

Early Childhood Special Education/Early Intervention (birth to age 8) **Professional Standards**
With CEC Common Core
October 2008

This document presents the newly validated personnel standards for “professionals” in Early Childhood Special Education/Early Intervention (ECSE/EI). These standards are delineated as Early Childhood (EC) standards for initial preparation. The document also includes CEC’s Common Core (CC) standards (document dated 3/18/2008) so that both sets of standards are included in one document. The ECSE/EI (EC) standards assume the inclusion of CEC’s CC standards in personnel preparation for program accreditation.

The terminology that is used in the EC standards presented below was developed originally in the context of the meetings for CEC’s Knowledge and Skills Committee (April 2006). The purpose was to simplify the wording of the standards for personnel in ECSE/EI and to use terminology that is appropriate for those who serve the populations of children, birth to age 8, and their families. These terms adhere to the “Editing and Smoothing Guidelines” of the Knowledge and Skills Committee. CEC’s Knowledge and Skills Committee accepted the EC standards at their April 2007 meeting.

Terms used in the ECSE/EI Standards:

1. *Infants and Young Children*: all children birth to age 8 years.
2. *Exceptional Needs*: in response to Exceptional Learning Needs (ELN) specified in the CEC standards, “infants and young children with exceptional needs” will be used, and not ELN, since infants and young children have developmental needs as well as learning needs.
3. *Infants and Young Children with Exceptional Needs*: refers to infants and young children, birth to age 8 years, who have, or are at risk for, developmental delays and disabilities.
4. *Development and Learning*: terms to be used, and in that order, to convey the focus of the following knowledge and skills for personnel – to support the developmental and learning needs of infants and young children, and their families.
5. *IFSP/IEP Family or Educational Plan*: The language of the standards requires spelling out IFSP and IEP. K&S suggests using “family or educational plan” to (a) simplify the expressions and (b) include Canadian terminology in the standards. DEC respectfully requests the use of “individualized plan” to simplify the language since the IFSP is an educational plan too.
6. *Developmental Domains*: Term to be used to simplify the listing of the five developmental domains specified in federal law – cognitive, communicative, social-emotional, motor, and adaptive development.
7. *Settings for Infants and Young Children*: to avoid lists, these settings refer to home, community-based, and school-based settings.
8. *Developmental and academic content* refers to curriculum.

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Special Education Standard #1: Foundations

Common Core

Knowledge:	CEC
CC1K1	Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis for special education practice.
CC1K2	Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management planning and implementation.
CC1K3	Relationship of special education to the organization and function of educational agencies.
CC1K4	Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
CC1K5	Issues in definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
CC1K6	Issues, assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services.
CC1K7	Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
CC1K8	Historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups.
CC1K9	Impact of the dominant culture on shaping schools and the individuals who study and work in them.
CC1K10	Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school.
Skill:	
CC1S1	Articulate personal philosophy of special education.

Early Childhood -- Standard #1: Foundations

	Knowledge:
EC1K1	Historical, philosophical foundations, and legal basis of services for infants and young children both with and without exceptional needs.
EC1K2	Trends and issues in early childhood education, early childhood special education, and early intervention.
	Skills:
EC1S1	Implement family services consistent with due process safeguards.

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Special Education Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC2K1	Typical and atypical human growth and development.
CC2K2	Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities.
CC2K3	Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.
CC2K4	Family systems and the role of families in supporting development.
CC2K5	Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
CC2K6	Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC2K7	Effects of various medications on individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Early Childhood – Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners

	Knowledge:
EC2K1	Theories of typical and atypical early childhood development.
EC2K2	Biological and environmental factors that affect pre-, peri-, and postnatal development and learning.
EC2K3	Specific disabilities, including the etiology, characteristics, and classification of common disabilities in infants and young children, and specific implications for development and learning in the first years of life.
EC2K4	Impact of medical conditions and related care on development and learning.
EC2K5	Impact of medical conditions on family concerns, resources, and priorities.
EC2K6	Factors that affect the mental health and social- emotional development of infants and young children.
EC2K7	Infants and young children develop and learn at varying rates.
	Skills:
EC2S1	Apply current research to the five domains, play and temperament in learning situations.

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Special Education Standard #3: Individual Learning Differences

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC3K1	Evidence-based practices validated for specific characteristics of learners and settings.
CC3K2	Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.
CC3K3	Impact of learners' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
CC3K4	Variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures and their effects on relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, family, and schooling.
CC3K5	Cultural perspectives influencing the relationships among families, schools and communities as related to instruction.
CC3K6	Differing ways of learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and strategies for addressing these differences.

Early Childhood – Standard #3: Individual Learning Differences

	Knowledge:
EC3K1	Impact of child's abilities, needs, and characteristics on development and learning.
EC3K2	Impact of social and physical environments on development and learning.
	Skills:
EC3S1	Develop, implement, and evaluate learning experiences and strategies that respect the diversity of infants and young children, and their families.
EC3S2	Develop and match learning experiences and strategies to characteristics of infants and young children.

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Special Education Standard #4: Instructional Strategies

Common Core

Skill:	
CC4S1	Use strategies to facilitate integration into various settings.
CC4S2	Teach individuals to use self-assessment, problem solving, and other cognitive strategies to meet their needs.
CC4S3	Select, adapt, and use instructional strategies and materials according to characteristics of the individual with exceptional learning needs.
CC4S4	Use strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments.
CC4S5	Use procedures to increase the individual's self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem.
CC4S6	Use strategies that promote successful transitions for individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Early Childhood – Standard #4: Instructional Strategies

	Knowledge:
EC4K1	Concept of universal design for learning.
	Skills:
EC4S1	Plan, implement, and evaluate developmentally appropriate curricula, instruction, and adaptations based on knowledge of individual children, the family, and the community.
EC4S2	Facilitate child-initiated development and learning.
EC4S3	Use teacher-scaffolded and initiated instruction to complement child-initiated learning.
EC4S4	Link development, learning experiences, and instruction to promote educational transitions.
EC4S5	Use individual and group guidance and problem-solving techniques to develop supportive relationships with and among children.
EC4S6	Use strategies to teach social skills and conflict resolution.
EC4S7	Use a continuum of intervention strategies to support access of young children in the general curriculum and daily routines.

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EC4S8	Implement and evaluate preventative and reductive strategies to address challenging behaviors.
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Special Education Standard #5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC5K1	Demands of learning environments.
CC5K2	Basic classroom management theories and strategies for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC5K3	Effective management of teaching and learning.
CC5K4	Teacher attitudes and behaviors that influence behavior of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC5K5	Social skills needed for educational and other environments.
CC5K6	Strategies for crisis prevention and intervention.
CC5K7	Strategies for preparing individuals to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world.
CC5K8	Ways to create learning environments that allow individuals to retain and appreciate their own and each other's respective language and cultural heritage.
CC5K9	Ways specific cultures are negatively stereotyped.
CC5K10	Strategies used by diverse populations to cope with a legacy of former and continuing racism
Skills:	
CC5S1	Create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
CC5S2	Identify realistic expectations for personal and social behavior in various settings.
CC5S3	Identify supports needed for integration into various program placements.
CC5S4	Design learning environments that encourage active participation in individual and group activities.
CC5S5	Modify the learning environment to manage behaviors.
CC5S6	Use performance data and information from all stakeholders to make or suggest modifications in learning environments.
CC5S7	Establish and maintain rapport with individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
CC5S8	Teach self-advocacy.
CC5S9	Create an environment that encourages self-advocacy and increased independence.
CC5S10	Use effective and varied behavior management strategies.
CC5S11	Use the least intensive behavior management strategy consistent with the needs of the individual with exceptional learning needs.
CC5S12	Design and manage daily routines.

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CC5S13	Organize, develop, and sustain learning environments that support positive intracultural and intercultural experiences.
CC5S14	Mediate controversial intercultural issues among students within the learning environment in ways that enhance any culture, group, or person.
CC5S15	Structure, direct, and support the activities of paraeducators, volunteers, and tutors.
CC5S16	Use universal precautions.

Early Childhood -- Standard #5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions

	Knowledge:
	None in addition to the Common Core.
	Skills:
EC5S1	Select, develop, and evaluate developmentally and functionally appropriate materials, equipment, and environments.
EC5S2	Organize space, time, materials, peers, and adults to maximize progress in natural and structured environments.
EC5S3	Embed learning opportunities in everyday routines, relationships, activities, and places.
EC5S4	Structure social environments, using peer models and proximity, and responsive adults, to promote interactions among peers, parents, and caregivers.
EC5S5	Provide a stimulus-rich indoor and outdoor environment that employs materials, media, and adaptive and assistive technology, responsive to individual differences.
EC5S6	Implement basic health, nutrition and safety management procedures for infants and young children.
EC5S7	Use evaluation procedures and recommend referral with ongoing follow-up to community health and social services.

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Special Education Standard #6: **Language**

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC6K1	Effects of cultural and linguistic differences on growth and development.
CC6K2	Characteristics of one's own culture and use of language and the ways in which these can differ from other cultures and uses of languages.
CC6K3	Ways of behaving and communicating among cultures that can lead to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.
CC6K4	Augmentative and assistive communication strategies.
Skills:	
CC6S1	Use strategies to support and enhance communication skills of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC6S2	Use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for students whose primary language is not the dominant language.

Early Childhood – Standard #6: Language

	Knowledge:
EC6K1	Impact of language delays on cognitive, social-emotional, adaptive, play, temperament and motor development.
EC6K2	Impact of language delays on behavior.
	Skills:
EC6S1	Support and facilitate family and child interactions as primary contexts for development and learning.
EC6S2	Support caregivers to respond to child's cues and preferences, establish predictable routines and turn-taking, and facilitate communicative initiations.
EC6S3	Establish communication systems for young children that support self-advocacy.

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Special Education Standard #7: Instructional Planning

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC7K1	Theories and research that form the basis of curriculum development and instructional practice.
CC7K2	Scope and sequences of general and special curricula.
CC7K3	National, state or provincial, and local curricula standards.
CC7K4	Technology for planning and managing the teaching and learning environment.
CC7K5	Roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator related to instruction, intervention, and direct service.
Skills:	
CC7S1	Identify and prioritize areas of the general curriculum and accommodations for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC7S2	Develop and implement comprehensive, longitudinal individualized programs in collaboration with team members.
CC7S3	Involve the individual and family in setting instructional goals and monitoring progress.
CC7S4	Use functional assessments to develop intervention plans.
CC7S5	Use task analysis.
CC7S6	Sequence, implement, and evaluate individualized learning objectives.
CC7S7	Integrate affective, social, and life skills with academic curricula.
CC7S8	Develop and select instructional content, resources, and strategies that respond to cultural, linguistic, and gender differences.
CC7S9	Incorporate and implement instructional and assistive technology into the educational program.
CC7S10	Prepare lesson plans.
CC7S11	Prepare and organize materials to implement daily lesson plans.
CC7S12	Use instructional time effectively.
CC7S13	Make responsive adjustments to instruction based on continual observations.
CC7S14	Prepare individuals to exhibit self-enhancing behavior in response to societal attitudes and actions.
CC7S15	Evaluate and modify instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data.

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Early Childhood – Standard #7: Instructional Planning

	Knowledge:
EC7K1	Theories and research that form the basis of developmental and academic curricula and instructional strategies for infants and young children.
EC7K2	Developmental and academic content.
EC7K3	Connection of curriculum to assessment and progress monitoring activities
	Skills:
EC7S1	Develop, implement, and evaluate individualized plans, with family members and other professionals, as a member of a team.
EC7S2	Plan and implement developmentally and individually appropriate curriculum.
EC7S3	Design intervention strategies incorporating information from multiple disciplines.
EC7S4	Implement developmentally and functionally appropriate activities, using a variety of formats, based on systematic instruction.
EC7S5	Align individualized goals with developmental and academic content.
EC7S6	Develop individualized plans that support development and learning as well as caregiver responsiveness.
EC7S7	Develop an individualized plan that supports the child’s independent functioning in the child’s natural environments.
EC7S8	Make adaptations for the unique developmental and learning needs of children, including those from diverse backgrounds.

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Special Education Standard #8: **Assessment**

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC8K1	Basic terminology used in assessment.
CC8K2	Legal provisions and ethical principles regarding assessment of individuals.
CC8K3	Screening, prereferral, referral, and classification procedures.
CC8K4	Use and limitations of assessment instruments.
CC8K5	National, state or provincial, and local accommodations and modifications.
Skills:	
CC8S1	Gather relevant background information.
CC8S2	Administer nonbiased formal and informal assessments.
CC8S3	Use technology to conduct assessments.
CC8S4	Develop or modify individualized assessment strategies.
CC8S5	Interpret information from formal and informal assessments.
CC8S6	Use assessment information in making eligibility, program, and placement decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
CC8S7	Report assessment results to all stakeholders using effective communication skills.
CC8S8	Evaluate instruction and monitor progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC8S9	Create and maintain records.

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Early Childhood – Standard #8: Assessment

	Knowledge:
EC8K1	Role of the family in the assessment process.
EC8K2	Legal requirements that distinguish among at-risk, developmental delay and disability.
EC8K3	Alignment of assessment with curriculum, content standards, and local, state, and federal regulations.
	Skills:
EC8S1	Assist families in identifying their concerns, resources, and priorities.
EC8S2	Integrate family priorities and concerns in the assessment process.
EC8S3	Assess progress in the five developmental domains, play, and temperament.
EC8S4	Select and administer assessment instruments in compliance with established criteria.
EC8S5	Use informal and formal assessment to make decisions about infants and young children’s development and learning.
EC8S6	Gather information from multiple sources and environments.
EC8S7	Use a variety of materials and contexts to maintain the interest of infants and young children in the assessment process.
EC8S8	Participate as a team member to integrate assessment results in the development and implementation of individualized plans.
EC8S9	Emphasize child’s strengths and needs in assessment reports.
EC8S10	Produce reports that focus on developmental domains and functional concerns.
EC8S11	Conduct ongoing formative child, family, and setting assessments to monitor instructional effectiveness.

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Special Education Standard #9: Professional and Ethical Practice

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC9K1	Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one's teaching.
CC9K2	Importance of the teacher serving as a model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC9K3	Continuum of lifelong professional development.
CC9K4	Methods to remain current regarding research-validated practice.
Skills:	
CC9S1	Practice within the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards of the profession.
CC9S2	Uphold high standards of competence and integrity and exercise sound judgment in the practice of the professional.
CC9S3	Act ethically in advocating for appropriate services.
CC9S4	Conduct professional activities in compliance with applicable laws and policies.
CC9S5	Demonstrate commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC9S6	Demonstrate sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of individuals.
CC9S7	Practice within one's skill limits and obtain assistance as needed.
CC9S8	Use verbal, nonverbal, and written language effectively.
CC9S9	Conduct self-evaluation of instruction.
CC9S10	Access information on exceptionalities.
CC9S11	Reflect on one's practice to improve instruction and guide professional growth.
CC9S12	Engage in professional activities that benefit individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, and one's colleagues.
CC9S13	Demonstrate commitment to engage in evidence-based practices.

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Early Childhood – Standard #9: Professional and Ethical Practice

	Knowledge:
EC9K1	Legal, ethical, and policy issues related to educational, developmental, and medical services for infants and young children, and their families.
EC9K2	Advocacy for professional status and working conditions for those who serve infants and young children, and their families.
	Skills:
EC9S1	Recognize signs of emotional distress, neglect, and abuse, and follow reporting procedures.
EC9S2	Integrate family systems theories and principles to guide professional practice.
EC9S3	Respect family choices and goals.
EC9S4	Apply models of team process in early childhood.
EC9S5	Participate in activities of professional organizations relevant to early childhood special education and early intervention.
EC9S6	Apply evidence-based and recommended practices for infants and young children including those from diverse backgrounds.
EC9S7	Advocate on behalf of infants and young children and their families.

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Special Education Standard #10:

Collaboration

Common Core

Knowledge:	
CC10K1	Models and strategies of consultation and collaboration.
CC10K2	Roles of individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, and school and community personnel in planning of an individualized program.
CC10K3	Concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs and strategies to help address these concerns.
CC10K4	Culturally responsive factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, school personnel, and community members.
Skills:	
CC10S1	Maintain confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC10S2	Collaborate with families and others in assessment of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC10S3	Foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals.
CC10S4	Assist individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families in becoming active participants in the educational team.
CC10S5	Plan and conduct collaborative conferences with individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families.
CC10S6	Collaborate with school personnel and community members in integrating individuals with exceptional learning needs into various settings.
CC10S7	Use group problem-solving skills to develop, implement, and evaluate collaborative activities.
CC10S8	Model techniques and coach others in the use of instructional methods and accommodations.
CC10S9	Communicate with school personnel about the characteristics and needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC10S10	Communicate effectively with families of individuals with exceptional learning needs from diverse backgrounds.
CC10S11	Observe, evaluate, and provide feedback to paraeducators.

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Early Childhood – Standard #10: Collaboration

	Knowledge:
EC10K1	Structures supporting interagency collaboration, including interagency agreements, referral, and consultation.
	Skills:
EC10S1	Collaborate with caregivers, professionals, and agencies to support children’s development and learning.
EC10S2	Support families’ choices and priorities in the development of goals and intervention strategies.
EC10S3	Implement family-oriented services based on the family’s identified resources, priorities, and concerns.
EC10S4	Provide consultation in settings serving infants and young children.
EC10S5	Involve families in evaluation of services.
EC10S6	Participate as a team member to identify and enhance team roles, communication, and problem-solving.
EC10S7	Employ adult learning principles in consulting and training family members and service providers.
EC10S8	Assist the family in planning for transition.
EC10S9	Implement processes and strategies that support transitions among settings for infants and young children.