies that recognize the importance of supporting children’s emotional development. ➤ Teaches others how to develop programs that support the emotional needs of a diverse population of children and families.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions and Guidance

Competency B: Demonstrates knowledge and skill in using developmentally appropriate guidance approaches, such as redirection, positive reinforcement, effective praise and encouragement and problem solving.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Defines the term “guidance”. ➤ Observes and identifies developmentally appropriate and inappropriate guidance approaches with children from infancy through school age. ➤ Knows realistic expectations of behavior for children. ➤ Establishes and communicates limits for acceptable behavior. ➤ Uses redirection and positive reinforcement.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Applies realistic expectations for each child. ➤ Discusses how guidance approaches affect the child’s self-concept and ability to learn self-control. ➤ Explains and practices additional developmentally appropriate guidance approaches such as, effective praise, encouragement and problem solving. ➤ Addresses the problem behavior or situation, rather than labeling the child. ➤ Communicates with parents regarding areas of concern and develops cooperative strategies to manage the problem.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches children problem-solving techniques appropriate for their developmental stage, so they can resolve conflicts on their own. ➤ Involves the children, as appropriate, in decision making about facility/program rules and consequences of behavior. ➤ Models appropriate guidance approaches and mentors others in their practice. ➤ Ensures the use of positive guidance approaches by other staff in the early childhood program.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches staff, parents and community members about positive guidance approaches and the effective use of praise and encouragement. ➤ Applies theories of child development to improve positive guidance approaches. ➤ Uses observations and assessments to individualize and improve child guidance. ➤ Ensures that children of all abilities are guided in positive ways.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs written policies for effective child guidance to be used by others. ➤ Articulates, evaluates and applies current theory and research to create guidance strategies for individual children.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions and Guidance

Competency C: Demonstrates how positive guidance and for social skills opportunities assist children in the development of responsibility, autonomy and positive social skills.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that children develop a positive sense of self through simple accomplishments and responsibilities. ➤ Accepts children’s need for autonomy and reacts appropriately. ➤ Knows that it is important for children to develop a sense of responsibility over time.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourages children to practice simple tasks appropriate to their developmental age, including self-help skills. ➤ Offers guidelines for children to use that promote positive social interactions. ➤ Knows that children’s active participation in their environment leads to an increased sense of responsibility. ➤ Provides a child-centered environment that will encourage autonomy.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implements developmentally appropriate tasks that lead to children’s development of autonomy. ➤ Models appropriate behavior for resolving conflict. ➤ Designs activities within the program that specifically teach responsibility.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches staff, parents and community members ways in which they can encourage children to practice responsibility, autonomy and positive social skills. ➤ Uses knowledge from current research about early childhood development to assess and nurture each child’s level of autonomy.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs a program that supports children’s development of responsibility, autonomy and positive social skills. ➤ Advocates for local, state and national policies that support the development of responsibility, autonomy and positive social skills.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions and Guidance

Competency D: Demonstrates the ability to plan routines, transitions, room arrangement and activities to support social/emotional development and diminish challenging behaviors.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides appropriate supervision. ➤ Identifies interventions to keep children safe. ➤ Adheres to basic licensing regulations to keep children physically safe. ➤ Establishes daily routines and transitions for the children. ➤ Offers children choices among appropriate activities, materials and food, whenever possible.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes the need for flexibility when following the daily routine. ➤ Plans and implements transitions that alert children to changes in activities or routines well in advance. ➤ Supports children’s emotional needs through routine daily transitions such as entering and leaving the classroom and moving from one activity to another. ➤ Explains the importance of including young children in the establishment of program rules, routines and activities. ➤ Discusses boundaries, limits and safety concerns and consistently involves children in a variety of appropriate ways to address these issues.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Follows children’s cues and adapts the daily routine when appropriate. ➤ Creates room arrangements and guides activities to promote cooperative play and the development of problem solving skills. ➤ Develops and employs a plan to help children cope with major transitions such as, moving to a new environment or a change in teaching staff. ➤ Facilitates children’s involvement in developing boundaries, limits and routines by using a variety of methods such as modeling and respecting children’s ideas and suggestions. ➤ Ensures the appropriateness of classroom rules, routines and activities by observing how children function within the room and modifying rules, routines and activities accordingly.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordinates schedules and routines throughout the program to support the need for flexibility in individual classrooms. ➤ Creates staffing plans to provide consistency in each classroom and supports the social/emotional needs of children and families. ➤ Works with staff to support children and families during major transitions.
V.	<p>At the Advanced level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches professional best practices related to environment and scheduling. ➤ Evaluates current practices related to environment and scheduling in light of current research. ➤ Advocates for licensing regulations and quality standards as they relate to an environment that supports social/emotional development and diminishes challenging behaviors.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions & Guidance

Competency E: Demonstrates knowledge of the relationship among emotions, actions and communication skills.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognizes that young children experience a variety of emotional states beginning in infancy. ➤ Labels the basic emotional states expressed by young children. ➤ Recognizes the need for appropriate expression of all emotions.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies and accurately labels all the emotional states that young children experience. ➤ Identifies the various ways young children express and communicate emotions, both verbally and nonverbally. ➤ Changes the environment and/or the situation when inappropriate emotional expressions occur. ➤ Uses strategies such as: listening, labeling, drawing pictures and role-playing with children for appropriate expression of emotions.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demonstrates appropriate interactions when young children display emotions. ➤ Develops and designs an environment that supports the positive, constructive expression of emotions. ➤ Teaches and implements a wide range of strategies for children to appropriately express and communicate their emotions. ➤ Recognizes behaviors that may indicate emotional disorder and require additional resources and/or referrals.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assists families in recognizing behaviors associated with typical emotional development. ➤ Works with families to assist them in understanding the range and impact of emotions on learning and behavior. ➤ Critiques environmental design for developmental appropriateness in supporting the constructive expression of emotions. ➤ Communicates information to parents, staff and other community members related to interactions and strategies for working with young children to help them express their emotions appropriately.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Produces and disseminates information to parents, staff and other community members to help them identify the wide range of children’s emotional expressions. ➤ Advocates for appropriate and accessible services to support healthy emotional development of young children. ➤ Evaluates the effectiveness of information and strategies related to the expression and communication of children’s emotions.

Core Knowledge Area: Interactions and Guidance

Competency F: Demonstrates effective communication techniques between and among children, adults and adults and children, from varied cultural, socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Models appropriate use of oral and written language. ➤ Builds upon the child’s home language and shows respect for the values, attitudes, expectations and culture of the individual. ➤ Engages in conversations with children that are developmentally appropriate and understood by the participants.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understands that communication includes speaking, signing, listening, reading, writing, body language, personal appearance and the use of additional devices such as drawings, photos, videos and computer related images. ➤ Creates secure and predictable environments that support opportunities for children to communicate with one another and with adults. ➤ Uses a variety of language strategies during adult-child interactions and facilitates dialogue between and among children to develop expressive language and thought. ➤ Communicates effectively using oral and written language. ➤ Demonstrates the use of active listening skills.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluates the learning environment to ensure that communication is age appropriate, on-going between the adults and children and is responsive to the children’s strengths and needs as a group and as individuals. ➤ Identifies resources that assist staff in eliminating any barriers to communication.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs enriched programming with daily opportunities to converse and communicate ideas in large and small groups and in a variety of informal and formal activities. ➤ Incorporates opportunities to develop communication skills for problem solving and resolving conflicts. ➤ Organizes professional development opportunities to enhance communication skills.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaches families and professionals about age appropriate communication development. ➤ Advocates for programs that support the development of communication skills in young children.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Related NAEYC Standard: Becoming a professional

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

Competencies:

- A. Demonstrates professional behaviors and adherence to the Code of Ethical Conduct as defined by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of federal, state and local regulations and public policy regarding programs and services for young children.
- C. Demonstrates continuous learning to inform practice by locating and using appropriate professional organizations, resources, literature and professional development experiences.
- D. Demonstrates a personal philosophy of developmentally appropriate early care and education that responds to practices that support inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity through actions and attitudes.
- E. Demonstrates decision-making based on knowledge of central issues, reflective approaches and critical perspectives.
- F. Demonstrates an understanding of the Early Childhood Profession including the influence of historical perspectives, current issues and trends on thought and practices.
- G. Demonstrates a commitment to advocacy on behalf of young children and their families, improved quality of programs and services for young children and enhanced professional status and working conditions for early childhood educators.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency A: Demonstrates professional behaviors and adherence to the Code of Ethical Conduct as defined by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Employs professional work habits such as dependability and time management.➤ Recognizes that the Code of Ethical Conduct developed by NAEYC guides professionalism in the Early Childhood Field.➤ Agrees to abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Creates and maintains professional behavior and attitudes.➤ Reviews the Code of Ethical Conduct with others.➤ Signs the statement of commitment as set forth by the Code of Ethical Conduct.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Applies the principles of the Code of Ethical Conduct to his/her practices.➤ Collaborates with colleagues in applying the Code of Ethical Conduct in incidents that arise in early care and educational practices.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teaches early childhood professionals how to use the Code of Ethical Conduct.➤ Analyzes situations and determines applications for using the Code of Ethical Conduct.➤ Models the principles of the Code of Ethical Conduct in his/her professional practice.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Advocates for the ethical treatment of young children, their families and early childhood professionals; and for the use of ethics in the early childhood care and education system.➤ Integrates the Code of Ethical Conduct into teaching and practice.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency B: Demonstrates knowledge of federal, state and local regulations and public policy regarding programs and services for young children.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Knows basic child daycare licensing rules and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), pertaining to his/her facility.➤ Has access to regulations such as, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), fire safety, local zoning and others, which impact programming for young children.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Educates and trains staff about all regulations governing programs and services for young children.➤ Follows policies and procedures to ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Identifies federal and state programs such as Head Start, Title I, Michigan School Readiness Programs and Early On.➤ Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations.➤ Describes how public policies can influence programming and services for young children.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reviews current and pending regulations and policies that affect the well being of young children.➤ Educates policy makers, parents and community members on the impact of rules, regulations and policy decisions and advocates for change when appropriate.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Advocates for rules, regulations and policies that promote high standards of quality in programs and services for young children.➤ Critiques and monitors regulations and policies for impact on programs and services for young children.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency C: Demonstrates continuous learning to inform practice by locating and using appropriate professional organizations, resources, literature and professional development experiences.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Identifies professional organizations and publications.➤ Understands professional growth is a continuous process.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Joins a professional organization and attends conferences.➤ Reads and responds to professional journals and publications.➤ Seeks opportunities and experiences to promote professional growth.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Maintains a membership in a professional organization and regularly attends conferences.➤ Discusses professional journals and publications.➤ Develops a plan for professional growth.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Assists local professional organizations through conference presentations, holding office or carrying out other duties associated with the organization's mission.➤ Applies research findings and practices presented in professional publications.➤ Organizes and facilitates professional growth opportunities and experiences for others.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Assists state and national professional organizations through conference attendance and presentations, holding office or carrying out other duties associated with the organization's mission.➤ Researches, writes and critiques material for professional publications.➤ Guides and mentors others in their professional growth.➤ Advocates for the development of recognized professional development systems.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency D: Demonstrates a personal philosophy of developmentally appropriate early care and education that responds to practices that support inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity through actions and attitudes.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Participates in developmentally appropriate activities for interacting with children and families.➤ Recognizes that there are differences in culture and language among children.➤ Examines own belief system related to inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Develops a personal philosophy resulting from an interaction of classroom experience and education.➤ Discusses ways, including both actions and attitudes, in which early childhood professionals support inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity.➤ Articulates personal philosophy of early care and education.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Seeks out knowledge of diverse families and communities and formulates developmentally appropriate curriculum and programs.➤ Embraces a personal philosophy that supports inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity.➤ Explains the rationale for supporting inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity in early childhood settings➤ Applies personal philosophy of early care and education to practice with young children.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Evaluates early care and education program(s) and practices for consistency with personal philosophy and accepted standards of quality.➤ Compares and contrasts own belief systems and those of other cultures to understand similarities and differences.➤ Promotes practices that support inclusion and cultural/linguistic diversity.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teaches other professionals techniques for developing and reflecting on their own personal philosophy of early care and education.➤ Advocates for early care and education that is respectful of cultural/ linguistic diversity and individual differences.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency E: Demonstrates decision-making based on knowledge of central issues, reflective approaches and critical perspectives.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Realizes professionals are continually learning.➤ Questions own practices and seeks input from supervisors and colleagues.
II.	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Discusses experiences and practices with colleagues identifying areas of strength and weakness.➤ Uses reflective approaches such as journaling to begin to analyze own practices.
III.	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Uses reflections to modify and improve work with young children, families and colleagues.➤ Develops personal goals based on reflections on current practices.
IV.	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Supports colleagues' reflective approaches by identifying resources, helping to provide time to think and facilitating a questioning attitude.➤ Encourages the expression of multiple perspectives recognizing shared values and existing differences.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teaches reflective approaches to early care and education teachers.➤ Dialogues about the Early Childhood field's central questions, recognizing that multiple perspectives exist and must be continually examined.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency F: Demonstrates an understanding of the Early Childhood Profession including the influence of historical perspectives, current issues and trends on thought and practices.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I	At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognizes that current issues and trends exist in the profession and may impact programming and interactions with children.
II	At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Discusses current trends and issues with colleagues.➤ Relates current issues and trends to personal thinking and practice.
III	At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Knows the historical development of the Early Childhood Profession and its influence on thought and practice.➤ Explains the influence of current trends and issues on thought and practices.➤ Integrates knowledge of historical perspectives, current issues and trends into personal thinking and practice.
IV	At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reflects on personal understanding of the influence of historical perspective and current trends and issues.➤ Designs practices to reflect and incorporate the appropriate elements of historical perspective, current trends and issues.
V.	At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Critiques the various historical perspectives noting the influence on both historical as well as current thought and practice.➤ Evaluates the validity of current trends and issues and their impact on practice.➤ Advocates for practices that reflect appropriate elements of historical perspective and valid trends and issues.

Core Knowledge Area: Professionalism

Competency G: Demonstrates a commitment to advocacy on behalf of young children and their families, improved quality of programs and services for young children and enhanced professional status and working conditions for early childhood educators.

Professional Step	Level of Competency
I.	<p>At the AWARENESS level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knows the importance of supporting young children and their families. ➤ Identifies how early care and education programs differ from care and education programs for older children. ➤ Observes a quality childcare program. ➤ Recognizes that early care and education is a profession. ➤ Knows that there are a variety of early care and education settings such as part-day, full-day, integrated and bilingual programs in centers, homes and hospitals; kindergarten and primary schools; and recreational programs.
II.	<p>At the DEVELOPING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participates in concrete advocacy activities on behalf of young children and families such as letter writing, speaking with parents or contacting policy makers. ➤ Describes how caring for and educating young children differs from caring for and educating older children. ➤ Discusses why quality in early care and education programs is crucial. ➤ Understands the importance of both education and field experience to enhance the professional status and working conditions for early childhood educators. ➤ Identifies careers and professions in fields related to early childhood.
III.	<p>At the ACHIEVING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifies gaps in services for young children and families. ➤ Creates and maintains high quality programs or services which serve as a model for other programs. ➤ Provides others (including families, colleagues, administrators and the community) with information regarding the characteristics of and need for quality programs for young children. ➤ Promotes recognition of professional levels in the early childhood field, and advocates for appropriate compensation and benefits. ➤ Investigates connections between and among careers and professionals in early childhood and related fields.
IV.	<p>At the EXTENDING level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recommends strategies to fill gaps and improve services for young children and families. ➤ Evaluates early childhood programs and implements findings to improve the quality of programs and services to young children and families. ➤ Informs others about research and personal findings on the effects of high quality programs for young children and families to ensure support for such programs. ➤ Examines current research and national and state models of career lattices for professional development. ➤ Integrates an understanding of the broader context and challenges within which early childhood professionals work, have worked and might work in the future.
V.	<p>At the ADVANCED level, the Early Childhood Professional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocates for legislation on behalf of young children and families. ➤ Encourages legislators to use current research in creating legislation that will positively affect early care and education. ➤ Creates a career lattice that incorporates education and field experience in determining professional steps. ➤ Advocates for recognition of early care and education as a profession.

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Aesthetic Development	The changes over time in one's ability to appreciate and be sensitive to the arts.
Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)	A federal law that prohibits public accommodations, including early childhood programs, from discriminating against anyone who is disabled.
Anti-bias	An activist approach to valuing diversity and promoting equity by teaching children to accept, respect and celebrate diversity as it relates to such things as: gender, race, culture, language and ability.
Assessment Partnership	Collaborative team made up of families and professionals that is involved in assessing children's development, strengths and needs.
Autonomy	Emotional state in which children strive to be independent.
Best practices	The standards for high-quality, developmentally appropriate, early childhood programs that are based on current knowledge and shared beliefs.
Caregiving Procedures	Refers to how the child is handled such as: never leaving a baby alone on a diaper changing table; holding the baby while bottle feeding; assisting with toileting and dressing and others.
Celiac Sprue	A chronic nutritional disturbance, usually of young children, caused by the inability to metabolize gluten, which results in malnutrition, a distended abdomen, muscle wasting and the passage of stools having a high fat content. The disorder can be controlled by a special diet that emphasizes the elimination of all foods containing gluten.
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	A federally funded program that assists early childhood programs in planning and paying for nutritious meals and snacks served to children in care from 0-12 years of age.
Childcare facilities	All businesses that care for and educate young children: family childcare homes, group childcare homes, childcare or development centers, part-day preschool programs, and school-age programs.
Code of Ethical Conduct	A document created by the National Association for the Education of Young Children that provides guidelines for responsible behaviors and decision making in early childhood education and care based on core values of the field.
Cognitive Development	The gradual orderly changes by which mental processes become more complex and sophisticated.
Collaborative	All members of a group working toward a common goal.
Community	A body of individuals often sharing common goals and interests.
Community assets	Resources within the community such as extended family member, friends, social workers, health care providers, schools, neighborhood associations, employers, government agencies, etc.
Construct Knowledge	Developing an understanding of the world through active exploration of the environment.
Critical Perspectives	A stance based on examinations of own work, sources of professional knowledge and the early childhood field.
Cultural Variations	Those practices and traditions that reflect the specific cultures of children in the early childhood program, community or state.
Cultural/linguistic	The unique identities of people based on the influence of family language, stories, values and spiritual life, as well as those of neighborhoods and schools.
Culture	The customary beliefs, social forms and material traits of a racial, religious or social group.
Development	The orderly, adaptive changes in humans that occur from conception to death.
Developmental delays	The classification for children with or without established diagnosis that perform significantly behind developmental norms.

Developmental Domain	Areas of developments including: cognitive development, physical development, social development, emotional development, language development and aesthetic development.
Dialect	A variation in language that is characteristic of a particular social or geographical group such as Southern Dialect or Black English.
Disabilities	The inability to do something specific such as see, walk or learn.
Disposition	A prevailing tendency, mood or inclination; a temperamental makeup; and the tendency to act in a certain manner under given circumstances.
Early On	A non-profit network, which coordinates services for families with children under three years of age who have special needs.
Effective praise/Encouragement	Group or individually focused acknowledgement by an adult that recognizes progress and efforts and supports children's further efforts.
Emergent Literacy	Young children's language, concepts, behavior, and skills, which precede and can develop into reading, conventional writing and a body of literacy knowledge.
Emotional Development	The changes over time in the physical sensations, thoughts, interpretations and response expressions one has to the people and events around him/her.
Emotional Disorder (ED)	Behavior in children that is, cultural, and/or situational inappropriate and interferes with the child's education and/or that of other children. (Individual's With Disabilities Act)
Emotional Distress	Emotional distress can be exhibited by many different behaviors such as: habit disorders (biting, rocking, head banging), regression (thumb sucking, wetting or soiling by older children), behavioral extremes (overly compliant or very demanding), self-destructive behavior, irrational and persistent fears and sleep or speech disorders
Environmental Influences	The people, procedures, habits, routines and things that affect the child.
Family	Group bound by each individual's perception.
Family strengths	Characteristics that create fulfillment and contribute to a family's satisfaction and it's perceived success such as: rituals, traditions, respect, commitment, strong value system, effective crisis management, etc.
Guidance Approach	An approach aimed at reducing the need for and resolve the occurrence of inappropriate behavior in a way that are non-punitive and teach democratic life skills.
Head Start	A federally funded comprehensive child development programs serving children from 0-5 years of age, pregnant women, and their families. It is a child-focused program with the goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families.
Holistic Approach	An approach to understanding the developing child that considers the complete system or all areas of development.
Idiosyncratic language	The verbal expressions of the 2-7 year old based on personal experiences and over generalized to other situations or concepts.
Inclusion	The practice of including all children regardless of their abilities in regular early childhood care and education programs.
Individual Educational Plans (IEP)	An annually revised program for an exceptional student, detailing present achievement level, goals and strategies, drawn up by teachers, parents, specialists and when appropriate, the student.
Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP)	The written document specified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to guide the implementation of early intervention services for children from birth to age three and their families. It is to be developed through collaborative interchanges between families and the professionals involved in assessment and service delivery.
Integrated Learning Experiences	Experiences that bring together, in varying combinations, language, literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama and movement.

Language Development	The changes over time in one's ability to understand and use the system of oral and written symbols used for communication.
Learning styles	The varying environmental factors and personal preferences that affect approaches to, and the processing of, learning.
Least restrictive	The educational setting in which a child with special needs can learn that is as close as possible to the general education classroom.
Maturation	The genetically determined, naturally unfolding course of growth.
Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP)	MSRP serves children who are the appropriate age, live in the district in which they are enrolling, and have two qualifying factors as listed. The goal is to increase the school readiness of young children who may be at risk for not succeeding in school.
Mission	The purpose or reason for being; the result at which the entire organization is aimed.
Multiple Modes of Intelligence	The varying human mental abilities to acquire and use knowledge to solve problem, to generate new problems, adapt to the world and to make a product or offer a service. Included are: Logical-Mathematical, Linguistic, Musical, Spatial, Bodily Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Interpersonal and Naturalistic.
Participatory leadership	The practice of delegating responsibilities and authority across the team.
Philosophy	A clear statement of what the program is trying to accomplish in terms of: attitudes about the needs of children, process of education, the needs of families and the program's role in terms of the families and communities served.
Physical Development	The changes over time in body structure and function.
PKU	An abbreviation for phenylketonuria, a genetic disorder in which the body lacks the enzyme necessary to metabolize phenylalanine to tyrosine. Left untreated, the disorder can cause brain damage and progressive mental retardation as a result of the accumulation of phenylalanine and its breakdown products.
Positive reinforcement	A method used to shape behaviors by using praise, encouragement or a reward following a desirable behavior.
Problem solving	Finding an appropriate way to attain a goal.
Protective Services	In Michigan, Protective Services refers to the Family Independence Agency's Children's Protective Service Department. Staff receives phone calls and written reports of suspected child abuse and neglect and investigates them.
Reciprocal	Mutual, give and take, shared.
Redirection	A guidance strategy that diverts a child from unacceptable behavior to acceptable behavior without stopping the energy flow. Ideally, it involves giving the child a choice to lean toward a constructive behavior or activity.
Reflective approaches	Examining one's own experiences, both past and present, in order to learn from it and grow. Often used to examine personal reactions to certain situations, or to develop and maintain relationships or facilitate the teaching-learning process.
Reflective communication techniques	A communication technique in which an adult repeats back or supportively acknowledges a remark, action or implied emotion of a child.
Responsible Assessment	Ethically grounded, guided by sound professional standards, it is collaborative and open and is used to support children rather than exclude them or deny them services.
Self-Concept	The thoughts and feelings that an individual has at any point in time about who he/she is.
Social Atmosphere	Planning meal times so all children and adults are sitting at the table together, food is served family style and people engage in pleasant conversation.
Social Development	The changes over time in the ways we relate to each other.
Society	The wider community, nation or grouping of people having common traditions, institutions and collective activities and interests.

Special abilities	Children who have diverse needs due to abilities above or below the normal range.
Standard Precautions	(Also Called Universal Health Precautions) An approach to infection control wherein all bodily fluids are treated as if they are infectious. People take proper precautions to avoid contaminations, such as wearing latex gloves, whenever there is a chance of contact with bodily fluids.
Temperament	An individual's behavioral style and characteristic emotional response.
Theories of family systems	Hypothesis or sets of general principles, concepts or assumptions used to explain family such as: Family Systems Theory, Family Development Theory, Conflict Theory, Structural Functionalism, Symbolic Interaction, Social Exchange Theory, etc.
Time-Space formula	A Formula used by family and group home childcare providers to calculate the allocated house-related expenses for their record keeping of business expenses.
Title I	A federally funded, poverty-driven program designed to provide extra help to students who are having difficulty in reading and/or math. Title I teachers and paraprofessionals work with classroom teachers to reinforce the student's reading and/or math programs.
Wellness Activities	Behaviors and opportunities that promote good health, nutrition and physical well-being.