

Alaska's Early Care and Education

Core Knowledge and Competencies

October 2020



Alaska System for Early Education Development
Alaska's early childhood professional development system



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1. Introduction

What are Core Knowledge and Competencies?

Welcome to Alaska's System for Early Education and Development (SEED) Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) document. This document is designed to provide information about what early childhood professionals who work with young children need to know, understand, and demonstrate to best facilitate children's learning and development. It is also a resource document for early childhood professionals who work in administrative, policy, higher education, and teaching roles.

The CKC are designed to complement other systems that are related to and overlap with the early care and education systems in Alaska to include family support services, home visiting, economic support, health, and mental health.

2. About Alaska's Early Childhood Professional Development System

Alaska SEED: Alaska's Early Childhood Professional Development System

The Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) is Alaska's professional development system for early childhood and school-age education professionals. Alaska SEED is a statewide collaborative approach to professional development, integrating, and recognizing the needs of a diverse workforce. Alaska's integrated professional development system crosses sectors serving early childhood professionals working in direct and non-direct service roles including:

- Head Start and Early Head Start
- Child care programs in centers and homes
- Prekindergarten (Pre-K) programs in community-based and school settings
- Public school programs (K-3)
- Before/After school programs
- Early intervention and special education services
- Home visiting programs
- Resource and referral agencies
- Higher education institutions
- State Departments of Education and Early Development and Health and Social Services
- Other early childhood care and education partner agencies

Alaska SEED was formed in 2001 with funding from the Federal Department of Education and was originally managed by the University of Alaska Southeast in partnership with the Department of Education and Early Development. Now **thred**, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral Network, is the organizational home for Alaska SEED with funding from the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

Alaska SEED Professional Development Committee

Early childhood professional development systems incorporate integrated supports for early childhood professionals that improve the quality of care and learning they provide to children and families. The Alaska SEED Professional Development Committee, a cross-sector of early childhood stakeholders, oversees and guides the work of Alaska SEED to integrate, unite, and advance the needs of Alaska's diverse workforce, including all early childhood sectors that serve children from birth through age 8 and their families.

The National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (PDW Center) jointly funded by the federal Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, and Office of Head Start identifies five key elements of an aligned professional development system: 1) Core Knowledge and Competencies; 2) Career Pathways (Alaska SEED Career Ladder); 3) Professional Development Capacity; 4) Access to Professional Development; and 5) Funding.

The Alaska SEED Professional Development Committee includes a sixth key element, Governance, in Alaska's Professional Development Plan for the Early Care and Education Workforce, which provides the framework for continued growth of a cross-sector professional development system in Alaska.

Alaska SEED has the following six goals for early childhood professional development in Alaska:

- The Core Knowledge and Competencies link to all training and are used by all professionals working with children birth to age 8, including Infant/Toddler, Prekindergarten, School-Age, and Special Needs sectors.

- Alaska SEED supports the establishment of educational standards for early care and education professionals.
- Alaska SEED increases the quality of early education training as a part of the professional development system by linking to Trainer/Training Registry.
- Alaska SEED develops and implements a continuum of supports to develop and retain qualified early care and education professionals.
- Alaska SEED ensures sufficient blended funding to support professional development, wages, and program quality incentives.
- Alaska SEED supports a collaborative approach to promote a sustainable professional development system that supports early care and education services to improve outcomes for young children.

Alaska SEED's 2018 Professional Development Plan can be accessed through the Alaska SEED website: <http://www.seedalaska.org/>

Alaska SEED Registry and Career Ladder

One of the most critical elements to ensuring a successful system for early care and education in Alaska is having the right information to paint a picture of the needs of the workforce. A part of Alaska SEED is the Alaska SEED Registry, a member-based database for early childhood professionals to track and plan their own professional development as well as document and quantify professional accomplishments. The Alaska SEED Registry includes all those who work with young children and their families, including Head Start, Infant Learning Program, Before/After School programs, family and center-based child care professionals, child care directors, administrators, all teachers of children preschool through age 8, support staff and those who provide training for early educators. The Alaska SEED Registry tracks the workforce's ongoing education and training through the Alaska SEED database to:

- Document and quantify educational growth and accomplishments;
- Provide information to employers and parents about the early childhood professional credentials of staff working in all early care and education settings through the Alaska SEED Career Ladder certificate;
- Provide critical information to legislators and policy makers about the early childhood professionals working in the early care and education field;
- Drive quality and accountability for early care and education practitioners and programs;
- Bring increased recognition, professionalism, and compensation to the early care and education field.

The Alaska SEED Career Ladder is a career pathway recognizing credit-based education and training for all early care and education professionals. The Registry awards an Alaska SEED certificate to Alaska SEED Registry members verifying placement on the Alaska SEED Career Ladder. The Registry staff validates and evaluates credit-based professional development and specialized credentials for placement on the Alaska SEED Career Ladder.

Trainer and Training Approval System

The Alaska SEED Trainer and Training Approval System is a part of the Alaska SEED Professional Development System and the Alaska SEED Registry, administered by **thread**. The Trainer and Training Approval system provides quality assurance for early childhood trainers and training in Alaska.

Training approval ensures that training content reflects current research, aligns with the Alaska SEED Registry, Core Knowledge and Competencies, Early Learning Guidelines, and other learning standards, and is delivered in a way that reflects how adults learn.

Relationship-Based Professional Development (RBPd) System

In December 2019, Alaska SEED approved a strategic plan for the development of a Relationship-Based Professional Development (RBPd) System in Alaska. RBPd is a professional development framework for supporting early childhood and school-age educators. RBPd provides a specialist (coach, mentor, or consultant) who builds a relationship with an individual educator/coachee as a partner to support their professional growth and development. RBPd relies on one-to-one or small group interactions between the coachee and specialist. The specialist then facilitates the application of the coachee's growth in knowledge and understanding into their own practice setting. RBPd coaches, mentors, and consultants will align their work with the educator's Core Knowledge and Competencies presented in this document, as well as with other standards, such as Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines. The RBPd system is currently under development and will be piloted in the coming years.

Alignment Between Components of other Early Childhood Systems

- **Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS)**

The ECCS project facilitates the building and implementation of statewide comprehensive system of care that support family and community approaches to promoting positive early development and early school success for young children. The ECCS related goals are:

1. Early care and education programs for children birth through age eight will be based on standards of best practice.
2. The early childhood workforce will be well-qualified and fairly compensated.

- **Learn & Grow**

Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS), is a recognition system that advances the quality of early care and education to foster the success of young children. Learn & Grow provides a framework for assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality in early care and education programs.

The Learn & Grow Quality Domains: 1) Administration & Leadership; 2) Early Childhood Educator Qualifications and Professional Development; 3) Learning Environment, Adult-Child Interactions & Child Outcomes; and 4) Family & Community Engagement, align with the Core Knowledge and Competency goals and standards.

3. About Core Knowledge and Competencies

Purpose and Definition

Early care and education settings are diverse, but the foundation of knowledge needed by all practitioners is at its core, the same. The Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) are designed for all professional development levels and for all settings. Additional course work, credentials, endorsements, and work experience build on this foundation for increasing competence for all early childhood professionals.

- **Core knowledge:** the central concepts that adults who work with young children need to know and understand to facilitate children's learning and development.
- **Core competencies:** the central range of observable skills that adults who work with young children need to facilitate children's learning and development.

Together these "cores" create a foundation for the Alaska SEED Professional Development system by providing a road map for curriculum development, organizing and approving training and trainers, informing academic

coursework, as well providing a basis for the levels on the Alaska SEED Career Ladder. CKC create a common language that provides for early educator's learning outcomes and a tool to document skills throughout a practitioner's professional development. Additionally, the Alaska SEED System includes a cross sector approach that promotes movement within the field to increase overall retention as practitioners are prepared to work in more than one sector.

Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) define the desired content and skill areas for professional training and education. Systems must have the capacity to deliver these opportunities to the workforce and the ability to support access to training and education in order to increase knowledge and competence. Development of Core Knowledge and Competencies should result in a workforce that makes progress on the career pathway, with increased compensation and benefits. Successful implementation includes supportive workforce conditions that allow for knowledge and skills to translate into improved practice and contribute to job satisfaction and retention (National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives, PDW Center).

Why are they important?

Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) provide a fundamental and consistent set of knowledge and skill areas that are common to all roles working with children from birth to age eight. Adults working in early childhood make countless daily decisions that impact children's healthy development and learning. It is critical that these decisions be made based on nationally recognized standards of best practice. There are many benefits to having a clearly defined core body of knowledge and competencies:

- Enables those working in early childhood to understand child development in a cultural and comprehensive context, which will result in better care and development of young children in Alaska, and quality programs for children and families.
- Enhances the profession of early care and education by requiring specialized knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained through education and ongoing professional development.
- Provides a framework for the preparation of those entering the field and the continued professional growth of those already working with young children and their families.
- Provides a helpful tool as individuals assess their own knowledge and skill levels, from entry level to mastery, and charts a course for professional development.

How were they developed?

The Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) are based on what research and national professional organizations have indicated as the critical set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to work with young children and their families. In Alaska, the SEED Professional Development Committee has selected the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Teacher Standards as a basis for the CKC. In November 2019, the NAEYC National Governing Board released updated Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators. Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) were updated in October 2020 to assure alignment with NAEYC's updated standards.

Additionally, Alaska's CKC are inclusive of the standards set by the Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC), Head Start Performance Standards, and the Council for Professional Recognition Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards, which are the national standards used to evaluate a caregiver's performance with children and families during the CDA assessment process. The six Competency Goals are:

- I. To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment
- II. To advance physical and intellectual competence
- III. To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance

- IV. To establish positive and productive relationships with families
- V. To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs
- VI. To maintain a commitment to professionalism

How are they used and by whom?

Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) provide all who work within Alaska's early care and education sectors a common set of standards upon which training, technical assistance, Relationship-Based Professional Development (RBPDP), and post-secondary coursework can be designed and aligned.

The CKC may be used by professionals working directly with young children as a self-assessment tool to identify gaps in competency areas where additional education or training is needed or used to document the skills used in working with young children and families. The CKC can also be used as a tool to support self-reflection and track progress as new skills are gained.

Different ways the Core Knowledge and Competencies may be used:	
Caregivers and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess level of knowledge and skill in the six content areas Identify specific areas of need for professional development (e.g., training/education)
Directors and Program Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify professional development (e.g., training/education) requirements for staff job descriptions Develop staff professional development (e.g., training/education) plans and policies Establish a salary scale based on levels of competency
Trainers and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and organize professional development (e.g., Organization's training/education) Promote professional development (e.g., training/education) opportunities
Higher Education Faculty, Staff, and Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate and design course content and facilitate articulation between institutions of higher learning Assess current program content to determine course development
Federal, State, and Local Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement programs and funding that will enhance professionalism in the field of early care and education
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess content knowledge of potential or current caregivers and teachers of their children
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and private investments, incentives, and initiatives that encourage and facilitate professional competency Early childhood advocates educate parents, general public, policy makers about the need for and the impact of professional standards on the quality of early care and education

Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) weave together the components of Alaska's Early Childhood System, which includes three parts:

- The program that delivers early care and education services → program standards
- The people who receive the services → learning standards
- The people who provide the services → professional standards

To determine if quality services are being provided requires looking at all three parts. In Alaska, **program standards** begin with licensing regulations as the minimum and progress to accreditation standards. Accreditation is administered from various entities to include the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association of Family Child Care, National After School Association, and others. The Environmental Rating Scales are another mechanism being widely used to assess program quality in many settings. Alaska's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS), Learn & Grow, provides additional program standards and more resources for building quality. The CKC are linked with program standards through tiered competency items aligning needs for programs to be accredited and for higher Learn & Grow recognition.

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG), Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Alaska's Content and Performance Standards for students (updated K-3) provide the essential information for examining **learning standards** for those who love, care for, and educate young children. Head Start, Infant Learning Programs (ILP), Before/After School programs, and Public School Districts utilize learning standards to measure how children and their families are doing and how responsive programs are in meeting children's needs. The learning standards found within these documents are meant to guide early childhood educators' curriculum development, and the tiered competency items scaffold the use based on the level of professional education and experience. The domains referenced within the CKC and the associated goals for learning can be found in the specific guidelines and standards documents.

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) provide guidance on what young children should know and be able to do at specific developmental stages. Alaska's CKC link with the ELG to ensure that early childhood educators are prepared to foster children's learning across multiple domains. The ELG serve as a source document, informing practitioners and parents about expectations for children's development and learning.

The ELG standards are used by families and local communities, by states, and by countries in order to strengthen and coordinate early childhood practices, programs, and policies. The Alaska ELG draws upon Alaska's rich traditional ways of teaching children and brings the most current child development practices built on knowledge of brain development. Alaska's ELG are organized into five domains, including 1) physical well-being, health, and motor development; 2) social and emotional development; 3) approaches to learning; 4) general knowledge and cognition; and 5) communication, language, and literacy.

The **Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching** were developed by Alaska Native educators to complement the state standards with a way for schools and communities to attend to the educational and cultural well-being of the students in their care. The "cultural standards" are predicated on the belief that a firm grounding in the heritage language and culture indigenous to a particular place is an essential ingredient for identifying the appropriate qualities and practices associated with culturally-responsive educators, curriculum, and schools. The standards are laid out in five areas for students, educators, curriculum, schools, and communities. These "cultural standards" provide guidelines or touchstones against which schools and communities can examine what they are doing to attend to the cultural well-being of the young people they are responsible for nurturing into adulthood.

The **Alaska Content and Performance Standards for kindergarten through grade 3** were updated in 2016. These are the state standards, which create a map for the skills a learner will obtain in each content area from health and PE, language arts, mathematics, and science and at each grade level.

Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies, the **professional standards**, are broad and can be tailored to support everyone working in the field of early care and education, whether they are classroom teachers, center-based and family child care professionals, Head Start/Early Head Start, Infant Learning Program professionals, before/after school professionals, administrators, child care resource and referral staff, trainers, etc. Core Knowledge and Competencies are consistent with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards, Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC), Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, and the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Competency Standards.

There are multiple uses for this document that may include the following but are not limited to:

- Early childhood professionals working directly with children and families can use the Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) to assess their current skills and identify areas to improve their practice.
- Administrators of early care and education programs can use the CKC to create staff orientation and to develop job descriptions, training plans, and staff evaluations.
- Higher education instructors can utilize the CKC in planning and evaluating course content and as a framework for articulation and transfer agreements.
- Home visitors, including prevention and early intervention and mental health practitioners can utilize the CKC to guide their practice. CKC could also be used to develop effective hiring practices and training plans for these staff.
- Alaska SEED will utilize the CKC as the foundation of the professional development system, including for trainer and training approval, RBP system, and training registration and tracking.
- State and local agencies could integrate the CKC into policies and regulations to support quality early care and education programs and services.

Credentials and Licensing

Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies can also be used to align with existing professional development credentials and licensing regulations. For example, tier 2 competencies within each element of the CKC includes the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Tier 2 also aligns with Level 6 on the Alaska SEED Career Ladder if the practitioner has a current CDA credential.

Alaska's child care licensing regulations also have specific requirements and qualifications for caregivers working in various child care settings that align with the CKC. For a copy of the current licensing requirements, please contact the Child Care Program Office.

4. About this Document

Core Knowledge Areas

The core knowledge areas are the central concepts that adults who work with young children need to know and understand to facilitate children's learning and development.

Core Competencies

Levels of Competence refer to a range of observable skills and abilities educators need to facilitate children's learning and development.

Tiers of Competence

Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies document includes six standards or areas of competency. Each standard describes the knowledge and skills professionals need to work with children birth through age eight and their families. These six areas are:

1. Child Development and Learning in Context
2. Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections
3. Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment
4. Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices
5. Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum
6. Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

Standards 1 through 5 are divided into three levels that further articulate the knowledge and skill of that particular standard. These can be understood to develop from foundational knowledge or recognition of aspects of the standard into growing understanding and the application of concepts learned as a professional becomes familiar with concepts in a standard. The levels in Standards 1 through 5 build as follows:

- Levels labeled (a) articulate knowledge and competencies related to recognizing and identifying skills and concepts within the standard;
- Levels labeled (b) articulate knowledge and competencies related to a deeper understanding and valuing of skills and concepts within the standard; and
- Levels labeled (c) articulate knowledge and competencies related to the utilization and integration of skills and concepts within the standard.

Standard 6 follows a unique pattern in which the levels (a) through (e) are not meant to build upon each other in the same manner.

Within each level are multiple competencies organized by tiers. The tiers of competency start with the basic skills necessary to enter the field and continue through an advanced tier of academic preparation and varied experience. The five tiers are cumulative. Tier 2 includes all the competencies of Tier 1 in any particular category. Tier 3 includes competencies in Tier 1 and Tier 2, and so on.

- ▶ **Tier 1** sets the foundation for early care and education and includes the basic knowledge and skills expected of a professional new to the early care and education field, or a professional who has been in the field but has had little opportunity for specialized mentoring, training, or education.
- ▶ **Tier 2** includes **Tier 1** plus the knowledge and skills comparable to a Child Development Associate credential, a certificate in child development, or training/education.
- ▶ **Tier 3** includes **Tiers 1 and 2** plus knowledge and skills equivalent with an associate's degree in early childhood education or child development.
- ▶ **Tier 4** includes **Tiers 1, 2, and 3** plus knowledge and skills commensurate with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development.
- ▶ **Tier 5** includes **Tiers 1 through 4** plus knowledge and skills commensurate with an advanced degree in early childhood education or child development or a degree in an unrelated field with 30 Early Childhood (EC) credits.

Alaska SEED Career Ladder

The Alaska SEED Career Ladder provides a pathway articulating advancement in the early care and education profession. It provides a common system for everyone working in this field. Alaska's career ladder has twelve tiers from entry to Ph.D. It includes a parallel career ladder for those working in the early intervention field. The Alaska SEED Professional Development Committee has established an alignment between the Core Knowledge and Competencies and the Alaska SEED Career Ladder.

CKC Tiers 1-5	Alaska SEED Career Ladder Levels 1-12
Tier 1: Sets the foundation for early care and education and includes the basic knowledge and skills expected of a professional new to the field, or one who has been in the field with little opportunity for specialized training or education.	Level 1: Working in the field or high school diploma/GED with motivation to advance in early childhood field Level 2: 24 hours of training from Alaska SEED-approved source or 1 EC credit Level 3: Planting the SEED of Success or 2 EC credits
Tier 2: Includes Tier 1 plus the knowledge and skills comparable to a Child Development Associate credential, a certificate in child development, or training/education.	Level 4: 60 hours of CDA training or 60 hours of Alaska SEED-approved training or 3 EC credits Level 5: 120 hours of Alaska SEED-approved training
Tier 3: Includes Tiers 1 and 2 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with an associate's degree in early childhood education or child development.	Level 6: Current CDA OR 6 EC credits Level 7: 12 EC credits EI/ILP Track Developmental Assistant: associate's degree in unrelated field Level 8: 24 EC credits EI/ILP Track Developmental Assistant: BA degree in unrelated field or associate's degree in related field
Tier 4: Includes Tiers 1, 2, and 3 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development.	Level 9: AA degree in EC or related field or unrelated field with 24 EC credits EI/ILP Track Developmental Specialist I: BA degree in related field or MA degree in unrelated or related field without license or teaching certificate or Associate Degree in SLP with license Level 10: BA degree in EC or related field or unrelated field with 30-45 EC credits EI/ILP Track Developmental Specialist II: BA degree in related field and professional license or teaching certificate
Tier 5: Includes Tiers 1 through 4 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with an advanced degree in early childhood or child development.	Level 11: MA degree in EC or related field or unrelated field with 30-45 EC credits EI/ILP Track Developmental Specialist III: MA degree in related field with professional license or teaching certificate Level 12: Doctorate in EC or related field or unrelated field with 30-45 EC credits EI/ILP Track Developmental Specialist IV: Doctorate in related field with professional license or teaching certificate

5. Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competency Standards

Standard 1:

Child Development and Learning in Context

- 1a.** Recognize and identify how children develop birth through age 8 across domains, including bilingual/multilingual development
- 1b.** Understand and value each child's unique developmental variations (experiences, strengths, challenges) and influences (family, culture, language)
- 1c.** Apply and integrate knowledge of individual child development and influences, including health and safety standards to make responsive decisions to support each child



Child Development and Learning in Context

Early childhood educators (a) are grounded in an understanding of early childhood development from birth through age 8 across developmental domains. They (b) understand and value each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, learning and developing within relationships and multiple influences, such as families, cultures, languages, and communities. Early childhood educators (c) apply and integrate this knowledge of child development and health and safety standards to make responsive decisions to support each child.

1a. Recognize and identify how children develop birth through age 8 across domains, including bilingual/multilingual development

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize that development occurs in a continuum.
- ☐ Recognize that children respond to situations differently.
- ☐ Identify developmental domains and goals of children birth through age 8 as identified in Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG).
- ☐ Identify and define developmental domains (physical, cognitive, social-emotional, and communication, including bilingual and multilingual development).
- ☐ Identify several ways that children are different from adults in learning, thinking, behavior, and needs.
- ☐ Define temperament and the role it plays in how children respond to people and the environment.
- ☐ Describe the role of play and exploration in children's overall development.
- ☐ Recognize the importance of observing and documenting children's development.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify and describe the major theories and theorists of child development, including brain development and social-emotional development.
- ☐ Describe the sequence of development in children, including cognitive, motor, bilingual and multilingual language and communication.
- ☐ Adapt care and education to children's changing needs.
- ☐ Distinguish between typical and atypical development, recognizing that there is a range of ages at which children acquire skills.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Explain the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive differences of children in their care.
- ☐ Explain social and learning styles of children and various ways children learn.
- ☐ Explain current theories and ongoing research in early care and education as it applies to the children in their care.
- ☐ Monitor children's health status and intervene appropriately when it impacts their behavior, interaction, and learning.
- ☐ Name a variety of practices that support brain development in infants and toddlers and choose appropriate practices within the program.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Apply major theories and interrelationships across developmental areas of early care and education.
- ☐ Integrate information from observation, including recordings on growth and development.
- ☐ Integrate information on growth, development, and learning patterns of individuals and groups and apply to practice.
- ☐ Identify strengths, needs, and interests of each child and develop strategies to support each child's growth and development.
- ☐ Share information with families about the general principles of child growth and development.
- ☐ Demonstrate knowledge of inclusive philosophy and practices.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Articulate, apply, analyze, and evaluate current theory, research, and policy on child growth and development.
- ☐ Use observation and assessment tools in communication with families.
- ☐ Communicate major theories, research, and issues relevant to child growth and development to families in a way that is meaningful.

1b. Understand and value each child's unique developmental variations (experiences, strengths, challenges) and influences (family, culture, language)**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ Define adult-infant attachment and explain how it is important in supporting exploration and later development.
- ☐ Describe the relationship between fulfilling children's basic needs and its impact on growth and development.
- ☐ Understand that children's development varies based on their experiences, strengths, and challenges.
- ☐ Understand that children's families and other social environments play important roles in supporting and shaping development.
- ☐ Respect and accept cultural differences, including family values and strengths, and the positive effects those differences may have on behavior and development.
- ☐ Recognize that stress resulting from trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty, and other factors impacts children's development and behavior in individual ways.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of biological and environmental factors on development.
- ☐ Describe different patterns of attachment and the ways that adult interactions support the development of healthy attachment relationships.

- Identify characteristics of people and environments that promote and support development.
- Describe specific ways that stress due to trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty, and other factors impacts children's development and behavior.
- Acknowledge that children can demonstrate their cultural knowledge and capabilities in many ways.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- Respond appropriately to the variety of ways children demonstrate growth and development based on cultural influences as well as experiences, strengths, and challenges.
- Support children in creating healthy attachment relationships with significant adults.
- Create environments and experiences that affirm and respect cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity.
- Respond appropriately to the variety of ways children experience grief and loss.
- Display student work that reflects local cultural knowledge and ways of life.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- Employ strategies that support and optimize the healthy development of children.
- Demonstrate ability to embrace and integrate cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity into the daily curriculum by partnering with families and caregivers to incorporate and value aspects of language and traditions into the daily routine.
- Demonstrate knowledge of inclusive philosophy and practices and recognize the range of development in young children.
- Analyze physical or behavioral changes in children as possible indicators of the presence of stress and take appropriate action.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- Articulate and share research and theory related to developmental variations and a range of influences on child development.
- Model and mentor others in understanding influences on child development related to environmental, socio-economic, cultural, and relationship factors.
- Facilitate children's participation in meaningful community-based cultural activities that are embedded with academic content.

1c. Apply and integrate knowledge of individual child development and influences, including health and safety standards to make responsive decisions to support each child

Tier 1 Competencies:

- Describe the elements of a welcoming, supportive, healthy, and enriching learning environment.
- Follow a consistent yet flexible schedule that is appropriate for all children.
- Maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment and create learning spaces with focus on safety, health, routines, and play/exploration.
- Offer choices to support individual child needs.
- Support and encourage children's participation in a variety of activities.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- Create a responsive daily routine to meet individual child needs, balancing individual, large and small group activities, child-directed and teacher-directed activities, and indoor and outdoor activities.
- Maintain, monitor, and adapt a daily schedule to meet individual child needs.
- Describe how environments support children's independence, exploration, and positive behavior.
- Use materials that demonstrate acceptance of all children's gender, family, race, language, culture, ethnic, socio-economic, and special needs.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
- Provide engaging materials and activities in a space balanced between active and quiet areas, individual and group, and indoor and outdoor activities to encourage play, exploration, interaction, and learning.
- Incorporate local knowledge and resources to create a learning environment that honors diverse cultures in present-day contexts.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- Plan and create indoor and outdoor environments that are healthy, safe, stimulating, engaging, and intentionally designed to support curriculum goals.
- Adjust the routine and environment to provide numerous opportunities for children to engage in extended periods of free exploration and spontaneous play within the daily routine.
- Build children's pride in their cultures, families, and communities by creating learning centers that reflect culture and community members of the children.
- Use opportunities throughout the day to incorporate activities that facilitate development in language, fine/gross motor, and social-emotional and cognitive areas.
- Promote children's development of age-appropriate, self-regulated behaviors by using routines, schedules, and classroom design.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- Create learning in the environment by using materials, child choice, and play as a context for enhancing development and active learning.
- Provide experiences and materials that encourage learners to adapt and use cultural and traditional knowledge.
- Choose, use, and evaluate age-appropriate technologies within the learning environment.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to modify the environment to manage behaviors when necessary.
- Develop strategies that allow children to play an important role in planning curriculum.
- Observe the program, evaluate how the environment is meeting the needs and interests of the children, and make changes as appropriate.
- Observe the environment and make adjustments to reduce behavior issues and maximize appropriate use of materials.
- Ensure the environment facilitates learning in all developmental areas: cognitive, language, physical, social-emotional.
- Plan environment for children with special needs or learning styles based upon recommendations and input from families and specialists.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Articulate, analyze, evaluate, and apply current theory and research on design of environment.
- ☐ Model and mentor others regarding development of an appropriate and responsive learning environment including health and safety standards.
- ☐ Develop and promote relevant and inclusive learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom.

Standard 2:

Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

2a. Recognize and value the diversity of families and communities

2b. Support, collaborate with, and value families and communities as partners through respectful, reciprocal relationships and engagement

2c. Utilize family and community resources to build partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies.



Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

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

2a. Recognize and value the diversity of families and communities

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Respect the family's role as primary educator.
- ☐ Acknowledge the varying structures and strengths of children's families and communities.
- ☐ Appreciate and support diversity of children, families, and community.
- ☐ Recognize local cultural protocols for connecting with diverse community members.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Understand how socialization (culture, religion, and other perspectives) may influence the relationship among families, schools, and communities.
- ☐ Respect and support cultural differences and diverse family structures.
- ☐ Identify and explore one's own personal beliefs, values, and biases.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Strive to ensure that community diversity and cultures are reflected in the children's environment.
- ☐ Value and promote family and school partnerships.
- ☐ Develop reflective practice to connect with families and communities.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Understand and support unique family structures, beliefs, and values within cultures and communities.
- ☐ Articulate and appreciate diverse family systems and communities.
- ☐ Reflect on funds of knowledge to support partnerships.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Integrate children's home cultures and languages into the program as appropriate.
- ☐ Utilize family funds of knowledge to make environment more inclusive.

2b. Support, collaborate with, and value families and communities as partners through respectful, reciprocal relationships and engagement**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ Describe qualities of programs that are healthy, accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for all families.
- ☐ Describe what a strengths-based, family-centered practice means and identify key practices in partnering with families.
- ☐ Establish positive communication and relationships with families.
- ☐ Recognize stress factors affecting families and potential community resources for families.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Create and maintain open and collaborative relationships with families and communicate daily events.
- ☐ Use practices that value and build on family strengths.
- ☐ Partner with families to develop healthy behaviors and routines for their children.
- ☐ Identify different ways to communicate with families, including one- and two-way communication strategies.
- ☐ Work effectively with families from a variety of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Create opportunities for families to engage in the program and to interact with one another.
- ☐ Build family and community partnerships to support and appreciate each child's unique development.
- ☐ Assist families in accessing appropriate resources as necessary.
- ☐ Facilitate family conferences.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Support and strengthen families based on an understanding of theories of family systems.
- ☐ Promote Alaska's "Strengthening Families" protocols to support families as needed in each individual community.
- ☐ Promote a unified approach to sharing child information with families, staff, and specialists.
- ☐ Collaborate with families on Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) and Individualized Education Plans (IEP), including the planning and implementation.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Apply and promote current theory, research, and policy on importance of relationships with families within the system of early care and education.
- ☐ Ensure the role of the family as decision-makers in settings.
- ☐ Facilitate teams to coordinate services for children and families.
- ☐ Ensure and promote a family-centered approach with community partners.
- ☐ Evaluate a variety of communication techniques and select appropriate methods to support and build trusting relationships with each family.

2c. Utilize family and community resources to build partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify community resources that support children and families.
- ☐ Establish partnerships and relationships with early care and education professionals.
- ☐ Collaborate with families to access resources that meet families' needs.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Create pathways for family engagement through program activities and events.
- ☐ Utilize community resources within the program that support children and families.
- ☐ Assist and support families in accessing appropriate community organizations and agencies

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Participate in family engagement activities.
- ☐ Participate in teams to coordinate services for children and families.
- ☐ Maintain a family-centered philosophy when working with others in the community.
- ☐ Utilize appropriate resources to establish relationships with community organizations and agencies.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Facilitate family engagement opportunities.
- ☐ Provide leadership for teams coordinating services for children and families.
- ☐ Assist with public awareness and community outreach activities.
- ☐ Assist with community and school transitions.
- ☐ Promote involvement of local Elders, Culture Bearers, and families in the learning community.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Work to develop resources in the community.
- ☐ Represent the early childhood field in collaborative community endeavors.
- ☐ Develop and maintain relationships with other disciplines and specialties in related fields.
- ☐ Facilitate an ongoing reflective process to understand family and community needs.
- ☐ Use a system of multiple communication techniques throughout the program to accommodate a wide range of families' needs or styles.
- ☐ Model and mentor others in the use of local cultural and community protocols.

Standard 3:

Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

3a. Recognize a wide range of types of assessments, their purposes, and their associated methods and tools

3b. Understand and value the importance of using a variety of assessments (formal and informal, formative and summative) for planning and decision-making

3c. Utilize appropriate assessments (ethically grounded, culturally and linguistically relevant) for three purposes:

- document developmental progress
- promote positive outcomes for each child
- build both curriculum and assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues



Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

Early childhood educators (a) understand the primary purpose of assessments is to inform instruction and planning in early care and education settings. They (b) know how to use observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment approaches and tools. Early childhood educators (c) use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress, promote positive outcomes for each child, and build assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues.

3a. Recognize a wide range of types of assessments, their purposes, and their associated methods and tools

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify and define a wide range of assessment tools (observation, screening, and other more formal assessments).
- ☐ Identify the screening and assessment tools used by the program and their unique purposes.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize federal, state, and program documentation requirements for collecting objective and complete information about each child.
- ☐ Understand why the collection of observations and documentation is important.
- ☐ Recognize a range of developmental milestones as identified in Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) and Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize observation as a tool for ongoing assessments.
- ☐ Identify a variety of assessment tools and their appropriate use.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify and seek out culturally appropriate assessments.
- ☐ Identify needs for further evaluation.
- ☐ Recognize the purpose of using assessment tools to track children's progress toward goals developed by self, staff, and specialists.
- ☐ Identify a range of developmental milestones as identified in Alaska's ELG and Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Communicate major theories, research, and issues relevant to observation and assessment.

3b. Understand and value the importance of using a variety of assessments (formal and informal, formative and summative) for planning and decision-making**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ View children as individuals and acknowledge that children develop at their own rate.
- ☐ Identify the assessment cycle (Early Learning Guidelines to curriculum to assessment to reflection) for curriculum planning.
- ☐ Understand the importance of confidentiality between the program and the child's family regarding each child's observation and assessment.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Understand the assessment cycle for curriculum planning and decision-making.
- ☐ Identify various ways to get to know each child as an individual, including strengths, needs, interests, families, and life situation.
- ☐ Understand how to document observation in written, visual, and oral forms.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize and seek guidance when development is not progressing at a typical rate in one or more developmental areas.
- ☐ Appreciate and accommodate the range of development and skills among children.
- ☐ Recognize environmental factors that may place children at risk.
- ☐ Communicate the importance and usage of ongoing assessment to families and other staff.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Use and consider assessment and screening information when making curriculum and program decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- ☐ Understand how to use the assessment cycle in curriculum planning and decision-making.
- ☐ Understand how to develop and implement individual child goals based on observation, assessment, and family input.
- ☐ Understand and value the use of culturally appropriate assessments.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Communicate how the use of the assessment cycle drives program decision-making.
- ☐ Communicate the value of the assessment cycle with families and community.

3c. Utilize appropriate assessments (ethically grounded, culturally and linguistically relevant) for three purposes:

- **document developmental progress**
- **promote positive outcomes for each child**
- **build both curriculum and assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues**

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Maintain confidentiality between the program and the child's family regarding each child's observation and assessment.
- ☐ Assist with the collection of information about each child's development for assessment purposes.
- ☐ Partner on observation and documentation to support curriculum and decision-making.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Meet federal, state, and program documentation requirements by collecting objective and complete information about each child.
- ☐ Communicate observation and documentation in written, visual, and oral forms.
- ☐ Assist with observation and documentation to support curriculum and decision-making.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Observe children continually, analyze and evaluate findings, and apply this knowledge to practice.
- ☐ Administer and interpret formal and informal assessments in a non-biased manner.
- ☐ Develop and implement individual plans including referrals as appropriate.
- ☐ Observe and document children's developmental progress to support curriculum and decision-making.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Plan culturally appropriate assessments.
- ☐ Apply knowledge of a range of developmental milestones as identified in Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) and Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students.
- ☐ Communicate both informal and standardized observation and assessment results to families in a clear and supportive manner.
- ☐ Develop and implement individual child goals based on observation, assessment, and family input.
- ☐ Work cooperatively with assessment and health care teams for children with special needs.
- ☐ Adjust curriculum and make decisions based on outcomes of child assessments.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Utilize assessment information to inform program decision-making.
- ☐ Work closely with families, community agencies, and schools to coordinate educational expectations between home and school.
- ☐ Establish criteria, procedures, and documentation methods for assessment.
- ☐ Articulate, apply, analyze, and evaluate current theory, research, and policy on assessment.
- ☐ Model and mentor others in how to observe and document a child's developmental progress to support curriculum and decision-making.

Standard 4:

Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

4a. Recognize the importance of positive, supportive relationships and interactions with young children as the foundation of work with them

4b. Understand and value teaching practices that are developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive

4c. Utilize supportive relationships and interactions, as well as a variety of culturally relevant and evidence-based instructional techniques to meet individual child needs



Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

Early childhood educators understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages and characteristics and on the settings in which teaching and learning occur. They (a) recognize the importance of positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for their work with young children. They (b) understand and value teaching skills that are culturally and linguistically responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child. Early childhood educators (c) integrate supportive relationships and interactions with a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning.

4a. Recognize the importance of positive, supportive relationships and interactions with young children as the foundation of work with them

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Understand the importance of trusting relationships with children where they feel safe, secure, and valued.
- ☐ Recognize when a child is in distress and requires adult support to console or soothe the child.
- ☐ Recognize that children mirror emotions evident in adults.
- ☐ Understand that family and community have different cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socio-economic experiences that may influence how children respond socially to adults and other children.
- ☐ Recognize that children have significant knowledge based on culture, family values, and prior experiences.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize how children communicate their needs, including verbal and nonverbal cues.
- ☐ Recognize a variety of responsive activities that foster healthy development, security, and attachment.
- ☐ Recognize the importance of interacting in a manner reflecting respect for the child's family, self, and others.
- ☐ Value children's culture and background.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize the role of the professional in a child's social-emotional development.
- ☐ Recognize the role of positive relationships in social-emotional development.
- ☐ Communicate and inform others of the link between positive social-emotional development and learning.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- Identify opportunities for children to listen, interact, and communicate freely with other children and adults.
- Identify ways to collaborate with families to develop individually appropriate expectations for children's behavior.
- Articulate the theory and current research on attachment and the role of relationships in supporting healthy social-emotional development.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- Develop written policies for responsive interactions and caregiving.
- Apply, analyze, and evaluate current theory and research promoting social and emotional development.
- Model and mentor others in responsive caregiving.
- Support and promote children's and family's funds of knowledge, including cultural identity, socio-linguistic, family, and other backgrounds as strengths in a diverse world.

4b. Understand and value teaching practices that are developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- Identify a variety of positive guidance techniques that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically relevant.
- Understand and recognize ways to participate and engage in children's play.
- Understand and promote health and safety guidelines and appropriate supervision of children.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- Understand a variety of positive guidance strategies that respect children and teach appropriate social skills.
- Maintain reasonable expectations about children's needs, abilities, and interests.
- Identify and understand how to encourage children to ask questions.
- Recognize a variety of reasons for children's behaviors.
- Identify developmental stages of children (motor, cognition, language, social-emotional).
- Recognize different temperaments and individual differences of children and families and how these may influence their development and needs.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- Develop proactive partnerships with families and community to support transitioning children into and out of the program.
- Understand and assist other professionals in the development of behavior plans to support children's positive behaviors.
- Understand an appropriate balance of child-directed and adult-guided activities.
- Relate guidance practices to knowledge of children's temperaments and developmental domains and goals from Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Use knowledge of child development theories to improve child guidance techniques.
- ☐ Use child assessments to individualize and support children's development.
- ☐ Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of teaching strategies that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive for all children.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Articulate and reflect on strategies for intervention and conflict resolution in children's play and learning.
- ☐ Develop plans to support individual children's needs, accessing relevant resources as needed.
- ☐ Articulate, apply, analyze, and evaluate current theories and research on child development and guidance.

4c. Utilize supportive relationships and interactions, as well as a variety of culturally relevant and evidence-based instructional techniques to meet individual child needs**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ Demonstrate warm, positive, nurturing, and respectful interactions with children and families.
- ☐ Participate and engage in children's play.
- ☐ Observe how children's development and culture may influence their behaviors, interactions, and play.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Respond to children as they communicate their needs with verbal and nonverbal cues.
- ☐ Promote and use a variety of responsive activities (developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant) to foster healthy development, security, and attachment.
- ☐ Understand developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant instructional techniques that support positive behaviors.
- ☐ Support children in learning how to identify feelings, both their own and others, and how to express them in healthy ways.
- ☐ Guide children to resolve interpersonal conflicts and solve problems with others.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Support the facilitation of responsive curriculum and environment to address children's needs.
- ☐ Design and implement behavior plans to support children's positive behaviors.
- ☐ Provide an appropriate balance of child-directed and adult-guided activities.
- ☐ Promote positive, pro-social relationships among children and help each child feel accepted in the group.
- ☐ Support children by teaching and facilitating self-regulation as a tool for building healthy relationships.
- ☐ Encourage children to develop independence by providing physical and emotional security and opportunities for children to master new skills, experience success, and safely take risks.
- ☐ Use a variety of developmentally and culturally responsive instructional strategies to support children's needs and experiences.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- Observe children's interactions and facilitate intentional, responsive experiences to support all children in listening, interacting, and communicating freely with others.
- Connect families and caregivers to community resources, including mental health resources, to provide families and caregivers with additional assistance when needed.
- Integrate a variety of teaching strategies that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive for all children.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- Design and implement plans to support children's growth and development in collaboration with families and other involved adults as appropriate for individual children.
- Model and mentor others in developing curriculum that integrates supportive relationships and interactions as well as a variety of culturally relevant and evidence-based instructional techniques to meet individual child needs.
- Create curriculum to build on children's and family's funds of knowledge, including cultural identity, socio-linguistic, family, and other backgrounds as strengths in a diverse world.

Standard 5:

Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

- 5a.** Recognize that content knowledge and resources, such as Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines, are a foundation for developing early childhood curriculum
- 5b.** Understand how to use instructional techniques (pedagogy) and the practices described in Standards 1 through 4 to support young children's learning in each content area
- 5c.** Apply and integrate updated instructional techniques and content knowledge (pedagogical content), as well as updated curriculum resources to modify teaching practices



Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

Early childhood educators have knowledge of the content of the academic disciplines (e.g., language and literacy, the arts, mathematics, social studies, science, technology and engineering, physical education). They (a) recognize this content knowledge, the central concepts, the methods and tools of inquiry, and the structures in each academic discipline, and they see important resources as a foundation for curriculum development. Educators (b) understand pedagogy, including how young children learn and process information in each discipline, the learning trajectories for each discipline, and how teachers use this knowledge to inform their practice. They (c) apply this knowledge using early learning standards and other resources to make decisions about spontaneous and planned learning experiences and about curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation to ensure that learning will be stimulating, challenging, and meaningful to each child.

5a. Recognize that content knowledge and resources, such as Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines, are a foundation for developing early childhood curriculum

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify the components of content knowledge (math, science, social studies, arts, and literacy) for children birth through age 8.
- ☐ Identify and review early childhood resources such as Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG), the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students.
- ☐ Recognize the primary role sensory experiences, free exploration, and play have in children's growth and learning.
- ☐ Read to children and engage children through questions and conversations.
- ☐ Encourage creative expression.
- ☐ Practice observing children to identify their interests and needs.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize that curriculum is delivered through environmental arrangement, learning activities, and interactions.

- ☐ Learn about the cultural values of the community.
- ☐ Identify how the creative process supports children's growth.
- ☐ Identify where children's interests and needs are incorporated into the program.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify cultural activities and values that can be integrated into the curriculum.
- ☐ Make a wide variety of developmentally and culturally appropriate books easily accessible to children.
- ☐ Identify open-ended activities that foster curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the children's developmental domains and goals from Alaska's ELG.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Describe how children learn specific content through their senses, play, exploration, interactions, and inquiry.
- ☐ Identify developmentally and culturally appropriate learning experiences based on observations and analyses of children's behaviors and activities.
- ☐ Identify how Alaska's ELG and other resource materials align in program curriculum.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Work collaboratively with other agencies to research and communicate information on child development based on Alaska's ELG.
- ☐ Analyze curriculum models along with their rationales and limitations

5b. Understand how to use instructional techniques (pedagogy) and the practices described in Standards 1 through 4 to support young children's learning in each content area

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Define curriculum as it applies to programs for children birth through age 8.
- ☐ Identify aspects of the program that support children's emergent literacy, language, and communication.
- ☐ Observe themes of local significance to the community.
- ☐ Assist planning of individual, small group, and large group activities.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Select materials appropriate to the developmental domains and goals from Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG).
- ☐ Identify where sensory experiences, free exploration, and play occur during the program.
- ☐ Identify and connect developmental domains and goals from Alaska's ELG to the program curriculum.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Use developmentally and culturally appropriate materials, activities, and strategies in an integrated curriculum that includes all content areas.
- ☐ Understand basic classroom guidance techniques for individuals and small groups.
- ☐ Provide various sensory experiences and opportunities for play and exploration.
- ☐ Create open-ended activities that foster curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the children's developmental domains and goals from Alaska's ELG.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Plan a developmentally and culturally appropriate program that supports learning in all the specific content areas.
- ☐ Adapt the learning environment for all children, including those with special needs or unique learning styles.
- ☐ Develop strategies that allow children to play an important role in planning curriculum.
- ☐ Support participation in local cultural activities and apply those activities to content learning areas.
- ☐ Plan developmentally and culturally appropriate learning experiences based on observations and analyses of children's behaviors and activities.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for children to raise questions about the world around them and to explore their questions using the scientific method.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify and use specialists in artistic disciplines to incorporate the building blocks of each art form.
- ☐ Model and mentor others in curriculum design and facilitation.
- ☐ Articulate, analyze, evaluate, and apply current theory and research on the design of curriculum and environment.
- ☐ Communicate and mentor others on major theories, research, and issues relevant to learning environments for young children.

5c. Apply and integrate updated instructional techniques and content knowledge (pedagogical content), as well as updated curriculum resources to modify teaching practices**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ Provide varied learning activities to create an enriched learning environment that supports the developmental needs of children.
- ☐ Ensure that educational materials are accessible to the children and changed or rotated with intentionality.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Use Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG), the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students in curriculum development and program planning.
- ☐ Create a developmentally and culturally appropriate learning environment that has dedicated areas to meet basic needs, as well as foster independence and self-directed learning.
- ☐ Create learning experiences appropriate to the ELG developmental domains and goals, as well as the interests of the children.
- ☐ Incorporate local cultural traditions and values of the community into curriculum and planning.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Arrange developmentally and culturally appropriate learning centers that promote active exploration and cooperative play.
- ☐ Adapt the curriculum, the environment, and the materials to meet the needs of individual children.
- ☐ Use Alaska's ELG, the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students in planning and evaluating curricula.

- Engage children, families, and community members in cultural and seasonal activities.
- Participate in implementing individualized plans and making accommodations for children with special needs.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- Ensure the environment and approaches to learning are connected to Alaska's ELG and other resources.
- Implement an integrated curriculum that addresses the various content areas and is based on children's needs and interests.
- Create and facilitate developmentally and culturally appropriate learning environments that allow individuals to retain and appreciate their own and each other's language, ethnicity, and cultural heritage.
- Link cultural and seasonal activities in and out of the classroom in curriculum development and planning.
- Adjust teaching practices based on individual children's developmental accomplishments and needs, using recommendations and input from families and specialists.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- Explain and apply major theories of curriculum and learning for young children.
- Integrate local, cultural knowledge across the curriculum.
- Integrate curriculum for seasonal traditional activities, bridging cultural and academic components.
- Identify and use specialists in artistic disciplines to incorporate the building blocks of each art form.

Standard 6:

Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

- 6a. Uphold ethical and other early childhood professional guidelines
- 6b. Identify and be involved with the early childhood field and understand the role of being an informed advocate for young children, families, and the profession
- 6c. Utilize professional communication skills (including technology-mediated strategies) to support and engage with families and colleagues
- 6d. Serve as an advocate in the field of early childhood education
- 6e. Engage in continuous, collaborative learning and reflection to develop an intentional practice in daily work with young children as members of the early childhood profession



Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

Early childhood educators (a) know and use ethical guidelines and other early childhood professional guidelines. They (b) identify and participate as members of the early childhood profession, understanding the importance of becoming an advocate. Early childhood educators (c) have professional communication skills that effectively support their relationships and work with young children, families, and colleagues. They (d) serve as informed advocates for young children, for the families of the children in their care, and for the early childhood profession. Finally, early childhood educators (e) are continuous, collaborative learners who develop and sustain the habit of reflective and intentional practice in their daily work with young children and as members of the early childhood profession.

6a. Uphold ethical and other early childhood professional guidelines

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Demonstrate knowledge of ethical standards, specifically the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethics.
- ☐ Define and maintain rules of confidentiality related to children, families, and colleagues.
- ☐ Recognize professional behavior.
- ☐ Exhibit professional appearance as defined by program practices.
- ☐ Demonstrate good work habits as appropriate to program practices.
- ☐ Support and comply with regulations and licensing standards.
- ☐ Recognize and honor diversities.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Demonstrate a commitment to the professional code of ethics.
- ☐ Manage demands of personal and professional commitments.
- ☐ Maintain personal and professional boundaries with children, families, and service providers.
- ☐ Understand quality child care services.
- ☐ Follow accreditation and/or Alaska's Learn & Grow QRIS standards as applicable to the program.
- ☐ Demonstrate professional behavior.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Act to maintain ethical standards in oneself and others.
- ☐ Work toward credentials, degrees, Learn & Grow Alaska's QRIS, and/or program accreditation.
- ☐ Identify and utilize the cultural and professional expertise of coworkers.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize potentially unethical practices in self or others.
- ☐ Participate in reflection and problem solving to address ethical dilemmas with integrity and respect.
- ☐ Articulate and use a professional code of ethics for making professional decisions.
- ☐ Reflect upon own values and beliefs and how they influence and guide decisions, expectations, and behaviors.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Initiate and mediate group problem solving of ethical dilemmas.
- ☐ Model and mentor others in professional behavior.
- ☐ Maintain currency of research and best practices for children, families, and staff.

6b. Identify and be involved with the early childhood field and understand the role of being an informed advocate for young children, families, and the profession**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ Participate in learning opportunities.
- ☐ Demonstrate awareness of the professional development continuum for early care and education professionals.
- ☐ Maintain ongoing compliance with continuing education requirements.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize and seek out professional resources.
- ☐ Evaluate own performance and set goals to advance knowledge of field.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Actively participate in professional association.
- ☐ Exhibit familiarity with current trends in early childhood education.
- ☐ Promote quality in child care services.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Evaluate current trends and research in early childhood care and education and adjust practice as appropriate.
- ☐ Integrate knowledge of historical, philosophical, psychological, and social foundations of education into planning and decision-making.
- ☐ Articulate personal philosophy of early childhood education based on knowledge of child development and best practices.
- ☐ Integrate cultural values into professional development activities.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Explore models of professional development and evaluate/assess opportunities to promote professional growth of others.
- ☐ Design staff development opportunities for colleagues.
- ☐ Keep up to date on research and policy relevant to early care and education.
- ☐ Develop documentation of the cultural and professional expertise of coworkers and utilize it to mentor coworkers new to the community.
- ☐ Utilize traditional settings as learning environments to support cultural and academic knowledge and skills.
- ☐ Describe relationship between theory and practice.

6c. Utilize professional communication skills (including technology-mediated strategies) to support and engage with families and colleagues**Tier 1 Competencies:**

- ☐ Identify different communication strategies for use with colleagues.
- ☐ Respond to feelings and needs of children, families, and coworkers.
- ☐ Interact positively and professionally with families, staff, coworkers, and colleagues.
- ☐ Recognize program and legal standards around appropriate use of technology in communicating with families, staff, coworkers, and colleagues.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Establish collaborative working relationships with staff, coworkers, and colleagues.
- ☐ Demonstrate professional behavior in utilizing appropriate communication methods.
- ☐ Utilize a variety of communication methods that align with program and legal standards with families, staff, coworkers, and colleagues.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Demonstrate respect, equity, and a commitment to conflict resolution in interactions with colleagues.
- ☐ Work as part of a team, making personal contributions to collaborative efforts.
- ☐ Establish and participate in relationships with experienced colleagues such as supervisors, mentors, and other professionals.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Provide leadership while maintaining a collaborative approach.
- ☐ Consistently collaborate with identified coworkers who have cultural and professional expertise.
- ☐ Initiate problem solving and conflict resolution with staff and colleagues.
- ☐ Engage with families, staff, coworkers, and colleagues in their preferred method of communication.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Advance program practice by working collaboratively with other staff.
- ☐ Provide a work culture that fosters staff initiative to solve problems and resolve conflicts.
- ☐ Model and mentor others in appropriate use of technology for communications with families, staff, coworkers, and colleagues.

6d. Serve as an advocate in the field of early childhood education

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Recognize the field of early childhood education as part of a larger system of support for children's growth and development.
- ☐ Demonstrate an interest in broader early childhood issues.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Demonstrate an understanding of policy and regulation issues that impact the field of early childhood education.
- ☐ Demonstrate support for quality early care and education.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Identify community needs that affect children and families.
- ☐ Exhibit knowledge of advocacy issues in the field of early childhood education.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Describe the legislative process, including legal and advocacy issues that impact children and their families, and communicate this information to others.
- ☐ Explain how government policies affect early childhood education.

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Serve on professional boards and committees.
- ☐ Serve as a spokesperson to the community and the media on early care and education issues.
- ☐ Participate at local, state, regional, and national conferences and events to disseminate knowledge and establish external professional relationships.
- ☐ Advance community well-being through community involvement to promote respect, awareness, and acceptance of diverse worldviews.

6e. Engage in continuous, collaborative learning and reflection to develop an intentional practice in daily work with young children as members of the early childhood profession

Tier 1 Competencies:

- ☐ Use resources to create a professional development plan.
- ☐ Value reflection on teaching and learning.
- ☐ Delight in and have curiosity about children's development.
- ☐ Understand the importance of feedback opportunities for professional growth.

Tier 2 Competencies:

- ☐ Accept advice and constructive criticism as opportunities to improve practice.
- ☐ Exhibit the ability to be flexible.
- ☐ Recognize and respect diverse cultural perspectives and professional expertise of coworkers.

Tier 3 Competencies:

- ☐ Use professional resources to improve practice.
- ☐ Engage routinely in reflection of teaching practices and the behavior of children.
- ☐ Remain open to new ideas and continually refine practice as a result.
- ☐ Update personal professional development plan based on feedback and resources.

Tier 4 Competencies:

- ☐ Participate in job interviews in an appropriate and professional manner.
- ☐ Participate in assessing one's self and other staff members using the program's process and tools.
- ☐ Serve as a coach or provide technical assistance.
- ☐ Build upon personal strengths and identify areas where growth may occur.
- ☐ Articulate a professional value system and implement ongoing professional self-reflection.
- ☐ Demonstrate a willingness to take risks and learn from mistakes

Tier 5 Competencies:

- ☐ Engage in the change process and develop practices to support professional growth.
- ☐ Model and mentor others in the reflective change process and developing practices to advance professional growth.
- ☐ Recognize adult learning styles and apply knowledge to practice to support others in their professional growth.



6. Glossary

The following list includes terms, titles and acronyms you are likely to encounter in the Alaska's Early Care and Education community.

Accreditation: A standard of quality applied to early childhood programs which have successfully completed requirements set forth by the Council on Accreditation (COA), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).

Approved coursework: Credit-bearing courses consisting of early childhood content, offered through accredited colleges.

Articulation agreement: An agreement that matches coursework between schools, which may include the transfer of professional development credentials, courses, credits, and degrees and/or student performance-based competencies from one program or institution to another within one state or across a region.

Associate Degree: An undergraduate academic degree awarded by community, technical, junior, bachelor's degree-granting colleges, and universities upon completion of a course of study usually lasting two years.

Attachment: The process of affection, bonding, and connectedness between an infant and significant caregivers or parents that build a sense of trust and security within the child and profoundly affects all areas of development.

Baccalaureate Degree: A degree awarded by a college or university to a person who has completed undergraduate studies.

Behavior Plan: A plan created by staff, family, child, and resource specialists when applicable to assist the child in reinforcing positive behaviors.

Career Ladder: A framework of professional development criteria for credential levels/endorsements.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): A food assistance program that provides nutritious meals and snacks for eligible children and adults in care.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential: The most widely recognized credential in early childhood education, issued by the Council for Professional Recognition, is based on a core set of competency standards designed to improve the quality of child care. The CDA is valid for three years from the award date. <http://www.cdacouncil.org/the-cda-credential>

Confidentiality: A set of rules that respects a family's right to privacy; ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access, including any information, whether written, oral, or electronic.

Compensation parity: The gap in wages and benefits between teachers working in school-sponsored early childhood and market-based early care and education programs regardless of equal or equivalent education or training.

Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students: Broad statements of what students should know and be able to do as a result of their public school experience.

Culture: The behaviors, beliefs, values, and characteristics of a particular social, ethnic or age group.

Developmentally Appropriate: Programs, activities and environments that are designed on the basis of knowledge

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): The foundation for effective teaching based on child and youth physical, cognitive and social/emotional needs.

Developmentally Effective Approaches: Strategies and techniques grounded in research about how young children learn and develop.

Disposition: A prevailing tendency, mood or inclination; a temperament makeup; and the tendency to act in a certain manner under given circumstances.

Diversity: The variance among family structures, functions, characteristics, and interests.

Early Learning Guidelines: A set of statements that reflect expectations for children's knowledge and behavior designed to support the growth and development of young children from birth to kindergarten.

Effective assessment strategies: A system of observation, documentation and analysis that helps track a child's progress.

Elders/Culture Bearers: A respected individual from a specific cultural group or community who exemplifies the values, ways of knowing and being and who possess the wisdom and willingness to pass their knowledge to future generations.

Facilitator Role: The caregiver/teacher serves as guides to children to foster healthy development.

Family-centered practice: Beliefs and practices that treat families with dignity and respect; are individualized, flexible, and responsive.

IEP: Individualized Education Plan

IFSP: Individualized Family Service Plan

Indigenous: Originating in a particular region or country.

Mentor: A knowledgeable and experienced individual who provides guidance to beginning and experienced professionals to develop knowledge, skills and reflection of practice. Mentorship may include observation and feedback, demonstration of skills, and guidance.

National AfterSchool Association: A national association whose mission is to foster development, provide education, and encourage advocacy for the out-of-school-time community. <http://naaweb.org/about-us>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): A national association dedicated to improving the well-being of and the quality of education and care for all young children birth through age 8. <http://www.naeyc.org>

National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC): A national association dedicated to promoting quality early care and education in home-based settings.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS): A system that administers methods of assessment of the level of quality in early childhood programs for the purpose of quality improvement and community engagement.

Relationship-based Professional Development (RBPD): A framework for supporting early childhood and school-age educators by providing a specialist who builds a relationship with an individual coachee partner as the primary method to support the professional growth and development of adult learners.

Strength-based: The ability to recognize and utilize existing abilities and competencies in children.

Systematic observation: Informal and formal screening and assessment approaches to systematically evaluate a child's growth across all domains of development and learning.

7. References

The Alaska SEED CKC Workgroup and Professional Development Committee used the following resources in the development of the Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) and in the updates to the CKC:

Alaska Native Knowledge Network – University of Alaska Fairbanks. Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools. Retrieved from: <http://ankn.uaf.edu/Publications/CulturalStandards.pdf>

Council for Professional Recognition. CDA competencies and functional areas. Retrieved from: https://www.cdacouncil.org/index2.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=98&Itemid=105

Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. Recommended Practices in Early Childhood Special Education. Retrieved from: <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>

Montana Early Childhood Project. Early Care and Education Knowledge Base A guide to professional early care and education practice. (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.mtecp.org/pdfs/Knowledge Base Assessments/ Knowledge Base Rev 02 2013.pdf>

National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2010 Standards for Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/ncate/standards>

National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2010 Standards for Initial & Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/ncate/files/ncate/NAEYC Initial and Advanced Standards10 2012.pdf>

National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2019 Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ppp>

State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Content and Performance Standards. Retrieved from <http://education.alaska.gov/standards/pdf/standards.pdf>

State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Early Learning Guidelines. (2007). Retrieved from <https://www.alaskaelg.org>

State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Strengthening Families Alaska. Retrieved from <http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/families/default.aspx>

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center. (2013). Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals. Retrieved from <http://northernlightscdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/CKA-and-C-Booklet-Final-8-13.pdf>

Washington State Department of Early Learning. Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals. Retrieved from https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/EPS_0023.pdf

8. Resources

Alaska Content and Performance Standards

The state standards, which create a map for the skills a learner will obtain in each content area from health and PE, language arts, mathematics, and science and at each grade level. Retrieved from <https://education.alaska.gov/standards>

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) provide guidance on what young children should know and be able to do at specific developmental stages. Alaska's Core Knowledge and Competencies document is consistent in approach and intent with the ELG. The ELG serve as a source document, informing professionals and parents about expectations for children's development and learning, while the Core Knowledge and Competencies serves as a source document for adults working with young children. Retrieved from <https://www.alaskaelg.org>

Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools

Alaska's CKC utilized the cultural standards, key elements, and performance indicator ratings from the Alaska Cultural Standards for Educators to develop areas of knowledge and competencies that help early care and education teachers become culturally responsive teachers by creating learning environments that support, respect, promote, validate and integrate the cultures of all children and their families. Retrieved from <http://ankn.uaf.edu/Publications/CulturalStandards.pdf>

NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) updated their Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators in November of 2019. These new standards were used to develop Alaska's updated Core Knowledge and Competencies. The NAEYC Standards are used by the early childhood education profession across a range of roles, settings and degree levels, from associate to baccalaureate to graduate programs. They are also used in higher education accreditation systems, in state policy development, and in program improvement systems. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ppp>

Strengthening Families™ Framework

Strengthening Families framework is a research-informed approach which looks at families through a strength-based lens to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs, and communities in building five key Protective Factors. Retrieved from <https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/>

9. Acknowledgments

Alaska SEED Statewide Steering Committee Members:

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My Professional Development Record

Use this document to record and plan your professional development training and education hours in the Core Knowledge and Competency content areas.

Standard 1: Child Development and Learning in Context

DATE	TRAINING TITLE	TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR	HOURS

Standard 2: Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

DATE	TRAINING TITLE	TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR	HOURS

Standard 3: Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

DATE	TRAINING TITLE	TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR	HOURS

Standard 4: Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

DATE	TRAINING TITLE	TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR	HOURS

Standard 5: Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

DATE	TRAINING TITLE	TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR	HOURS

Standard 6: Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

DATE	TRAINING TITLE	TRAINER/INSTRUCTOR	HOURS



Alaska Early Childhood Administrator Credential (AK-ECAC)

The Alaska Early Childhood Administrator Credential (AK-ECAC) is a series of content specific trainings designed to provide administrators with knowledge in the areas of business/fiscal management, human resources/personnel management, social emotional development, family engagement, what it means to be a professional in early childhood, and how to arrange a classroom environment to support children's development. These content areas have been identified by a statewide advisory panel of early childhood professionals as foundational to any program administrator in order to help provide a quality early care and education program.

AK-ECAC includes the following content area trainings:

- 1) Business/Fiscal Management
- 2) Human Resources/Personnel Development (Center and Group Homes ONLY)
- 3) *Family Engagement*: Strengthening Families Training
- 4) *Social Emotional Development*: Pyramid Model Foundations Training
- 5) *Professionalism*: Introduction to the Alaska Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies
- 6) *Learning Environment*: Environment Assessment Scales (Part I, II and III)
- 7) *Child Development*:
 - *Center*: 12 EC credits (SEED Level 7)
 - *Homes and Group Homes*: CDA or 6 EC credits (Alaska SEED Level 6)

The AK-ECAC content areas are broken into two groups: the Learn & Grow Level 2 trainings and the Fiscal Management and Human Resources trainings. The four Learn & Grow Level 2 trainings paired with the Fiscal Management and Human Resources trainings make up the AK-ECAC. To view a list of Alaska SEED-approved trainings and options which fulfill the AK-ECAC requirements, review the Learn & Grow Level 2 training descriptions and Fiscal Management and Human Resources training descriptions visit: <http://aklearnandgrow.org>.

The AK-ECAC is issued by the Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED).

Alaska Early Childhood Administrator Core Knowledge & Competencies

Early childhood administrators have many responsibilities critical to the success of developing and maintaining a high quality early care and education program. Early childhood administrators' responsibilities include but not limited to: maintaining a fiscally viable program, retaining knowledgeable and skilled teaching staff who can support the development of young children, assure their program is providing culturally responsive and inclusive care for children and families, and work to secure the appropriate resources and supports (e.g., coaching, technical assistance, training, equipment and materials and funding) are available for the program to be actively engaged in continuous quality improvement.

Effective leadership is vital to the success of education and learning in early childhood settings. Without skills and committed leaders to help shape teaching and learning, the opportunity to create and sustain high-quality learning environments is minimal.

The National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has identified several core knowledge and competencies (CKC) essential for an early childhood leader. A subcommittee of Alaska SEED conducted an extensive review of local and national course work and trainings, NAEYC administrator CKC, the Program and Business Administrator Scales (PAS & BAS), and other literature regarding the skills and knowledge of an early childhood leader. This research resulted in the development of the Alaska Early Childhood Administrator Core Knowledge and Competencies designed to help guide individual administrators own professional development and growth to support their programs active engagement in a continuous quality improvement.

The Alaska Early Childhood Administrator Core Knowledge and Competencies (AK-ECACKC) are designed as a self-assessment to encourage administrators to reflect on their skills and to identify one or two goals each year for their own professional growth.

There are eight domain areas associated with the AK-ECACKC:

- 1) Personnel Management
- 2) Program Management
- 3) Inclusionary Practices
- 4) Professional Leadership & Advocacy
- 5) Observation & Child Assessment
- 6) Curriculum & Planning
- 7) Family & Community Engagement
- 8) Child Development

Domain areas 1-6 are additions to the Alaska Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies and specific to early childhood administrators. Administrators must also have core knowledge and competencies in Family & Community engagement and Child Development, however these are addressed in the general CKC standard areas 1 and 2 (see document below for specific subsections and tiers applicable to administrators).

The AK-ECACKC self-assessment includes list of Core Knowledge and Competencies in each domain area followed by a list of suggested ways to measure. Early childhood program administrators participating in Learn & Grow, Alaska Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS), are required to complete the AK-ECACKC self-assessment annually beginning at Level 2 of Learn & Grow. For more information on Learn & Grow, go to <http://www.aklearnandgrow.org>.

Alaska Early Childhood Administrator Core Knowledge & Competencies Self-Assessment

Administrator's Name: _____ Date Completed: _____

Years in EC Field: _____ Years as an Administrator: _____ Program Name: _____

Administrator Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

**Only applicable to Child Care Center Administrators*

Core Knowledge & Competencies	Achieved	Not Yet Achieved	Will work on this year
Personnel Management			
• Knowledge and application of adult and career development, personality typologies, dispositions, and learning styles			
• Knowledge of one's own beliefs, values, and philosophical stance			
• The ability to evaluate ethical and moral dilemmas based on a professional code of ethics			
• The ability to be a reflective practitioner and apply a repertoire of technique to improve the level of personal fulfillment and professional job satisfaction.			
• Assure program staff have access to coaching and mentoring to improve quality of learning and environment and assist with the individual needs of children*			
• Knowledge and application of group dynamics, communication styles, and techniques for conflict resolution*			
• Knowledge of different supervisory and group facilitation styles*			
• The ability to relate to staff and board members of diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds*			
• The ability to hire, supervise, and motivate staff to high levels of performance*			
• Skill in consensus building, team development, and staff performance appraisal*			
• Knowledge of the rationale for and research supporting different models of child guidance and classroom management			
• Knowledge and importance of the Alaska's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies			
• Knowledge of organizational theory and leadership styles as they relate to early childhood work environments*			
• Provide a supportive work environment that encompasses program policies and procedures that support staff well-being, empowerment, and overall quality of work life*			
• Create and sustain a culture of continuous quality improvement that fosters leadership, equity, professionalism and positive adult-child and adult-adult interactions			

Suggested ways to demonstrate competencies:

- ▶ Design a staffing pattern aligned to program goals and resources, including qualifications, job descriptions, salaries, and benefits
- ▶ Design or revise personnel policies including hiring, supervision, and termination procedures
- ▶ Demonstrate staff recruitment techniques, including advertisement of vacancies, interview questions, interview procedures, and assessment of qualifications
- ▶ Create an orientation plan for new staff
- ▶ Develop individual staff development plans in coordination with the evaluation process
- ▶ Design a plan to supervise marginal employees using progressive discipline procedures
- ▶ Actively participate in the states Quality Recognition and Improvement System (Learn & Grow)
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to use conflict resolution techniques
- ▶ Provide staff with access to qualified coaches to support the development of the learning environment to optimize positive adult-child and peer-to-peer learning opportunities for all children in the classroom.

Notes/Actions:**Program Management*****Fiscal***

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|---|--|--|--|
| • Knowledge of bookkeeping methods and accounting terminology | | | |
| • Skill in budgeting, cash flow management, grant writing, and fund-raising | | | |

Laws & Regulations

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| • Knowledge and application of the advantages and disadvantages of different legal structures | | | |
| • Knowledge of different codes and regulations as they relate to the delivery of early childhood program services | | | |
| • Knowledge of child custody, child abuse, special education, confidentiality, antidiscrimination, insurance liability, and contract and labor laws pertaining to program management | | | |
| • Knowledge and application of policies and procedures that meet state and local regulations as well as professional standards pertaining to the health and safety of young children | | | |
| • Knowledge of nutritional and health requirements for food service | | | |

Marketing & Public Relations

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|--|--|--|--|
| • Knowledge of the fundamentals of effective marketing, public relations, and community outreach | | | |
| • The ability to evaluate the cost benefit of different marketing and promotional strategies | | | |
| • Skill in developing a business plan and effective promotional literature, handbooks, newsletters, and press releases | | | |

Community Partnerships

- The ability to communicate the program's philosophy and promote a positive public image to families, business leaders, public officials, and prospective funders
- The ability to promote linkages with local schools

Suggested ways to demonstrate competencies:

- ▶ Develop a financial policies and procedures manual
- ▶ Facilitate a cost of care study within your community
- ▶ Demonstrate collaboration with others to investigate group buying discounts
- ▶ Write a grant proposal to support a financial resource plan
- ▶ Develop and implement a fund raising plan
- ▶ Analyze an audit report in relationship to financial status and projected needs
- ▶ Demonstrate how to access financial resources at the local, state, and federal levels
- ▶ Develop a start-up and operating budget
- ▶ Work as part of a team to prepare an annual budget plan that reflects an understanding of the relationship between a quality program for children and available resources
- ▶ Present and respond to questions about budgets and/or monthly financial statements
- ▶ Develop a yearly budget showing line items and amount
- ▶ Prepare a financial report
- ▶ Write a grant proposal to support program goals
- ▶ Formulate a plan for employee benefits based upon legal requirements, available options, and staff needs
- ▶ Design a checklist of information needed for financial planning and monitoring
- ▶ Develop a fee policy for your program
- ▶ Develop a sliding fee scale based on matching funding
- ▶ Describe an appropriate benefits package for staff
- ▶ Identify grant opportunities based on program need
- ▶ Prepare a grant proposal aligned to specific funding guidelines and requirements
- ▶ Formulate and implement a fundraising plan based on the appropriateness of the resources and the program needs
- ▶ Design literature and other informational tools that describe and promote the program
- ▶ Prepare a press release about a special event or person connected with the program
- ▶ Interview a representative of the media
- ▶ Present an information session describing the program to families, the governing board, funding agencies, and the community
- ▶ Document media coverage for a special event
- ▶ Serve on the board or committee of an agency or organization

Notes/Actions:

Inclusionary Practices			
• Knowledge of atypical development, including mild and severe disabilities in physical, health, cognitive, social-emotional, communication, and sensory functioning			
• Knowledge of licensing standards as well as state and federal laws (e.g., ADA, IDEA) as they relate to services and accommodations for children with special needs			
• Knowledge of the characteristics of giftedness and how educational environments can support children with exceptional capabilities			
• The ability to work collaboratively as part of family-professional team in planning and implementing appropriate services for children with special needs			
• Knowledge of special education resources and services			
• Knowledge of the rationale for and research supporting different models of child guidance and classroom management			
• Ability to apply different techniques that promote positive and supportive relationships with children and among children			
• Ability to reflect on teaching behavior and modify guidance techniques based on the developmental and special needs of children			
• Knowledge of administrative practices that promote the inclusion of children with special needs			
• Knowledge of developmental and social emotional screening and monitoring/referral systems			
Suggested ways to demonstrate competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Design and implement, with staff input, instruction practices that meet the diverse needs of children and families and provide the supports and resources necessary of children with disabilities ▶ Describe ways in which the curriculum can be adapted to meet the individual needs and strengths of the children in the program ▶ Identify community resources that are appropriate sources for screening, assessing, and serving children ▶ Develop a portfolio of local agencies that provide services for families of children with special needs ▶ Describe ways to work with parents of children with special needs 			
Notes/Actions:			

Professional Leadership & Advocacy			
• Identify personal leadership style			
• Apply knowledge of personal leadership style and assess its impact on administering a program			
• Establish and implement effective organizational communication structures and decision-making process			
• Identify a personal statement of philosophy of early childhood and family support			
• The ability to articulate a vision, clarify and affirm values, and create a culture built on norms of continuous quality improvement and ethical conduct			
• The ability to evaluate program effectiveness (Benchmarks of Quality, PAS)			
• The ability to define organizational problems, gather data to generate alternative solutions, and effectively apply analytical skills in its solution			
• The ability to advocate on behalf of young children, their families, and the profession			
• Knowledge of the legislative processes, social issues, and public policy affecting young children and their families			
• Knowledge of the mechanics of writing, including organizing ideas, grammar, punctuation, and spelling			
• The ability to use written communication to effectively express one's thoughts			
• Knowledge of oral communication techniques, including establishing rapport, preparing the environment, active listening, and voice control			
• The ability to communicate ideas effectively in a formal presentation			
• Knowledge of basic computer hardware and software applications			
• The ability to use the computer for program administrative functions			
Suggested ways to demonstrate competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assess personal leadership style and identify areas that need improvement ▶ Develop a plan using personal leadership style to improve areas that need improvement ▶ Demonstrate the ability to use conflict resolution techniques ▶ Develop a personal statement of philosophy of early children and family support and demonstrate how this is shared and infused into the daily activities in your program. (orientation, postings, ongoing training and support for teachers. 			

Observation & Child Assessment			
• Knowledge and application of developmentally appropriate child observation and assessment methods			
• Knowledge of the purposes, characteristics, and limitations of different assessment tools and techniques			
• Ability to use different observation techniques, including formal and informal observation, behavior sampling, and developmental checklists			
• Knowledge of ethical practice as it relates to the use of assessment information			
• The ability to apply child observation and assessment data to planning and structuring developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and collect child outcomes.			

Suggested ways to demonstrate competencies:

- ▶ Identify and assure staff has training on how to use evidence based child assessment tools and practices to identify children's strengths and next areas of development.
- ▶ Demonstrate how individual child assessment information is being used to guide the design and facilitation of the learning environment and adult-child and peer-to-peer interactions.

Curriculum & Planning

- Knowledge of different curriculum models; appropriate curriculum goals; and different instructional strategies for children birth – age 12
- Ability to plan and implement a curriculum based on knowledge of individual children's developmental patterns, family and community goals, institutional and cultural context, and state standards
- Ability to design integrated and meaningful curricular experiences in the content areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, drama, movement, and technology
- Ability to implement anti-bias instructional strategies that take into account culturally valued content and children's home experiences
- Ability to evaluate outcomes of different curricular approaches
- Knowledge and application of different curriculum models, standards for high-quality programming, and child assessment practices
- The ability to develop and implement a program to meet the needs of young children at different ages and developmental levels (birth – age 12)
- Knowledge of administrative practices that promote the inclusion of children with special needs

Suggested ways to demonstrate competencies:

- ▶ Document that staff input has been incorporated into the design, arrangement, and equipping of indoor and outdoor space to support children's growth and learning
- ▶ Use a curriculum, with staff input, sensitive to the ages and developmental levels of children
- ▶ Plan grouping practices that provide the necessary supports as children grow and attain skills
- ▶ Describe the curriculum used and identify ways in which the curriculum encompasses cultural tolerance
- ▶ Describe ways the knowledge of principles and practices of child development is used in the evaluation of children's growth and development
- ▶ Describe the use of observation and assessment instruments to observe, record, assess children's behavior, and respond to individual needs and strengths
- ▶ Describe how assessment results are incorporated into curriculum development for individualized learning opportunities
- ▶ Describe ways that staff support bias-free interactions with children and families

Family & Community Engagement

- See Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships
- Subsections A, B, & C
 - Tier 5 competencies of each subsection

Child Development

- See Standard 1: Promoting Child Development & Learning
- Subsections A, B, & C
 - Tier 5 competencies of each subsection

Annual Goals

Supports/ Resources needed

Professional Development Planning Resources:

- **thread** Professional Development Specialists
Southcentral Alaska: info@threadalaska.org
Southeast Alaska: info@aeys-sea.org
Interior/Northern Alaska: thread@thrivalaska.com
- Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED): info@seedalaska.org or www.seedalaska.org



Alaska System for Early Education Development
Alaska's early childhood professional development system

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