

## **Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE) (Initial birth through age 8)**

### **Standard 1: Child Development and Early Learning**

Candidates understand the impact of different theories and philosophies of early learning and development on assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention decisions. Candidates apply knowledge of normative developmental sequences and variations, individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, and other direct and indirect contextual features that support or constrain children's development and learning. These contextual factors as well as social, cultural, and linguistic diversity are considered when facilitating meaningful learning experiences and individualizing intervention and instruction across contexts.

#### **Components:**

- 1.1. Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the impact that different theories and philosophies of early learning and development have on assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instruction decisions.
- 1.2. Candidates apply knowledge of normative sequences of early development, individual differences, and families' social, cultural, and linguistic diversity to support each child's development and learning across contexts.
- 1.3. Candidates apply knowledge of biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development and learning as they plan and implement early intervention and instruction.
- 1.4. Candidates demonstrate an understanding of characteristics, etiologies, and individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, their potential impact on children's early development and learning, and implications for assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention.

#### **Supporting Explanations for Each Component**

**Component 1.1:** Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the impact that different theories and philosophies of early learning and development have on assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instruction decisions

Candidates understand the theories and philosophies of development and learning that guide historical and current approaches to early childhood education and early childhood special

education services for all children, including those at risk for and with developmental delays and disabilities, ages birth through 8. They identify the contributions and limitations of different theories and philosophies as they apply to children who vary in age, characteristics, and family backgrounds. Further, candidates critically evaluate research and practices associated with these theories and philosophies. Candidates apply these perspectives to select and implement different preventive, ameliorative, and remedial approaches for supporting the development and learning of young children at risk for or with developmental delays and disabilities.

Candidates recognize how their roles may vary in focus, emphasis, or methods across ages birth through 8 in accordance with the assumptions and practices of specific developmental and learning theories and philosophies. For example, when working with infants and toddlers, candidates may focus more on the central importance of identifying and supporting family resources and needs from a family systems perspective. Conversely, when supporting preschool and early elementary children, candidates may employ a family systems perspective to identify classroom and school resources in response to family functions, characteristics, and processes. Similarly, candidates may apply behavioral theory when designing or supporting function-based assessment and intervention in the natural environment, irrespective of age.

Throughout the birth through 8 age range, candidates demonstrate their understanding of evidence-based practices associated with various theoretical approaches as they collaborate with families and other professionals to assess child and family strengths, needs, and priorities. Additionally, they apply their understanding of various evidence-based practices as they select and implement a broad array of responsive intervention and instructional practices with each child and family.

**Component 1.2:** Candidates apply knowledge of normative sequences of early development, individual differences, and families' social, cultural, and linguistic characteristics to support each child's development and learning across contexts.

Candidates articulate the sequence and milestones of normative sequences of development for each of the primary developmental domains, including cognitive, adaptive, communication, physical (gross and fine motor), play, and social-emotional. Candidates understand that abilities and skills interact with and are dependent on one another across domains. For example, candidates use their knowledge that social interaction supports young children's communication development to create opportunities for peer interactions. Candidates provide examples of how abilities and skills across developmental domains are integrated in the accomplishment of developmental growth in play, daily living, and personal characteristics such as positive approaches to learning, executive functioning, and resilience. Additionally, candidates recognize that young children may exhibit individual differences in development within a normative range, and that their own social and cultural background influences what they view as normative. Candidates consider normative ranges of development as they

interpret a child observation and identify how their own expectations influence their interpretation.

Candidates identify how the family's social, cultural, and linguistic characteristics may influence, as well as support, their child's development, including the timing and order of developmental milestones. For example, a family's cultural background may influence behaviors that families view as important in daily living as well as the activities and routines that they view as supportive of their children's development and learning. Candidates apply a strengths-based perspective and seek to understand families' social, cultural, and linguistic background when determining how they can establish respectful relationships with families and collaborate with families in all aspects of assessment, intervention, and instruction.

Candidates use information about typical development, individual differences, and the influence of social, cultural, and linguistic characteristics to observe and understand young children's abilities, skills, and behaviors, and to organize and/or select appropriate environments for intervention and instruction. This includes how they interpret, assess, and support children's development, behavior, engagement, interests, and learning within natural and inclusive environments. For example, candidates use their understanding of typical development to recognize deviations that require instructional adaptations or may indicate a need for developmental screening or referral. Additionally, candidates apply this knowledge as they identify family priorities and needs, and as they plan intervention and instruction across contexts that are both developmentally and individually appropriate.

Candidates understand that early development and learning of young children are both a focus of intervention and instruction as well as an important context for planning and delivering intervention and instruction to all young children and families. For example, candidates consider each child's current abilities and needs as they work with families and other professionals to set priorities for child outcomes and goals that will guide the focus of intervention and instruction. At the same time, these same abilities and needs inform the candidate's planning of developmentally and individually appropriate environments, materials, accommodations, and strategies.

**Component 1.3:** Candidates apply knowledge of biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development and learning as they plan and implement early intervention and instruction.

Candidates articulate the potential supportive and constraining influences of biological factors such as medical or genetic conditions, vision and hearing status, prematurity, health, and brain development on children's development across developmental domains, birth through age 8. They understand the potential effects that biological factors may have on young children's interactions, relationships, approaches to learning, and ability to access supportive learning opportunities. For example, candidates identify how children's interactions with their primary caregivers and with other children may be influenced by health differences associated with

prematurity. Candidates apply their understanding of how biological factors influence children's development to plan and implement assessment, intervention, and instruction.

Candidates understand that supportive or constraining characteristics in young children's environments (e.g., food resources, medical care, traumatic experiences, access to high quality early care and education) may affect children's growth, development, and learning. They articulate how these characteristics may also have indirect effects on children through their influences on children's interactions with primary caregivers and other children as well as their access to supportive learning opportunities. Candidates apply knowledge of factors in young children's social, economic, and physical environments as they plan and implement assessment, instruction, and intervention. For instance, when supporting infants and toddlers, they may identify family resources that address family food insufficiency or the mental health needs of primary caregiver(s). At the early elementary level, candidates consider children's access to environmental learning opportunities as they select and develop meaningful content curricula and learning activities.

**Component 1.4:** Candidates demonstrate an understanding of characteristics, etiologies, and individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, their potential impact on children's early development and learning, and implications for assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention.

Candidates describe the general characteristics of individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities as documented in law and policy as well as the implications of the ability ranges for intervention and instruction. They identify potential etiologies of developmental delays and disabilities, including genetic conditions, prenatal and postnatal circumstances, and early experiences. At the same time, candidates recognize that individual differences exist in how young children learn and develop such that individual children with a given delay or exceptionality may require differing types and/or intensity of intervention and instruction to facilitate their development and learning.

Candidates describe how the characteristics and etiologies of different exceptionalities may influence individual children's early development and learning, including the timing and order of developmental milestones, how children demonstrate emerging abilities and skills, and the types and intensity of developmental and instructional supports children require. Further, they recognize that the presence of a developmental delay or exceptionality is not the only determinant of the child's development or the types of intervention and instruction that they require. Candidates base decisions about interventions and supports upon an understanding of the whole child and their diverse developmental contexts, not just the developmental area(s) in which the child is showing a developmental delay or exceptionality. Such a holistic view of the child aids the candidate in selecting and developing appropriate assessments, collaborating

effectively with families and other professionals, and planning and implementing appropriate intervention and instruction.

## Standard 2: Partnering with Families

Candidates use their knowledge of family-centered practices and family systems theory to develop and maintain reciprocal partnerships with families. They apply family capacity-building practices as they support families to make informed decisions and advocate for their young children. They engage families in opportunities that build on their existing strengths, reflect current goals, and foster family competence and confidence to support their children's development and learning.

### Components:

- 2.1 Candidates apply their knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in families' lives to develop trusting, respectful, affirming, and culturally responsive partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information.
- 2.2 Candidates communicate clear, comprehensive, and objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments.
- 2.3 Candidates engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns; support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their young child's development and learning; and promote families' competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes.

### Supporting Explanations for Each Component

Component 2.1: Candidates apply their knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in families' lives to develop trusting, respectful, affirming, and culturally responsive partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information.

Candidates understand how to apply family-centered practices to work with young children and their families. They use relational practices to foster trusting partnerships with families, including acknowledging child and family strengths as well as nurturing positive interactions by listening actively, showing empathy, and respecting family perspectives. They use participatory practices to cultivate collaboration, including soliciting families' opinions and ideas, jointly sharing information for family choice making, and meaningfully involving families in identifying and obtaining the resources they need. Candidates seek a greater understanding of families'

diverse knowledge and expertise (e.g., funds of knowledge) about their children's strengths and needs. Candidates support families by acting in ways that build on family strengths and capacities in working with their young children. For example, for infants and toddlers, candidates and families jointly identify and implement individualized plans and supports around the family's priorities that promote the child's engagement, learning, development, and well-being (e.g., accessing natural environments and inclusive settings within the community). Together with families, candidates may identify strategies to facilitate the child's development.

Candidates understand family systems theory and recognize that biological, environmental, cultural, and societal factors influence families' structure, interactions, functions, and the family life cycle. They systematically gather information to develop a deeper understanding of families, their uniqueness, circumstances, and changing priorities. They consider factors such as social identities (e.g., culture, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, marital status, and age) as well as stressors such as trauma, mental health issues, and medical conditions, as they build relationships, exchange knowledge and information, and plan for individualized supports. For example, candidates ensure that all aspects of the classroom environment, including the activities and materials, reflect the diversity of the children and families represented in the program. They modify services/supports or use technology when appropriate based on the family's/child's needs (e.g., adjusting meeting times to accommodate families' work schedules). They also understand and respect the role of each family member as it relates to their preferred engagement in planning and implementing individualized supports. Candidates engage in self-reflection of their own culture, beliefs, and experiences, and evaluate the impact it has on their partnerships with families. They use the knowledge gained through reflection to inform interactions with families and respond in sensitive and culturally affirming ways. For example, they recognize both strengths and barriers, respect home cultures and languages, and honor parenting styles and family values (e.g., candidates provide information regarding child progress in home language).

**Component 2.2: Candidates communicate clear, comprehensive, and objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments.**

Candidates use effective communication strategies, such as attending, listening, and asking clarifying questions, to actively seek information from and about families. They articulate unbiased, comprehensive, and clear information from multiple perspectives and varied sources. Sources of information may include other professionals, policies, research, and professional literature. Candidates communicate in families' preferred modes, utilizing multiple formats, using technology when appropriate, and regularly checking for understanding (e.g., inserting intentional breaks during conversations, using interpreters) during formal and informal processes such as individualized education planning, home visits, and parent-teacher conferences. They prepare families to make informed decisions that are reflective of their priorities and concerns and support their young child's engagement, learning, development, and well-being. For example, they identify and connect families to resources (e.g., mental

health services, health care, adult education, English language instruction, and economic support/assistance), and may help with planning transitions from one setting to another.

Candidates recognize the critical need for equitable access to supports within natural and inclusive environments for all young children and families. They use a range of strategies to support families in advocating for access and equity in natural environments and inclusive settings and share information about all available services and community resources. They reflect on their own biases in order to understand the impact they have on their communication with families. They collaboratively problem solve and plan around the vision families have for their children and identify strategies to support families in accessing local community settings. They ensure multiple opportunities for families to be engaged in program activities and governance, including using strategies to seek family perspectives on program offerings. For example, they establish opportunities for families to connect with one another and respect families' decisions.

**Component 2.3:** Candidates engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns; support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their young child's development and learning; and promote families' competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes.

Candidates recognize family engagement as essential in supporting and strengthening family capacity and well-being to promote child development and learning and in the provision of high quality, effective supports for young children and their families. They promote families as equal team members using participatory practices such as acknowledging their expertise and supporting them in identifying strengths, priorities, and concerns.

Candidates ensure multiple opportunities for active family collaboration in decision-making during assessment, planning, implementation, and transition processes. During assessment, they work in partnership with families to exchange knowledge, information, and expertise and to evaluate and synthesize information about the child's strengths and needs. They collaboratively create outcomes/goals, develop implementation plans, and identify the formal and informal supports and services necessary to achieve the outcomes/goals. They use evidence-based practices that are rooted within a culturally responsive framework to select and adapt learning strategies appropriate to each family. Candidates remain non-judgmental in their interactions and offer support aligned with identified strengths, priorities, and needs of children and families.

Candidates support families in taking actions that meet their own and their child's needs. They frequently communicate and reflect with families to evaluate, monitor, and modify services, supports, and resources. They use a range of intervention and instructional strategies to promote families' competence and confidence (e.g., video, coaching, consultation, modeling, assistive technology). They employ adult learning strategies when partnering with families

across environments, activities, and programs. Candidates ensure that information and knowledge shared are understandable, immediately useful, and relevant to the family and build on prior knowledge. In preparation for and during transitions, they seek family input and provide unbiased information on a range of available supports, services, and resources (e.g., home, community, and/or school settings). They support families in evaluating transition options and making decisions to meet identified needs and priorities.

### Standard 3: Collaboration and Teaming

Candidates apply models, skills, and processes of teaming when collaborating and communicating with families and professionals, using culturally and linguistically responsive and affirming practices. In partnership with families and other professionals, candidates develop and implement individualized plans and successful transitions that occur across the age span. Candidates use a variety of collaborative strategies while working with and supporting other adults.

#### Components:

- 3.1 Candidates apply teaming models, skills, and processes, including appropriate uses of technology, when collaborating and communicating with families; professionals representing multiple disciplines, skills, expertise, and roles; and community partners and agencies.
- 3.2 Candidates use a variety of collaborative strategies when working with other adults that are evidence-based, appropriate to the task, culturally and linguistically responsive, and take into consideration the environment and service delivery approach.
- 3.3 Candidates partner with families and other professionals to develop individualized plans and support the various transitions that occur for the young child and their family throughout the birth through 8 age span.

#### Supporting Explanations for Each Component

Component 3.1: Candidates apply teaming models, skills, and processes, including appropriate uses of technology, when collaborating and communicating with families; professionals representing multiple disciplines, skills, expertise, and roles; and community partners and agencies.

Candidates are cognizant of the roles and responsibilities of multiple disciplines (e.g., occupational and physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, orientation and mobility specialists) and family members on the team, and work and interact with them collaboratively in various team processes. Candidates apply appropriate models of interprofessional teaming such as primary service provision, transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and



others to meet the needs of young children and their families and professionals working with them. Candidates apply teaming processes and skills in activities such as team assessment, joint goal/outcome development, and planning and implementation of services. Candidates demonstrate teaming skills and processes such as problem-solving, conflict resolution, joint decision-making, role release, group facilitation, and communication. Candidates show respect for all members of the team who represent various roles, expertise, and skill levels by being open to multiple perspectives. Team members support each other's professional growth as they learn from one another.

Candidates participate in and, in some instances, lead team meetings to support the developmental and academic content outcomes and goals of young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families (i.e., in the U.S., this would include IFSP, or Individualized Family Service Plan, and IEP, or Individualized Education Program, meetings, both initial, semi-annual, and annual).

Candidates are familiar with community-based services and resources and know how to access them for young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. These services and resources meet family-identified child and family needs. Examples of services and resources include public education agencies, private therapy, private evaluation services, private schools, early education and care, food banks, social services, and developmental pediatricians.

Candidates, when communicating with families and other team members, communicate clearly and without jargon to effectively explain children's strengths and needs. Examples include discussing a child's progress in a team meeting, during a home visit, or with an early childhood educator to support a child's inclusion in their classroom and across environments.

Candidates select and use appropriate technology platforms such as learning management and virtual communication systems as appropriate for effective teaming. Family preferences and access are considered to facilitate full participation of all team members.

**Component 3.2:** Candidates use a variety of collaborative strategies when working with other adults that are evidence-based, appropriate to the task, culturally and linguistically responsive, and take into consideration the environment and service delivery approach.

Candidates use adult learning strategies that are appropriate to the learning preferences and existing knowledge of other adults on the team (e.g., family members, professionals, paraprofessionals) to promote and sustain collaborative partnerships. Candidates support other adults in working with young children with developmental delays and disabilities. For example, a candidate might coach a paraprofessional to implement an intervention strategy during large group time in the classroom or coach a family member in embedding strategies into mealtime routines. Candidates, as appropriate, use the role release approach to implement interventions

recommended and demonstrated by another discipline as a part of their ongoing interactions with young children. For example, candidates provide proper positioning, utilize adaptive equipment, and facilitates ambulation for children with physical disabilities as recommended by physical and occupational therapists.

Candidates engage in collaborative activities such as coaching, consultation, and co-teaching with other adults, including related service personnel, general educators, paraprofessionals, family members, service coordinators, and medical professionals. Coaching could be used to support families during home visits; consultation could be used to support teachers of preschoolers in inclusive early childhood programs; and co-teaching could be used to partner with general education teachers to provide support to early elementary students (K through grade 3) in inclusive classrooms.

Candidates use a variety of strategies to increase the effectiveness of meetings with various professionals and family members, depending on the situation and environment, the needs of families and professionals, and the service delivery approach. For example, using a triadic strategy while working directly with a family member and child would be appropriate in a home or school environment, whereas using active listening and problem-solving skills would be effective in a team meeting at an office or school as well as with families.

Candidates use strategies for interacting and sharing knowledge and expertise with families and other professionals. Candidates learn from families and other professionals interacting in ways that are respectful, supportive, capacity enhancing, and culturally and linguistically responsive. Candidates access supports to increase families' understanding and engagement in collaborative activities such as using interpreters, cultural liaisons, and family support networks.

**Component 3.3: Candidates partner with families and other professionals to develop individualized plans and support various transitions that occur for the young child and their family throughout the birth through 8 age span.**

Candidates partner with families and other professionals to develop and implement individualized plans for each child. They share information about a variety of local services and a range of learning environments with family members prior to transitions to help families become informed of their options and next steps in the transition process. In collaboration with families and professionals, candidates explore and evaluate placement option(s) for young children as they transition from one environment to another. Candidates support families so that they have the information they need to be their child's own best advocate.

Candidates use a variety of planned and timely strategies to support children and families before, during, and after transitions according to their needs, priorities, and values. Candidates, partnering with families and other professionals, support transitions by helping to develop individualized transition plans to provide successful preparation, adjustment, and positive outcomes for children and families. Examples include supporting a family's observation of a

new program and debriefing afterwards, holding a transition meeting where the goals of the child and family are shared between sending and receiving programs, preparing the child for transition by practicing some of the routines of the next environment before the transition, facilitating the child visiting the new program, and/or providing information to the family as they exit the current program and enter the new program.

## Standard 4: Assessment Processes

Candidates know and understand the purposes of assessment in relation to ethical and legal considerations. Candidates choose developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program. Using evidence-based practices, candidates develop or select as well as administer informal measures, and select and administer formal measures in partnership with families and other professionals. They analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals for eligibility determination, outcome/goal development, planning instruction and intervention, monitoring progress, and reporting.

### Components:

- 4.1 Candidates understand the purposes of formal and informal assessment, including ethical and legal considerations, and use this information to choose developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, valid, reliable tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program.
- 4.2 Candidates develop and administer informal assessments and/or select and use valid, reliable formal assessments using evidence-based practices, including technology, in partnership with families and other professionals.
- 4.3 Candidates analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals.
- 4.4 Candidates, in collaboration with families and other team members, use assessment data to determine eligibility, develop child and family-based outcomes/goals, plan for interventions and instruction, and monitor progress to determine efficacy of programming.

### Supporting Explanations for Each Component

Component 4.1: Candidates understand the purposes of formal and informal assessment, including ethical and legal considerations, and use this information to choose developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, valid, reliable tools

and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program.

Candidates understand the primary purposes for the assessment process, including screening, determination of eligibility, program planning, on-going instructional monitoring, child progress monitoring, and evaluation. Candidates understand that commercially developed assessment tools are developed for the specific purposes listed above. They understand that assessment tools must be used in accordance with the publisher's guidance and for its intended purposes. For example, screening tools should not be used for program evaluation and standardized formal tests should not be used for program planning.

Candidates understand how comprehensive screening methods (such as "Child Find" in the U.S.) are used systemically to identify young children who may need additional evaluation. Candidates understand that when assessing for eligibility determination, multiple tools and methods should be used by an assessment team that includes multiple professionals and the child's family.

Candidates know federal, provincial, and state regulations related to early childhood special education assessment, birth through age 8, and understand how assessment practices may differ across services for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and early elementary students. They understand rules for eligibility determination for early intervention and early childhood special education services.

Candidates recognize the potential for bias and plan to limit the opportunity for bias in all stages of assessment. Candidates understand that biased results can occur if standardized assessment tools are not chosen with the child in mind. For example, candidates understand that bias may occur when using a standardized tool with a norm group that does not include representation of the child being assessed, when members of the assessment team do not meet the required training and experience qualifications for the tool, when assessment items that have been translated have inaccuracies, or when items used include examples that do not align with the child's experience (e.g., in a vocabulary assessment, a photo of a diving board is used, yet the child has never been to a swimming pool). In addition, candidates understand that many standardized assessment instruments rely on children's use of either verbal or motor behaviors (e.g., pointing) to indicate their response to items when the intention is to measure another domain such as cognition, receptive language, or even social-emotional development. For example, if an item requires a child to stack a certain number of blocks for a cognitive task and the child has motor difficulties, the candidate understands that the item likely will not accurately reflect the child's cognition.

Candidates understand the unique challenges that occur when assessing infants, toddlers, and young children. For example, it is important to assess infants when they are in an alert state. Candidates gather assessment information from families through formal and informal measures and methods because they understand that families are known to be valid and reliable when providing information about their children. Because it can be difficult to gather valid and

reliable assessment results with some infants and toddlers, working together with the team and guided by federal, provincial, and state regulations, the candidate understands the process and use of informed clinical opinion in determining eligibility for early intervention services.

Candidates use informal strategies such as naturalistic observation and embed assessment strategies in the curriculum and in daily routines at school and in the home to facilitate authentic assessment of infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and children in the early elementary grades (K through 3). Candidates recognize that curriculum-based measures and observation-based methods yield critical information needed for program planning and ongoing monitoring to make instructional based decisions.

**Component 4.2:** Candidates develop and administer informal assessments and/or select and use valid, reliable formal assessments using evidence-based practices, including technology, in partnership with families and other professionals.

Candidates use a variety of assessment tools, including formative and summative strategies that incorporate technology. They understand the strengths, limitations, validity, and reliability of different assessment methods and tools for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and children in the early elementary grades (K through 3). Candidates administer formal and informal assessments. Candidates understand the role of specialized assessment that may be performed by related service providers or other team members and know how to interpret results. Candidates understand how specialized assessment contributes to a holistic view of the child.

Candidates understand basic principles of psychometrics and apply these principles to critically evaluate formal and informal assessment instruments and methods. They define test reliability and validity and can identify subtypes of reliability and validity. They develop informal measures that are valid relative to the content and reliable in that they provide consistent results.

Candidates plan and use assessments that are individualized, developmentally appropriate, and culturally and linguistically appropriate for the child and family. When appropriate, cultural mediators and/or interpreters are included on the assessment team to ensure assessments are provided in ways that are responsive to the specific needs of dual language learners and their families. Candidates integrate environmental assessment processes across settings as appropriate for the child and family.

Candidates understand and use play as a context for assessment, as appropriate. Candidates participate in team-based assessments that are comprehensive, covering all domains of child development, consider relevant child medical issues, and family characteristics, including parenting skills, attitudes, and their understanding of their child's developmental strengths and challenges. Candidates apply play-based methods as appropriate alongside other informal assessments such as questioning, checking for understanding, and more formal assessments to cover academic and developmental content areas.

**Component 4.3:** Candidates analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals.

Candidates use a strengths-based approach in all facets of the assessment process. That is, they are able to identify the child and family strengths and build upon them. Candidates understand that the most important consideration in the assessment of a young child is the interrelationship between the child and their family. Candidates include family members and professionals in the assessment process, know the benefits of shared analysis with family members and other professionals, and, when sharing assessment results, respect confidentiality. Candidates are respectful of families and demonstrate flexibility in supporting them to participate at their level of preference.

Candidates demonstrate essential knowledge and core skills in team building and in communicating with families. They use effective communication strategies with families to ensure assessment results (e.g., eligibility determination, program planning, and progress monitoring) are conveyed in ways that facilitate families' understanding. Candidates demonstrate respect for families' knowledge, opinions, and concerns. They use communication skills during interviews and conferences with families, including active listening, furthering responses, paraphrasing, demonstrating non-judgmental attitudes, responding to affect, questioning, and summarizing to ensure that the family member's primary views have been heard accurately during the assessment process. Candidates write about, summarize, and display assessment data in a family-friendly way, without jargon. When specialized assessment results use technical terms, candidates explain those terms to family members. When asked questions about a child's assessment results by a family member or other professional, the candidate responds accurately using positive language and referring the individual to completed assessment documents.

Candidates know about the similarities and differences in approaches and assessment techniques used in early intervention, preschools, and school systems to assist with keeping families informed and to help them with transitions as children progress from program to program.

**Component 4.4:** Candidates, in collaboration with families and other team members, use assessment data to determine eligibility, develop child and family-based outcomes/goals, plan for interventions and instruction, and monitor progress to determine efficacy of programming.

Candidates understand how formal and informal assessment data are reviewed and analyzed to determine eligibility for special education services. Candidates understand how limitations of formal and informal assessments (e.g., biases, test constructs), contextual factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, family structure, previous intervention/instruction), and child characteristics may influence accurate interpretation of assessment results. Candidates understand eligibility rules for infants, toddlers, and young children to receive early

intervention or special education services. They observe and participate in team meetings, such as IEP and IFSP meetings, in which eligibility decisions are made in collaboration with families and other professionals.

Interviews, observations, and other authentic strategies (such as work samples, video recordings) are used to provide holistic, functional information on children's developmental strengths and challenges. Multiple settings (e.g., home, childcare, playground, community library) and multiple sources (e.g., family members, other caregivers) are utilized when collecting authentic assessment data. With a team that includes professionals representing multiple disciplines and families, candidates integrate formal, informal, and authentic assessment data in the development of child and family-based outcomes/goals and individualized plans. Candidates work with the team to ensure that outcomes, goals, and objectives are relevant, functional, and of high priority for the individual infant, toddler, or young child and their family.

Candidates use formative assessment (e.g., frequency, percentage, or rate data) to make data-based intervention and instructional decisions. Ongoing informal assessment (such as observations in the natural environment) is used by the candidate, together with other team members, to adapt and enhance instruction/intervention. Candidates monitor intervention/instructional effectiveness through ongoing formative child, family, and setting assessments that include formal, informal, and authentic techniques (such as observations of routines at home, school, or other settings; interviews with family members, childcare providers, and others). Candidates use an assessment-instruction cycle to collect ongoing data in authentic contexts, interpret individual progress based on the data, and make data-based instructional decisions regarding instructional strategies or intensity of instruction.

## Standard 5: Application of Curriculum Frameworks in the Planning and Facilitation of Meaningful Learning Experiences

Candidates collaborate with families and professionals to use an evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive early childhood curriculum addressing developmental and content domains. Candidates use curriculum frameworks to create and support universally designed, high quality learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments that provide each child and family with equitable access and opportunities for learning and growth.

### Components:

- 5.1 Candidates collaborate with families and other professionals in identifying an evidence-based curriculum addressing developmental and content domains to design and facilitate meaningful and culturally responsive learning experiences that support the unique abilities and needs of all children and families.

- 5.2 Candidates use their knowledge of early childhood curriculum frameworks, developmental and academic content knowledge, and related pedagogy to plan and ensure equitable access to universally designed, developmentally appropriate, and challenging learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments.

### Supporting Explanations for Each Component

**Component 5.1:** Candidates collaborate with families and other professionals in identifying an evidence-based curriculum addressing developmental and content domains to design and facilitate meaningful and culturally responsive learning experiences that support the unique abilities and needs of all children and families.

Candidates use the best available evidence as well as the wisdom and experience of the field to identify and evaluate early childhood curriculum. Candidates use their knowledge of curriculum content resources that address developmental (e.g., language and communication, social-emotional, cognition, play, and physical) and academic content domains (e.g., literacy, math, science, arts) as well as pedagogical knowledge as they collaborate in the identification of appropriate curricula. Candidates acknowledge that families and other professionals are integral members of the educational team and their contributions positively influence the quality of programming for young children. Candidates recognize the importance of working with a team as they identify and implement evidence-based early childhood curriculum. Together with the team, candidates are able to assess early childhood curricula to determine the degree to which they reflect a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence across developmental and academic content domains; they are culturally responsive and align with learning expectations of the local context, including state early learning standards and community expectations. Furthermore, as a part of the team, candidates are able to engage in developing and individualizing plans for children to increase equitable access to and participation in the general early childhood curriculum as well as differentiate challenging content to address the full range of abilities.

Candidates clearly communicate developmental and educational expectations with families and children. Candidates ensure that families have opportunities to share their knowledge about their children's strengths and areas for growth, contribute to planning, and propose ideas for individualizing plans that promote their children's development and learning as they participate in the early childhood curriculum and in the varied contexts of home and community.

Candidates recognize that culture plays a central role in their collaboration with families and in children's learning. Candidates make deliberate efforts to understand the families' developmental and educational expectations for their children and children's behavior within their cultural identity. Candidates seek to understand and are open to changing their own mindset about each family's and child's strengths and needs in the context of their culture. Candidates acknowledge the families' and children's cultural background and respond to them in ways that honor and respect their cultural values. In being culturally responsive, candidates provide equitable access to learning opportunities for all families and children from all cultures



and backgrounds. Candidates are proactive in embedding children's cultural references in all aspects of the learning environment (e.g., interactions, instruction, family routines, home, community outings, classroom activities and materials).

Component 5.2: Candidates use their knowledge of early childhood curriculum frameworks, developmental and academic content knowledge, and related pedagogy to plan and ensure equitable access to universally designed, developmentally appropriate, and challenging learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments.

Candidates use the best available evidence as well as the wisdom and experience of the field to identify, create, evaluate, and apply curriculum frameworks such as content or developmental curricula and state or national learning standards. Candidates apply knowledge of early childhood curriculum frameworks as a guide to make decisions about what, when, and how to promote all children's learning. Candidates understand that foundational to this decision process is creating learning experiences across developmental (e.g., language and communication, social-emotional, cognition, play, and physical) and academic (e.g., literacy, math, science, arts) domains that challenge children to achieve at a level just beyond their current mastery, while also having opportunities to practice newly acquired skills. To create such learning experiences, candidates possess a strong foundation in developmental and academic content knowledge as well as related pedagogical knowledge.

Candidates understand that young children come with a wide range of abilities, backgrounds, and family and community contexts. While this diversity brings richness to the work, ensuring all children's needs are effectively met requires that candidates engage in thoughtful, intentional planning in collaboration with families and other adults in the child's life. Candidates apply the principles of universal design for learning to ensure that learning experiences and environments are designed to allow for access and engagement to the greatest extent possible without need for adaptation. Specifically, candidates adhere to universal design for learning principles by incorporating a variety of ways for children to gain access to the curriculum content, offer multiple methods to recruit children's active engagement, and include a range of formats for children to respond and demonstrate what they know and have learned.

Whether working with infants, toddlers, preschoolers or children in the early elementary grades (K through 3), candidates plan and create universally designed, challenging learning experiences that promote access, engagement, and learning across developmental and academic content domains. In infancy, for example, this could be supporting caregivers as they engage in rich and varied forms of communication/literacy development, including singing, talking, sharing books, making funny faces, using gestures, and playing simple games such as peek-a-boo. For toddlers, this could be creating a variety of opportunities for children to engage in everyday mathematics (e.g., basic ideas about quantity, size, shape, and simple patterns). For preschoolers, for example, opportunities could be provided to conduct their own science experiments such as exploring whether a ball rolls faster down a steeper incline. In the early elementary grades, the candidate might address important social competence content such as assisting children to

work with their peers in cooperative groups. Thus, as candidates engage in a variety of teacher planned activities in multiple contexts, they have the opportunity to assume different roles to accomplish tasks, solve problems, and at times settle disputes.

## Standard 6: Using Responsive and Reciprocal Interactions, Interventions, and Instruction

Candidates plan and implement intentional, systematic, evidence-based, responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction to support all children's learning and development across all developmental and content domains in partnership with families and other professionals. Candidates facilitate equitable access and participation for all children and families within natural and inclusive environments through culturally responsive and affirming practices and relationships. Candidates use data-based decision-making to plan for, adapt, and improve interactions, interventions, and instruction to ensure fidelity of implementation.

### Components:

- 6.1 Candidates, in partnership with families, identify systematic, responsive, and intentional evidence-based practices and use such practices with fidelity to support young children's learning and development across all developmental and academic content domains.
- 6.2 Candidates engage in reciprocal partnerships with families and other professionals to facilitate responsive adult-child interactions, interventions, and instruction in support of child learning and development.
- 6.3 Candidates engage in ongoing planning and use flexible and embedded instructional and environmental arrangements and appropriate materials to support the use of interactions, interventions, and instruction addressing developmental and academic content domains, which are adapted to meet the needs of each and every child and their family.
- 6.4 Candidates promote young children's social and emotional competence and communication, and proactively plan and implement function-based interventions to prevent and address challenging behaviors.
- 6.5 Candidates identify and create multiple opportunities for young children to develop and learn play skills and engage in meaningful play experiences independently and with others across contexts.
- 6.6 Candidates use responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction with sufficient intensity and types of support across activities, routines, and environments to promote child learning and development and facilitate access, participation, and engagement in natural environments and inclusive settings.

- 6.7 Candidates plan for, adapt, and improve approaches to interactions, interventions, and instruction based on multiple sources of data across a range of natural environments and inclusive settings.

### Supporting Explanations for Each Component

Component 6.1: Candidates, in partnership with families, identify systematic, responsive, and intentional evidence-based practices and use such practices with fidelity to support young children’s learning and development across all developmental and academic content domains.

Across all age levels, candidates use effective interactions, interventions, and instructional practices that result in efficient learning of functional and socially valid skills. Effective interactions, interventions, and instructional practices are evidence-based and systematic. Candidates systematically and intentionally identify what to teach, when to teach, and how to evaluate the effects of teaching. They determine whether certain procedures are appropriate given the particular needs of the children and families with whom they are working. Further, candidates select evidence-based practices that are developmentally appropriate and are likely to have the highest expected leverage and impact on outcomes.

A considerable amount of planning is required to effectively implement systematic interactions, interventions, and instruction with fidelity. Candidates, together with other members of the team including the family, intentionally identify each child's strengths, preferences, and interests, and plan instruction to ensure the child is engaged and to maximize learning. Further, candidates plan, monitor, and intentionally use interactions, interventions, and instruction with fidelity to teach functional and socially valid skills and to promote child engagement and learning. Candidates implement the appropriate frequency, intensity, and duration of interactions, interventions, and instruction given the child’s strengths, needs, and phase of learning (i.e., acquisition, fluency, generalization, and maintenance). Candidates intentionally and proactively support the child’s learning and development across environments.

Component 6.2: Candidates engage in reciprocal partnerships with families and other professionals to facilitate responsive adult-child interactions, interventions, and instruction in support of child learning and development.

Candidates use effective collaborative behaviors (e.g., sharing ideas, active listening, questioning, problem-solving) and focus on the unique needs of adult learners as they engage in reciprocal partnerships with adults centered on positive outcomes for young children at risk for and with developmental delays and disabilities. Candidates acknowledge that each child and family is different and provide adults with relevant and immediately useful information that builds upon what they already know. Candidates use effective adult learning practices that

involve active, hands-on experiences paired with real-time practice, positive reinforcement, and individualized and performance-based feedback and support.

Candidates are responsive to the individual and unique needs of each child, family, and context. Therefore, candidates consider the previous knowledge and experiences of families and other professionals (e.g., related service providers, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators) and ensure that the interactions, interventions, and instruction they identify and facilitate are built upon and around the child and family's unique set of resources, priorities, strengths, and concerns. They engage in triadic and reciprocal partnerships with other adults as they facilitate responsive adult-child interactions, model naturalistic interventions, and actively demonstrate evidence-based instructional practices that promote child learning and development. Candidates understand how adult learning strategies apply to their work in a variety of roles (e.g., transdisciplinary team member, consultant, advocate, coach) and they employ those strategies consistently, across a wide range of natural and inclusive environments.

**Component 6.3:** Candidates engage in ongoing planning and use flexible and embedded instructional and environmental arrangements and appropriate materials to support the use of interactions, interventions, and instruction addressing developmental and academic content domains, which are adapted to meet the needs of each and every child and their family.

Candidates select evidence-based practices related to improvements in socially valid outcomes for young children and their families. Candidates are responsive to the individual and unique needs of each child, family, and context. They observe, interpret, and plan instruction that scaffolds the child's learning and engagement across the day; expands the child's communication, cognitive, social, and emotional repertoire; facilitates more complex play skills; and supports the child's increasing independence. They understand that although different procedures might be equally effective, one might result in more efficient learning. Thus, candidates intentionally consider efficiency of learning when planning and selecting instructional practices.

Candidates also thoroughly consider each aspect of the physical, social, and temporal environment when planning instruction to optimize outcomes and efficient learning. Each aspect influences the extent to which a young child will learn. Candidates plan for and provide the level of support and adaptations needed for the child to access, participate, and learn within and across activities, transitions, and routines. This includes engaging with families in reflecting on their competence and confidence in supporting their child's learning and development. The physical space is designed to support child independence and engagement. The social environment is designed to support ongoing social interactions, increasingly complex social play, and friendships. For example, children with stronger language and social skills might be encouraged to sit next to children who are learning language skills during mealtimes to support observational learning. The temporal environment is designed to maximize engagement and ensure children are likely to participate. For example, outdoor play time

where children are active and more likely to engage in vigorous exercise might occur right before small groups when children are expected to be engaged and attentive.

Candidates establish and support environments in which diversity is honored, use flexible instructional practices that support equitable access and participation for all children, and closely monitor child progress to identify and reflect on how to remedy inequities. Candidates identify and use relevant and developmentally appropriate materials that support children's learning and development. Materials that are directly relevant to the learning goals and outcomes are used. For example, when providing early intervention in a home, materials that are already in the home and relevant to the specific interaction or routine and the child's goals are used. Likewise, classroom materials are intentionally selected based on the children's preferences, interests, strengths, and learning needs, and are systematically rotated to support engagement. In group settings, candidates capitalize on observational learning by regularly using flexible groupings (e.g., dyads, small-group instruction) and embedding instructive feedback opportunities.

Component 6.4: Candidates promote young children's social and emotional competence and communication, and proactively plan and implement function-based interventions to prevent and address challenging behaviors.

Candidates partner with family members, other caregivers, and professionals to strategically promote social and emotional competence and communication to help children socially connect and engage with peers and adults across various environments. They recognize the importance of social engagement and emotional wellness for overall child growth across developmental and content area domains as well as for positive family outcomes. Throughout their work with children and families, candidates are respectful and responsive to all aspects of diversity and actively nurture reciprocal interactions and positive relationships.

Candidates plan, identify, and support proactive and preventive social environments, routines, and activities with attention to aspects such as emotional wellness, mental health, self-regulation, and prosocial behaviors. Candidates explicitly teach, reinforce, and promote social and communication skills using evidence-based interactions, interventions, and instruction with fidelity. Where applicable, candidates support young children's use of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and other assistive technology (AT) to support their access and engagement. They also coach other adults to employ evidence-based practices and responsive interactions across naturally occurring routines and activities. For example, in early intervention contexts, candidates enhance family and caregiver capacity to promote meaningful, positive outcomes for their children through a coaching model of service delivery. Through coaching, candidates support families and caregivers to effectively enact strategies that increase functional social engagement by helping them to embed strategies into routines and activities across natural and inclusive settings. In classroom settings, candidates coach other adults and children to embed evidence-based social communication practices into classroom routines and activities. In all settings, candidates provide specific and meaningful

feedback to assist children, families, other caregivers, and professionals to engage in ongoing self-reflection and assessment.

When challenging behavior occurs, candidates conduct functional assessments to systematically identify the behavior, events that precede such behavior (antecedents), and events that can maintain such behavior (consequences). Using functional behavior assessment data, candidates identify, plan, implement, and support others to implement function-based prevention, promotion, and intervention strategies with fidelity to promote social-emotional growth for all children across a range of settings. In supporting others, candidates help in building skills that will enhance social-emotional competence, communication skills, and overall connectivity and engagement of children and families in natural and inclusive environments to make challenging behaviors ineffective and inefficient.

Where applicable, candidates utilize multi-tiered systems of support as a framework for efforts to improve social-emotional, communication, and behavior outcomes for young children and families. Such frameworks assist candidates to reduce the use of inappropriate discipline practices and promote family engagement in the intervention process. Further, candidates' application of multi-tiered systems of support can promote the use of data for decision-making, integrate early childhood and infant mental health consultation, and foster quality, meaningful inclusion for all children and families.

**Component 6.5: Candidates identify and create multiple opportunities for young children to develop and learn play skills and engage in meaningful play experiences independently and with others across contexts.**

Candidates recognize play as a critical developmental ability that contributes to the learning of young children as well as a context within which development occurs. Candidates design and support the temporal, physical, and social environment to ensure that children have sufficient periods of time to engage in child-directed, meaningful play. Candidates identify, create, and support multiple opportunities for children to engage in sustained play of increasing complexity with the needed supports for success, including promoting meaningful interactions across peers, adults, and contexts throughout the age range of birth through 8 years. They work collaboratively with families, caregivers, and other professionals to identify and enhance environments to support play and play development.

Candidates use effective practices to facilitate children's increasingly complex play with objects and others. Candidates assess, teach, and monitor children's social and object play skills and coach other adults (i.e., family members, caregivers, and other professionals) to do so. Candidates identify opportunities to focus on teaching children to engage with objects with increasing sophistication moving from sensorimotor and functional use of objects to symbolic play. Likewise, candidates identify social play goals that support children in learning to play independently, then near peers (i.e., parallel play), and eventually cooperatively with peers. Play goals should be identified with families and based on the child's current strengths,

interests, and preferences. Play goals should facilitate the child's full participation and engagement in daily routines and natural environments. Effective play instruction should use evidence-based practices and focus on teaching generalized play skills across people, objects, and settings.

Candidates also recognize that developmentally appropriate play skills may increase learning opportunities for young children. Candidates use play as a context for embedding interactions, interventions, and instruction. Candidates also use play as a context to provide authentic opportunities to access additional and previously unavailable interactions with materials, peers, family members, and other individuals in the child's and family's lives.

**Component 6.6:** Candidates use responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction with sufficient intensity and types of support across activities, routines, and environments to promote child learning and development and facilitate access, participation, and engagement in natural environments and inclusive settings.

Candidates recognize that the strategic provision of a continuum of responsive interactions, interventions, and instructional strategies is the foundation for promoting developmental growth across developmental and academic content domains as well as meaningful inclusion and positive family outcomes. Candidates partner with other adults to ensure access, participation, and engagement by individualizing application of strategies to meet the needs of each child and family. They promote a wide array of activities, environments, and interactions for children to engage with adults, peers, and materials in meaningful ways. They identify and implement effective, contextually relevant, and individualized strategies, intervention, adaptations, and modifications that promote attainment of rigorous developmental and content learning standards. Further, candidates strategically identify, plan, and implement individualized interactions, interventions, and instruction across, and embedded within, environments, routines, and activities, and provide multiple modalities of engagement to ensure access and participation.

Candidates utilize comprehensive, authentic, and ecological assessment data to inform themselves of each child's strengths, preferences, needs, and interests to enhance their ability to promote active engagement in learning and participation in routines and activities. Candidates apply data-driven, responsive support of sufficient intensity across activities, routines, and environments to promote learning and development as well as meaningful inclusion by ensuring each child and family can function effectively as integral members of communities. Candidates also identify and ensure application of appropriate resources that respond to individual differences, including assistive and other forms of technology, to increase, maintain, and/or improve capabilities of young children and their families to further ensure access, participation, and engagement across settings.

In early intervention contexts, candidates promote positive and responsive parent-child and other adult-child relationships recognizing the importance of nurturing, responsive

relationships to overall development. They utilize evidence-based coaching practices to assist families and other adults to employ naturalistic instruction that embeds strategies in the context of ongoing, natural activities and routines. Candidates coach and assist other adults in a child's life to employ sensitive and responsive ways to interact with the child that promotes positive peer and adult-child relationships and, in turn, positive outcomes for children and families.

**Component 6.7:** Candidates plan for, adapt, and improve approaches to interactions, interventions, and instruction based on multiple sources of data across a range of natural environments and inclusive settings.

Candidates use knowledge of evidence-based practices and multiple sources of data to systematically plan for and modify interactions, interventions, and instruction designed to promote specific child and family outcomes. They use a data-driven decision cycle (i.e., plan, implement, assess, and revise) to (a) delineate the strengths, needs, preferences, and assets of children and families, (b) develop individualized goals, (c) select and implement meaningful and effective interactions, interventions, and instruction, and (d) make necessary adaptations to goals and implementation. Candidates identify, evaluate, create, and apply formal and informal measures that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and technically sound, and ensure child and family data are collected from a range of natural and inclusive settings.

Candidates work collaboratively with the child's team, including the family, to administer, interpret, and use data from multiple, authentic assessments appropriate for the individual needs of young children and their families. Candidates collaborate with the team to continuously monitor, evaluate, and document the learning, growth, and development of children and families to ensure adequate progress toward the attainment of short-term and long-term goals. Candidates use various kinds of appropriate technology for tasks such as test administration, testing accommodations, data storage, creating digital documents and logs, charting and graphing results for ongoing assessment, and progress monitoring.

Working collaboratively with families, caregivers, and other professionals, candidates effectively utilize multiple sources of data to evaluate, revise, and improve interactions, interventions, and instruction. They regularly interpret and reflect upon progress monitoring data and make necessary adjustments and adaptations to meet the needs and build upon the strengths of the young children and families with whom they are working. Candidates systematically document all aspects of the data-driven decision cycle and consistently communicate child progress and adjustments to planned interactions, interventions, and instruction with all members of the interdisciplinary team, including the family.



## Standard 7: Professionalism and Ethical Practice

Candidates identify and engage with the profession of early intervention and early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) by exhibiting skills in reflective practice, advocacy, and leadership while adhering to ethical and legal guidelines. Evidence-based and recommended practices are promoted and used by candidates.

### Components:

- 7.1 Candidates engage with the profession of EI/ECSE by participating in local, regional, national, and/or international activities and professional organizations.
- 7.2 Candidates engage in ongoing reflective practice and access evidence-based information to improve their own practices.
- 7.3 Candidates exhibit leadership skills in advocating for improved outcomes for young children, families, and the profession, including the promotion of and use of evidence-based practices and decision-making.
- 7.4 Candidates practice within ethical and legal policies and procedures.

### Supporting Explanations for Each Component

**Component 7.1: Candidates engage with the profession of EI/ECSE by participating in local, regional, national, and/or international activities and professional organizations.**

Candidates understand the nature of the profession of EI/ECSE and stay abreast of current issues as they arise (e.g., poverty, trauma, substance abuse, other issues). They apply their knowledge and skills of the profession to improve outcomes for all children and their families. Candidates engage in leadership and service opportunities that support positive outcomes for children and families. They demonstrate skilled expertise, utilize the expertise of others, and access professional resources that support positive outcomes for young children, families, and the profession.

Candidates understand the mission of professional organizations (e.g., CEC, DEC, NAEYC) and associate with them as a professional home. They engage in professional activities provided by professional organizations by accessing materials and resources (e.g., professional organization journals, webinars) to continuously improve their knowledge, expertise, and practice.

Candidates engage in continuous collaborative learning to develop skills and inform practice. They participate in learning communities in various ways (e.g., conferences, communities of practice) with other early childhood educators and professionals from other specialties, disciplines, and professions.

Candidates know and use national and state academic and personnel standards and recommended practices developed through professional organizations for planning and improving targeted services, supports, and outcomes for young children and their families.

**Component 7.2: Candidates engage in ongoing reflective practice and access evidence-based information to improve their own practices.**

Candidates participate in evidence-based activities and training to learn about and implement evidence-based practice and services for children and families to meet targeted outcomes. Candidates systematically reflect on their own practices and the practices of others. They reflect on their demonstration of professional personnel standards as well as the application of current research and recommended practices (e.g., DEC Recommended Practices, CEC High-Leverage Practices) in their own professional activities.

Candidates identify areas for growth within their own practices. They engage in evidence-based activities to address those areas for growth and demonstrate how their practices have improved. For example, they participate in conferences and online professional learning networks and access evidence-based resources through libraries and reputable sources. Using professional and evidence-based resources along with formative assessment data, candidates reflect on and adjust their practices. Candidates use mentors and mentorship experiences to continually improve their own professional practice. They actively seek feedback from others such as experienced EI/ECSE providers, families, and professionals from other disciplines, and apply this input to improve their own practice.

**Component 7.3: Candidates exhibit leadership skills in advocating for improved outcomes for young children, families, and the profession, including the promotion of and use of evidence-based practices and decision-making.**

Candidates demonstrate that they can take on leadership roles by engaging in informed advocacy for children and families and the profession. Candidates have basic knowledge of how federal/state/provincial/local policies are developed, demonstrate advocacy skills, and understand how their efforts can support systemic change and improvements in policies regarding young children at risk for and with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. They know about the central policy issues in the field, including program quality and provision of equitable access to high quality early intervention and early childhood special education services and supports and the implications of those issues for advocacy and policy change. Candidates understand implicit bias as well as the historical and current systems of marginalization and inequities regarding young children at risk for and with developmental delays and disabilities and their families (e.g., early identification, over/under identification, suspension and expulsion, ableism, among others). Candidates access evidence-based resources to be informed of issues around implicit bias and to limit the impact of their own biases in interactions with families, children, and other professionals.

Candidates know and work within federal/state/provincial/local legislative and statutory mandates and regulations that support young children and families and the implications of this

legislation for professional practice. Candidates understand how to advocate for the rights of young children and families. They recognize that program limitations and restrictions do not suppress the rights of children and families. Candidates know how to work with decision makers to minimize barriers to the rights of children and families.

They engage in and access professional organization activities and resources and/or evidence-based resources to support their own advocacy efforts as well as supporting families in their advocacy. Candidates are knowledgeable of professional organizations' policy and advocacy missions. For example, they engage in webinars, receive newsletters addressing advocacy events and initiatives, and stay abreast of current policy and advocacy issues.

Component 7.4 Candidates practice within ethical and legal policies and procedures.

Candidates maintain a high level of professional competence and integrity, and exercise informed professional judgment. Candidates apply professional codes of ethics, including the DEC Code of Ethics and NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct, in their practice with children, families, and other professionals, and are guided by the ideals and principles promoted within. They use these codes to analyze and resolve professional and ethical dilemmas related to professional practice. Further, candidates understand their responsibilities for reporting ethical and legal violations in relation to the profession as well as the safety of children and families. Candidates are familiar with relevant professional guidelines such as national, state, or local standards for content and child outcomes, recommended and high-leverage practices, and position statements about, for example, inclusion, challenging behaviors, and maltreatment of young children.

## EI/ECSE Field and Clinical Experience Standard

Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education candidates progress through a series of planned and developmentally sequenced field experiences for the early childhood age ranges (birth to age 3, 3 through 5 years, 5 through 8 years), range of abilities, and in the variety of collaborative and inclusive early childhood settings that are appropriate to their license and roles. Clinical experiences should take place in the same age ranges covered by the license. If the license covers all three age ranges, the program must provide clinical experiences in at least two of the three age ranges and a field experience in the third age range. These field and clinical experiences are supervised by qualified professionals.

## Supporting Explanation

Field and clinical experiences provide opportunities for candidates to apply knowledge and to practice skills in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, home-based settings, and other

community placements in partnership with families and other professionals. Field and clinical experience sites are developed and enhanced over time through collaborative partnerships among local education agencies and other community stakeholders, including families and university Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) faculty. Through collaboration and consultation, placements are selected to provide developmental field experiences that support candidates in using effective practices in a wide array of classrooms, homes, and other community settings.

Field and clinical experiences are designed to link EI/ECSE research and theory to practice and provide rich, scaffolded, developmental, and graduated experiences with increasing responsibilities for prospective early interventionists and early childhood special educators. Thus, field experiences are aligned with coursework and occur early and throughout the Educator Preparation Program beginning with observation and reflection on practices and systematically progressing to implementation of practices with supervision. Examples of these experiences include course-based field work, practica, internships, and student teaching. Field and clinical experiences are connected and sufficiently extensive and intensive that candidates are able to demonstrate through performance assessments that they have mastered the practices required for the professional roles for which they are preparing.

Field and clinical experiences are structured and varied, and ensure that candidates have experiences with infants, toddlers, and young children and their families across the age ranges and range of abilities for which they are preparing. To facilitate this, placements occur in the variety of collaborative, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically diverse early childhood programs in which infants, toddlers, and young children receive services. These include, but are not limited to, public school preschool and K-3 programs; other publicly funded programs such as Early Head Start and Head Start; community preschool and child care programs; and the natural environments of the child and family, for example, home, park, or grocery. All candidates have some field experiences across the complete age range. For example, candidates may observe for a specific child developmental domain across the birth through age 8 age range. Or, as another example, candidates may observe and reflect on the observation in settings that go across the age ranges. Then, as field experiences focus more on application of practices, candidates complete field experiences for the age ranges included in the license and roles for which they are preparing. In addition, all candidates have some field experiences in which they observe and participate in collaborative activities with families and other professionals (e.g., home visits, parent-teacher conferences, cross disciplinary team meetings).

Clinical practice must take place in the same age ranges covered by the license. For example, if the license covers two of the three age ranges (e.g., birth to age 3 and 3 through 5 years), clinical experiences must be provided for both age ranges. If the license covers all three age ranges, the program must provide clinical experiences in at least two of the three age ranges (e.g., 3 through 5 years and 5 through 8 years) and a field experience specifically focused on the third age range (e.g., birth to age 3).

Site-based professionals are selected for their expertise and experience with infants, toddlers, and young children and for providing the services for which the candidate is preparing. They hold the certification or credential necessary to work in the EI/ECSE program. Site-based professionals demonstrate mentoring and coaching skills in supporting the learning of candidates. In addition, the site-based professionals effectively communicate with and engage the candidate in self-reflection on the interactions and practices utilized with children, families, and other providers. Although university supervisors may not be licensed or certified in the state in which they are employed, they must have substantial formal preparation in the field of EI/ECSE and have expertise and experience with infants, toddlers, and young children and services for which the candidate is preparing.