Responsive Equitable System for Preparing Early Childhood Teachers (RESPECT) across Nebraska
Draft Competency Framework

Introduction

The competencies in this framework were developed through analysis of several sets of competencies defining what early childhood educators should know and be able to do[1]. These competencies are designed to be used in programs that prepare early childhood educators to work with children birth through age eight, because the current Nebraska teaching certifications available are the Inclusive Early Childhood Education (birth to age 8) and the Early Childhood Education endorsement (pre-k to third grade). The competencies are not "leveled" (i.e., level of knowledge or skill at the CDA, AA, or BA level) because some competencies will be mastered earlier for some students and later for others, depending upon their pathway to degree and certification. The competencies are organized according to knowledge and practice/skills (i.e., application of knowledge) to facilitate teaching and learning of the competencies and clear operationalization and assessment of competencies.

We identified three cross-cutting values: (1) Relationship-based approaches; (2) Reflective practice; and (3) Culturally sustaining practice. Each of these values are described in detail below and reflected in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions explicated within all the competency domains. There are many intersections among the competency domains, and we have attempted to organize the domains in a way that minimizes redundancy but also reflects the cross-cutting values. For example, the knowledge base undergirding relationship-based approaches to practice appears in the Child Development and Learning domain and is also reflected in all other domains. Reflective practice and culturally sustaining practice are each a unique domain with a body of knowledge and associated skills, but examples of these competencies in practice also appear in other domains.

Glossary is forthcoming.

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[1] NAEYC; DEC:EI/ECSE; Nebraska Core Competencies; Nebraska Rule 24 (Early Childhood Inclusive); Nebraska Rule 20; Zero to Three; InTASC; CUPID; Trauma-informed Practice; Diversity-informed Tenets

<div align="center">**Cross-cutting Values**</div>

Relationship-based Practice

A vast body of research documents the importance of positive, supportive, healthy relationships with families, teachers, and peers to young children's development and learning. Developmental relational science provides robust evidence that safe, stable, nurturing relationships are "biological necessities for all children" for supporting development of foundational skills that contribute to learning, health, and resilience across the lifespan (e.g., self-regulation, social skills, executive functions, constructive coping) and for mitigating toxic stress responses. Children learn best when they feel safe, secure, and included. Children need to experience belonging within their classroom community. Therefore, relationship-based practice in early childhood education requires that educators (1) form positive, supportive, healthy relationships that value the uniqueness of each child and build on their strengths; (2) form positive partnerships with families as a foundation for supporting child development and learning; (3) nurture children's development of positive friendships with peers; and (4) establish and maintain positive professional relationships.

Culturally Sustaining Practice

Culturally sustaining practice is the educational approach of recognizing diverse cultures, languages, and ways of being as critical assets that must be intentionally centered and valued. Key features of culturally sustaining practice include seeing and being in relationship with each person as a unique and complex individual rather than as a representative of their culture, valuing language, cultural practices, and intersectional ways of being, having a curriculum and learning materials that are reflective of a wide range of cultures, and connecting with and being accountable to the community. Equity of access and opportunity are at the heart of culturally sustaining practice, which requires questioning and reimagining dominant power hierarchies. Culturally sustaining practice is most equitable when there is a balance between providing access to the dominant culture, recognizing it as the vehicle toward achieving power within normative structures, while simultaneously finding and creating ways to decenter that dominant culture to uplift and learn from minoritized ways of thinking and being. Culturally sustaining practice builds on the work of culturally responsive and culturally relevant pedagogies, and it moves education from a place where cultural diversity is respected and represented, to a place where it is also elevated and nurtured.

Reflective Practice

Early childhood professionals' lived experiences and associated beliefs and emotions influence their practice. Understanding how one's lived experiences have shaped beliefs and

emotions around child development, learning, and relationships is critical for growth as an educator, especially when examining beliefs that may be biased or incongruent with current research. Reflective practice involves examining one's own thoughts, feelings, and knowledge about child development and learning and how they influence behavior; and critically examining the effect of one's behaviors on others. Self-awareness is central to reflective practice and supports educators' ability to be intentional rather than reactive when interacting with children, families, and other professionals. Reflective practice occurs in the moment as educators observe children's behavior with curiosity, make meaning of their observations, and respond with intentionality. Simultaneously, reflective educators are aware of their own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs that are activated by children's behavior, and therefore they are better able to self-regulate, thus engaging in more supportive and effective practice. Reflective practice also involves educators critically reviewing their practice, individually or collaboratively, and considering multiple perspectives for understanding themselves and others. Research evidence indicates that educators who are more reflective engage in more developmentally appropriate practice, are more sensitive with young children, and experience lower levels of stress in the workplace.

1. **Domain 1: Child Development Knowledge, Content Knowledge, and Developmentally Appropriate Strategies/Instructional Practices**
   a. **Child Development and Learning**
      i. Theoretical Understanding
         1. Explain major theoretical concepts, assumptions, and debates related to early childhood development and learning.
         2. Explain current research that forms the basis of early childhood development and learning.
         3. Explain current research related to developmental domains, play, and temperament.
      ii. Typical Development (key developmental domains: physical and fine and gross motor, social emotional, cognitive, aesthetic development)
         1. Describe the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age 8 across physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic domains, including bilingual/multilingual development. (NAEYC 1a)
         2. Describe how biological and environmental factors affect pre-, peri-, and postnatal development and learning.
         3. Describe key developmental milestones across all domains of development.
         4. Explain connections between domains of development (e.g., language and social development; cognitive and language development; language development and self-regulation).
         5. Describe how children are active and competent learners (learning from birth).
         6. Describe how safe, supportive, nurturing relationships promote healthy development across domains.
         7. Describe the impact of social and physical environments on development and learning.
         8. Explain the importance of play in promoting children's development and learning. (NE Core Competencies)
         9. Describe the developmental benefits of multilingualism.
         10. Explain how cognitive development occurs through trial and error, exploration, experimentation, creativity, and play.
         11. Explain how all behavior has meaning and is affected by physiology, relationships, and both immediate environments and broader contexts (CUPID)
         12. Use a strengths-based perspective in understanding children and families.
      iii. Individual Differences

1. Explain how each child is an individual with unique developmental variations, experiences, temperament, strengths, interests, abilities, challenges, approaches to learning, life situations, and the capacity to make choices (NAEYC 1b).
2. Describe the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in the context of early childhood care and education.

iv. Exceptionalities in Development and Learning
1. Identify/describe technologies that support instructional planning, delivery, and assessment for children with disabilities (e.g., augmentative, and alternative communication systems).
2. Identify/describe local, regional, and/or state services for families with special needs.
3. Identify the etiology, characteristics, and classification of common disabilities and how this impacts development and learning in the first years of life (Rule 24).
4. Describe the impact of language delays on all areas of development.
5. Explain the impact of medical conditions on a child's development and families' concerns, resources, and priorities.
6. Describe the accelerated development and complex needs of children who are gifted, including those who are twice exceptional.
7. Identify key strategies teachers can use to meet the needs of children with exceptionalities.

v. Developmental Contexts
1. Explain the ways that child development and learning processes occur in multiple contexts, including family, culture, language, community, and early learning settings, as well as in a larger societal context that includes social inequities (NAEYC 1c).
   a. Identify/describe how family, culture, and language influence children's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development, including the child's identities.
   b. Identify/describe how adversity, trauma, stress, and abuse may affect children's development in multiple domains. (TIP – K3; NE Core Comp CGD)
   c. Identify/describe how past and current policies influence health, learning and development of young children and families.

b. Content Knowledge
i. Developmentally Appropriate Practice

1. Explain how to use knowledge of child development (i.e., how young children learn and process information in each developmental domain and/or content discipline, the learning trajectories for each discipline) to inform practice (NAEYC 5b).
2. Explain why positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions are the foundation for their work with young children (NAEYC 4a).
3. Identify/describe teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child (NAEYC 4b).
4. Describe/explain positive guidance strategies and why and how they work.
5. Prepare children for transitions (e.g., from one classroom or group to another; from preschool to kindergarten).
6. Explain the importance of child-led activity for development and learning.
7. Explain the importance of movement and physical activity for learning and development.
8. Describe how play promotes development and learning, and the teacher's role in supporting children's play.

ii. Core Concepts and Practices (+all content areas, curriculum)
1. Describe the central concepts, methods, and tools of inquiry, and structures in each academic discipline (each academic content area) (NAEYC 5a).
2. Recognize that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. (InTASC, Pos. 86)
3. Explain theoretical and research basis of developmental and academic curricula and instructional strategies for young children.
   a. Curriculum and instructional resources
   b. Language and literacy, including the science of reading
   c. Creative expressions and creativity
   d. Science and scientific thinking
   e. Math and mathematical thinking
   f. Approaches to learning
   g. Health and physical development
   h. Social and emotional development
   i. Social studies

iii. Health and Safety

1. Describe good health practices (e.g., rest, good nutrition, exercise, handwashing, tooth brushing) (NE Core Competencies, Rule 24)
2. Describe signs of emotional distress, neglect, and abuse (Rule 24).

c. **Developmentally Appropriate Strategies/Instructional Practices: Skills Developmentally Appropriate Strategies:** Application of Child Development and Learning and Content Knowledge. Use teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child, recognizing that differentiating instruction, incorporating play as a core teaching practice, and supporting the development of executive function skills are critical for young children.

    i. Developmentally Appropriate Teaching Strategies (all developmental domains, whole child, play-centered, all curricular content areas including health and safety)

        1. Facilitate child-initiated learning and use teacher-scaffolded and initiated instruction to complement child-initiated learning.
        2. Build positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for work with young children (NAEYC 4a).
        3. Create inclusive and welcoming environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, meaningful, and engaging for each child, including those with disabilities. (Rule 24)
        4. Apply the Early Learning Guidelines: Nebraska's Birth to Five Learning and Development Standards as a reference for curriculum planning (when working with this age group).
        5. Use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning (NAEYC 4c).
        6. Apply knowledge of how young children learn and the learning trajectories for each discipline, child development theory and research to make decisions about spontaneous and planned learning experiences and curriculum development, implementation, assessment, and evaluation to ensure that learning will be stimulating, engaging, and meaningful for each child.
        7. Translate knowledge of human relations into attitudes, skills, and techniques which result in favorable experiences for students.
        8. Applies a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically inclusive instructional strategies to achieve learning goals. (InTASC, Pos. 180)

9. Use general and specialized content knowledge to teach across curricular content areas.
10. Modify teaching practices by applying, expanding, integrating, and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, their knowledge of curriculum content resources, and their pedagogical content knowledge (NAEYC 5c).
11. Use positive guidance strategies that are appropriate to children's individual development and needs.
12. Actively supervise and limit children's exposure to screen time.
13. Provide a balance of active and quiet play, child-directed and teacher-directed activities, individual and group activities, and indoor and outdoor play.
14. Structure developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to work independently, with other children, and with adults.
15. Create learning experiences that make cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills accessible and meaningful for students to assure mastery of the content.
16. Evaluate the suitability of curriculums and programs for use with a particular child or group of children. (NE Core Competencies)
    a. Identify learner misconceptions in a discipline that interfere with learning and create experiences to build accurate conceptual understanding.
    b. Use multiple representations and explanations that capture key ideas in the discipline.
    c. Stimulate learner reflection on prior content knowledge, link new concepts to familiar concepts, and make connections to learners' experiences.
    d. Use positive, explicit, detailed feedback to increase child engagement.
    e. Use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic issues.
    f. Facilitate learners' ability to develop diverse social and cultural perspectives that expand their understanding of local and global issues and create novel approaches to solving problems.
    g. Use developmentally appropriate technologies to support instructional assessment, planning, and delivery.

ii. Play and Nature
    1. Foster appreciation for natural beauty (NE Core Competencies).

2. Use knowledge of how play supports learning and the development of the whole child to plan and implement activities.
3. Use play-based approaches to promote children's access to and participation in exploration and concept learning experiences.
4. Create multiple opportunities for young children to develop and practice play skills and engage in meaningful play experiences independently and cooperatively.
5. Facilitate opportunities for child-led play.
6. Plan opportunities for children to use items found in nature to creatively express themselves.
7. Facilitate children's ability to express themselves creatively by freely moving to music.
8. Encourage imagination and creativity for all children.
9. Demonstrate skills to support and expand play.

iii. Individualization: Individualize design of environments, learning experiences, and assessment for children with special needs to promote development and learning.

1. Identify potential developmental delays or mental health needs through appropriate screening and partner with families to make referrals to the Early Development Network, school district, or other agencies responsible for implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

    a. Implement family-centered approaches to work with families of children with special needs.
    b. Use strength-based practices to adapt to specific learning needs.
    c. Develop individualized plans and support various transitions that occur for the young child and their family.
    d. Use technology effectively in supporting each child's learning and development (e.g., various assistive technologies including augmentative and alternative communication systems).
    e. Engage children with disabilities in meaningful learning activities and social interactions.
    f. Structure social environments using peer models, proximity, and responsive adults.
    g. Use a continuum of intervention strategies to support access to the general curriculum and daily routines and make adaptations for the unique developmental and

learning needs of children, including those from diverse backgrounds.

h. Design intervention strategies incorporating information from multiple disciplines.

i. Develop, implement, and evaluate IFSPs and IEPs with family members and other professionals as members of a team, that support development and learning as well as caregiver responsiveness, align individual goals with developmental and academic content, and support the child's independent functioning in the child's natural environment.

j. Assess progress in all developmental domains, play, engagement, and independence in everyday routines.

2. **Domain 2: Partnerships with Families and Communities**
   a. **Partnerships with Families and Communities-Knowledge**
      i. Partnerships with Families
         1. Explain the important roles that families play in children's development and learning.
         2. Identify/describe the diversity of families (NAEYC 2a).
         3. Identify/describe experiences that can influence family and child well-being, including stress, trauma, economic challenges, etc.
         4. Explain the importance and characteristics of effective family-educator partnerships. (CUPID, Pos. 52-79)
         5. Describe family-centered practices and explain how changing needs and priorities in families' lives impact children's development and learning. (DEC- EI:ECE, Pos. 7)
         6. Describe/explain diverse family characteristics and how language, culture, and family background influence children's learning. (Rule 24, Pos. 16)
         7. Understand and explain how children's learning is influenced by language, culture, and family background, and apply that knowledge to implement learning experiences and strategies that respect the diverse needs of all children.
      ii. Partnerships with Communities
         1. Explain the important roles that communities play in children's development and learning.
         2. Describe/explain diverse community characteristics including language and culture as assets for children's development and learning.
      iii. Identify what services are available for families with specific needs and describe how and when to connect families to services. (CUPID, Pos. 52-79 (D1-D6)
   b. **Partnerships with Families and Communities - Skills**
      i. Partnerships with Families
         1. Create respectful, affirming, culturally sustaining, reciprocal relationships with families to learn about child and family strengths. (NE core comp)
         2. Seek knowledge of family practices to understand children and adapt interactions as necessary. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 315, modified).
         3. Collaborate as partners with families to support young children's development and learning (NAEYC 2b; Rule 24, Pos. 41, NE Core Competencies, Pos. 138; DEC- EI:ECE, Pos. 7)

4. Use "people-first" language in all communication, including speaking to or about children and families (i.e., child with a disability). (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 323)
5. Use a variety of approaches to communicate with families (e.g., bulletin boards, websites, notes home, newsletters, texts, emails, apps) to provide families with up to date, comprehensive, and unbiased information. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 410)
6. Establish and maintain a family handbook, with family input, describing program policies and procedures. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 510)
7. Build positive relationships with all families through program activities such as: family nights or breakfasts; home visits; parent-teacher conferences; and ongoing communication using multiple modes (written, verbal, text/program app). (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 318)
8. Collaborate with families to regularly exchange expertise, knowledge, and information for shared decision-making (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 422; Pox. 177 modified; Pos. 415)
9. Share information with families about general principles of child growth, development, and early brain development.
10. Communicate with families about the importance of talking and reading with children at home to increase children's language development. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 221)
11. Provide opportunities for families to gain an understanding of the link between physical health and children's social, emotional, and cognitive development and learning outcomes. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 172)
12. Support families to achieve the goals they have for their young child's development and learning. (DEC- EI:ECSE , Pos. 9)
13. Promote families' competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes. (DEC- EI:ECSE , Pos. 9)
14. Use information from families to understand children and adapt interactions as necessary.
15. Individualize routine care by incorporating family practices whenever possible. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 317)
16. Support families' use of home language and share information about the developmental benefits of learning in multiple languages.

17. Assist families to discover and access community-based services and other informal and formal resources to meet family-identified child or family needs.
18. Involve families in planning learning activities and evaluating the program. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 407)
19. Invite family involvement (e.g., volunteer in the classroom or as a parent advisory group member) and collaboration in designing activities (e.g., sharing special talents, skills, or family culture), ensuring that all families have opportunities to participate. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 316 & NE Core Competencies, Pos. 406)
20. Demonstrate sensitivity to children's parents/caregivers who often have unaddressed trauma issues that can impact their ability to help their children. (Trauma-informed Practice (TIP), Pos. 27)
21. Demonstrate ability to teach children and parent/caregivers techniques that help children who have experienced trauma including relaxation, calming, soothing, and grounding themselves and/or their children and strategies for implementing CAPPD (being calm, attuned, predictable, present, and de-escalating). (Trauma-informed Practice (TIP), Pos. 29)
22. Collaborate with families in using assessment data, developing child and family-based outcomes/goals, planning for interventions and instruction, and monitoring progress.
23. Discuss concerns with families when there is evidence that a child may have a special need and a possible referral is necessary.

ii. Partnerships with Communities
1. Use community resources to support young children's learning and development (NE Core Competencies).
2. Use community resources to support families (NAEYC 2c).
3. Build, nurture, and sustain meaningful partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies (NAEYC 2c).

3. **Domain 3: Learning Environments**
    a. **Learning Environments - Knowledge** Describe/explain key impacts of social and physical environments on development and learning. (Rule 24)
        i. Explain how development and learning occur in varied contexts and environments (e.g., early learning setting as well as family, community, and broader societal settings). (NAEYC, Pos. 4, NAEYC, Pos. 5, DEC-EI:ECSE , Pos. 3)
        ii. Identify biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development. (DEC- EI:ECSE , Pos. 4, modified).
        iii. Explain principles of universal design for learning (UDL) and how they can be applied in early childhood environments.
        iv. Know how to use specific materials to support development (e.g., blocks, manipulatives).
    b. **Learning Environments - Skills**
        i. Physical Environments
            1. Establish play areas to encourage active play, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and self-sufficiency for all children**.** (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 139).
            2. Plan and create a rich, stimulating environment that encourages engagement, interaction, exploration, and investigation.
            3. Create learning environments that intentionally promote growth in all domains of development.
                a. Provide and use a variety of equipment, activities, and learning opportunities to promote physical development of all children. NE Core Competencies, Pos. 182
                b. Provide stimulus-rich indoor and outdoor environments where children can engage in nature exploration and education, sensory experiences, physical and motor development, self-initiated discovery, and meaningful play experiences. (NE Core Competencies, many; DEC-EI:ECSE , Pos. 27).
                c. Design learning environments that foster and support children's natural tendency to move and be active throughout the day. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 171, modified)
                d. Incorporate living things such as plants, insects, and pets into the environment while following appropriate safety and health practices, if possible. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 263).

e. Design environments that support creative expression through language, music, dramatic play, movement, and visual art, both indoors and outdoors. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 162)

f. Create environments that promote learning through trial and error, exploration, experimentation, and creativity. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 21).

4. Materials

a. Provide a variety of developmentally appropriate toys, materials, and equipment and materials that are clean, safe, and free from hazards and appropriate for the developmental stage of each child. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 120)

b. Organize materials in predictable ways, on the child's level, to allow for children's self-reliant exploration and so children know where to locate and return selections. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 122)

c. Rotate materials on a regular basis to allow new experiences and opportunities for exploration and learning. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 123)

d. Use materials representing multiple cultures, ages, abilities, gender roles, and ethnic groups in non-stereotypical ways. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 121)

e. Provide adequate time and appropriate materials for children to explore and expand their fine and gross motor skills. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 189)

f. Provide a variety of counting materials, puzzles, and books that encourage mathematical thinking and problem solving. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 235)

g. Use a variety of learning materials that reflect children's diverse backgrounds and abilities.

5. Routines

a. Implement schedules, routines, and transitions that offer choices and meet each child's developmental needs.

b. Provide time for spontaneous and/or extended creative play. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 153)

c. Provide opportunities for outdoor activities daily (weather permitting). (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 173)

d. Use routines and transitions to build and support relationships. (CUPID, Pos. 92)

       e. Alert children well in advance to changes in activities or routines. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 343-344)

       f. Structure routines and transitions to support children's autonomy. (CUPID, Pos. 39)

6. Accessibility and Accommodation (applicable to children with and without verified disabilities)

      a. Provide the least restrictive environment for all children. (Rule 20, Pos. 33)

      b. Provide for special needs of children in care including disabilities, allergies, and medical needs. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 86)

      c. Work with families and staff to determine use of adaptive equipment. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 70)

      d. Accommodate food choices based on children's allergies, health issues, and/or family dietary preferences as appropriate (e.g., breastfeeding vs. use of formula, dietary practices based on religion, etc.).

      e. Implement accommodations for children who need them, regardless of disability verification (e.g., own square or cube chair if cannot be on carpet)

7. Health and Safety

      a. Implement basic health, nutrition, and safety management procedures (Rule 24).

      b. Create opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices (i.e., rest, good nutrition, exercise, handwashing, and tooth brushing) (NE Core Competencies).

      c. Incorporate healthy habits (e.g., nutrition, safety, hygiene) into curriculum and daily routines.

      d. Practice and model healthy behaviors (e.g., handwashing, safety, nutrition).

      e. Design indoor and outdoor environments that balance safety with stimulation and freedom, where children can be always supervised by sight and sound without relying on artificial monitoring devices. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 71, CUPID, Pos. 14, merged)

      f. Routinely assess environments inside and outside for safety and sanitation and ensure any problems are resolved. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 77)

g. Actively supervise children to ensure safety indoors and outdoors.
h. Ensure food is never withheld or threatened to be withheld as a form of discipline.
i. Provide for special needs of children including disabilities, allergies, and medical needs.
j. Ensure children are released only to an authorized adult.
k. Recognize signs of emotional distress, neglect, and abuse and follow reporting procedures.
l. Refer children (families) to community health, nutrition, and social services when indicated.
m. Provide health and safety information to families on a routine basis (e.g., car seats/safety restraints, fire safety,

ii. Social Environments
1. Promote an overall climate that fosters trust, peer collaboration, inclusion, and a sense of belonging for all children, especially those who belong to historically marginalized communities. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 479-487)
2. Create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, positive social interactions, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. (Rule 20, Pos. 6, DEC- EI:ECSE , Pos. 27)
3. Create an environment that is welcoming to all children and families.
4. Create safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environments in which children with and without disabilities develop emotional well-being and positive social interactions.
5. Support children's independent functioning in their natural environment.
6. Demonstrate ability to recognize dehumanizing biases reflected in instructional materials.
7. Demonstrate ability to relate to people from backgrounds other than their own.
8. Manage resources of time (e.g., schedule) and space (i.e., room arrangement and materials) in ways that engage all learners.

4. **Domain 4: Reflective Practice**
    a. **Reflective Practice - Knowledge**
        i. Define reflection and reflective practices. (CUPID, Pos. 193)
        ii. Explain why reflective practice is essential to engaging in optimal interactions with children and adults.
        iii. Explain what factors can influence adults' reactions (e.g., thoughts, feelings, and behaviors) and responses to children. (CUPID, Pos. 196)
        iv. Explain how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognize how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others. (9i InTASC)
        v. Recognize the importance of one's own emotions, responses to children's behaviors, emotional regulation strategies and own mental health for effective practice.
        vi. Describe the impact that teacher well-being and self-regulation have on teaching practice, learning environment, and children's well-being.
        vii. Identify resources that can support teacher well-being and mental health.
    b. **Reflective Practice - Skills**
        i. Self-awareness and Improvement of Practice
            1. Interpret observations of self and others with knowledge of how contexts can influence development and behavior. (CUPID, Pos. 207)
            2. Develop and sustain the habit of reflective and intentional practice in daily work with young children and as members of the early childhood profession. (NAEYC, Pos. 31; DEC-EI:ECSE)
            3. Reflect on and strengthen self-awareness to improve practice. (A7.4) (Zero to Three, Pos. 38)
            4. Evaluate one's own performance, set goals for improvement, and utilize self-reflection to engage in ongoing assessment of progress toward self-improvement. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 460)
            5. Use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on one's practice and to plan for adaptations/adjustments. (9g InTASC, Pos. 202)
            6. Reflect on one's own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child. (Rule 24, Pos. 53)
            7. Use evidence to continually evaluate one's practice, particularly the effects of one's choices and actions on others (e.g., students, families, other professionals, and the community) (Rule 20, Pos. 18, modified)
        ii. Reflection Focused on Culture, Identity, and Bias

1. Reflect on their own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with learners and their families. (9m InTASC)
2. Reflect on one's own cultures, values, beliefs, and attitudes, especially related to caregiving and education (Diversity-informed Tenets , Pos. 3-4; CUPID, Pos. 56; A5.4)

iii. Continually evaluate their practice, particularly the effects of their choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapt practice to meet the needs of each learner. (InTASC, Pos. 191)

5. **Domain 5: Culturally Sustaining Practice**
   a. **Culturally Sustaining Practice - Knowledge**
      i. Demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the role of culture in shaping individual values, beliefs, and behaviors. (Zero to Three, Pos. 22)
      ii. Demonstrate knowledge of the broad characteristics of culture that shape human experiences and perspectives (CUPID, Pos. 54)
      iii. Demonstrate an awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the values, lifestyles, contributions, and history of a pluralistic society. (Rule 20, Pos. 23)
      iv. Demonstrate a familiarity with a broad repertoire of culturally relevant, linguistically relevant, anti-biased teaching approaches and teaching strategies. (NAEYC, Pos. 18, modified)
      v. Demonstrate knowledge of non-dominant ways of knowing, bodies of knowledge, sources of strength, and routes to healing within families and communities. (Diversity-informed Tenets, Pos. 11)
      vi. Recognize ways in which dehumanizing biases may be reflected in instructional materials (Rule 20, Pos. 26)
      vii. Demonstrate awareness of dehumanizing biases (e.g., "-isms") and some of the impacts these and other systems of oppression have on children and families (Diversity-informed Tenets, Pos. 3-4, modified)
      viii. Understand how bias influences guidance and discipline practices in early childhood programs. (CUPID, Pos. 31)
      ix. Recognize policies and practices that harm adults and harm children in their care (e.g., exclusionary practices, dehumanizing language). (Diversity-informed Tenets, Pos. 9)
      x. Demonstrate knowledge of second language acquisition processes and know how to incorporate instructional strategies and resources to support multilingualism. (InTASC, Pos. 35).
      xi. Describe the benefits of learning in multiple languages for a child's growth and development. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 359)
      xii. Demonstrate understanding of how learner diversity can affect communication, and of ways to communicate effectively with diverse learners. (InTASC, Pos. 58)
      xiii. Understand that there is diversity within every culture.
      xiv. Explain how diversity is a part of all educational and care settings (Rule 24, Pos. 18)
      xv. Describe how to access information about characteristics and values of diverse cultures and communities.

b. Culturally Sustaining Practice - Skills

    i. Identify one's own personal and cultural biases to assess their potential impact on others, including their influence on teaching approaches and practices (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 446; Zero to Three, Pos. 10)

    ii. Plan and implement ways to get to know each child as an individual, including strengths, needs, interests, family, and life situations. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 392)

    iii. Establish a supportive and respectful community within the program where all children and adults feel valued and learn to value each other. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 293, InTASC, Pos. 41, Zero to Three, Pos. 4)

    iv. Respond in developmentally appropriate ways to children's developing understanding of gender and cultural identity. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 303)

    v. Recognize, promote, and encourage individual, family, cultural, and community influences on the development of children. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 4)

    vi. Foster respectful communication and positive relationships among all members of the learning community through interactions that are sensitive and responsive to children's and families' diversity (e.g. culture, language, religion, ability, income, family makeup). (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 403, NE Core Competencies, Pos. 313, InTASC, Pos. 64, combined)

    vii. Design culturally sustaining learning experiences by collaborating with families to design curriculum that will support unique abilities and needs of all children and families. (DEC- EI:ECSE , Pos. 20, adapted)

    viii. Design environments and experiences that support and show respect for diversity regarding culture, language, family structures and abilities. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 24)

    ix. Implement activities that routinely use materials representing multiple cultures, ages, abilities, gender roles, and ethnic groups in non-stereotypical ways. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 121)

    x. Consistently use and display a variety of songs, books, and games which include people of diverse backgrounds and experiences, ensuring that home languages are represented (NE Core Competencies)

    xi. Implement learning opportunities using cultural funds of knowledge in partnership with holders of that knowledge (i.e., materials, concepts, and languages of multiple cultures). (adapted from NE Core Competencies, Pos. 232)

xii. Integrate multiple perspectives to the discussion of content, including attention to learners' personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms. (InTASC, Pos. 29)

xiii. Evaluate settings and programming to include feedback and input from families.

xiv. Celebrate cultural differences that influence children's ways of expressing themselves creatively. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 159)

xv. Access resources to deepen their own understanding of cultural, ethnic, gender, and learning differences to build stronger relationships and create more relevant learning experiences. (InTASC, Pos. 198)

xvi. Acknowledge privilege where it exists. (Diversity-informed Tenets , Pos. 9)

xvii. Identify and mitigate racism, sexism, able-ism, classism, homophobia, xenophobia, and systems of oppression within ourselves, our practice, our settings, and our field. (Diversity-informed Tenets , Pos. 9)

xviii. Support racialized educators as they implement culturally responsive, anti-bias pedagogy with the aim of preventing isolation and backlash.

xix. Support opportunities for children to experience oral and written communication in a language their family uses and understands. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 214)

xx. Recognize the importance of revitalizing native languages and cultural elements, particularly in indigenous communities, and seek to create a learning environment responsive to languages and cultures.

xxi. Provide the families of young children who are multilingual learners with information about the benefits of learning in multiple languages for the child's growth and development. (NE Core Competencies, Pos. 413)

6. **Domain 6: Trauma-informed Practice**
   a. **Trauma-Informed Practice – Knowledge**
      i. Identify/reduce risk factors and identify/increase protective factors associated with trauma and childhood adversity (Trauma-informed Practice).
      ii. Describe key signs, symptoms, impact, and manifestations of trauma, disrupted attachment, and childhood adversity in children and adults.
      iii. Understand how the domains of development can be affected by trauma, abuse, adversity, and stress.
      iv. Recognize signs of emotional distress, neglect, and abuse in children.
      v. Describe local resources for trauma-specific treatment and trauma-informed services for children and families. (Trauma-informed Practice (TIP), Pos. 7)
      vi. Define trauma informed care and trauma specific care.
      vii. Recognize that involving parents and caregivers as partners in the process of recovery from trauma and childhood adversity maximizes potential for healing.
      viii. Engage in reflective practice around personal beliefs about experiences of trauma and childhood adversity as well as the impact these have on interactions with children, families, and colleagues.
      ix. Understand and explain childhood trauma and adversity as significant, complex, and often preventable health problems with broad ranging effects on children and adults from which people can recover and heal with proper resources and support.
      x. Understand and explain the need to eliminate labels that pathologize behavior, children, and families.
      xi. Explain re-traumatization and identify ways that children and their families can be retraumatized/triggered by the systems and services designed to help them (e.g., how school contexts and behaviors of adults can re-traumatize children, e.g., using separation and humiliation for discipline, using language that erases or diminishes children's identities). (Trauma-informed Practice (TIP), Pos. 11)
   b. **Trauma-informed Practice - Skills**
      i. Facilitate trauma-informed collaborative relationships with children, parents, caregivers, and colleagues to include demonstrating care, respect, and cultural and developmental sensitivity.
      ii. Apply research-based strategies related to causes and effects of stress and trauma on children and families to improve outcomes.
      iii. Apply current research on reciprocal relationships with families to help families build resilience in areas of stress, crisis, and trauma.

    iv. Facilitate referrals for access to trauma informed services and specific treatment services.

    v. Create environments that are safe, comfortable, and welcoming for all children, families, and staff.

    vi. Educate parents and caregivers about risk and protective factors associated with trauma, childhood adversity, and healthy child development.

c. Trauma-informed Practice – Dispositions

    i. Demonstrate an interpersonal style that is flexible, adaptable, reflective, trustworthy, and engaging.

7. **Domain 7: Supporting Social and Emotional Development**
   a. **Supporting Social and Emotional Development – Knowledge**
      i. Teacher relationships with children
         1. Demonstrate understanding of the importance of supportive relationships with adults for children's development and learning.
         2. Understand and explain the impact of biases on relationships.
         3. Describe the importance of building mutual respect and mutual trust in relationships with children.
      ii. Children's relationships with other children
         1. Explain the development and importance of supportive relationships with peers.
         2. Describe the importance of positive peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.
      iii. Supporting children with challenging behaviors
         1. Understand and explain internal and external influences on behavior.
         2. Understand and explain the developmental and contextual roots of challenging behaviors.
         3. Understand and explain the functions of challenging behaviors.
         4. Understand and explain the associations between perceived efficacy, motivation, and engagement.
         5. Explain how some behaviors that appear as "problems" reflect trauma-related coping skills to protect the self and to survive (e.g., "fight, flight, freeze" behaviors).
         6. Describe how domains and stages of typical development can be impacted by trauma, abuse, and adversity.
         7. Understand and explain how bias influences guidance and discipline practices.
      iv. Child Development
         1. Describe the development of self-regulation (e.g., internal and external processes such as co-regulation).
         2. Understand that social and emotional development occur within the context of family, school, community, and broader culture.
         3. Explain how different kinds of play experiences support social and emotional development.
         4. Recognize the impacts of language delays on social-emotional development.
   b. **Supporting Social and Emotional Development-Skills**
      i. Teacher relationships with children

1. Engage in relationships and interactions that are positive, caring, and supportive as the foundation of their work with young children.
2. Plan and implement ways to get to know each child as an individual including strengths, needs, interests, family, and life circumstances.
3. Develop positive individual relationships with each child by providing care that is:
    a. Responsive
    b. Attentive
    c. Caring
    d. Trusting
    e. Warm
    f. Consistent
    g. Comforting
    h. Supportive
    i. Culturally sensitive
4. Engage in everyday serve-and-return conversations with children.
5. Facilitate feelings of empathy and mutual respect between children and adults.
6. Display a positive attitude while working with children.
7. Encourage, respect, and support children's efforts, ideas, accomplishments, and interests.
8. Refrain from using words and actions that are disrespectful, hurtful, or abusive.
9. Understand and model identification and appropriate expression of positive and negative feelings.
10. Name and validate children's expression of emotion and engage in conversations about the causes of emotions.
11. Help children understand and communicate thoughts and feelings.
12. Demonstrate awareness of children's reactions to the educator's physical touch, tone, and word choice, and responsively adapt behavior to children's needs.
13. Communicate acceptance and understanding by responding promptly and in developmentally appropriate ways to each child's emotions, feelings of hurt, and feelings of fear.
    a. Name and validates children's emotions.
    b. Engage in conversations about the causes of emotions.

14. Demonstrate the skills to structure and maintain a relational environment that promotes security, engagement, and interaction to support development.
15. Use routines and transitions to build supportive relationships and trust.
16. Demonstrate comfort with physical contact and affection.
17. Demonstrate comfort with emotional expression (e.g., able to regulate one's own emotions in the context of a child's or adult's emotional expression).
18. Respond in sensitive, developmentally appropriate ways to children's developing understanding of gender and cultural identity.
19. Demonstrate respect for ALL children in ALL situations.

ii. Peer relationships
1. Encourage positive interactions between children.
2. Facilitate empathy and mutual respect among children.
3. Engage children in conflict resolution and peer-mediated intervention to teach problem-solving skills and promote children's engagement and efficacy.

iii. Developmentally supportive guidance
1. Use methods of positive behavior support and guidance techniques including a range of strategies from less directive to more directive and structured.
2. Respond positively to challenging behaviors to guide children's development of self-regulation.
3. Identify periods of stress, separation, and transition that may affect children's social interactions and behaviors.
4. Support children through periods of stress, separation, and transition.
5. Engage in collaborative problem solving with families and professionals to address challenging social behaviors.
   a. Incorporate techniques provided by assessment of specialists (e.g., mental health, special education, coaches) to improve teaching strategies.
6. Provide children with rules and routines that are consistent, clear, and explained.
7. Use guidance strategies that are appropriate to each child's personality, temperament, activity levels, and individual development.

8. Create multiple opportunities for children to participate in decision making about rules.
9. Analyze and evaluates events, activities, and interactions to understand the causes of challenging behaviors and apply strategies to help children overcome challenging behavior based on understanding the causes.
10. Use functional assessment tools related to prevention, promotion, and intervention.
11. Model and teach children acceptable alternative behaviors.
12. Demonstrate patience with challenging behavior.
13. Demonstrate anticipatory guidance skills (e.g., anticipate behavior challenges and proactively intervene).

iv. Teacher relationships with and attitudes toward families
1. Encourage child's attachment to family and significant adults.
2. Work with children and their families to create a partnership that fosters social and emotional development in the child's home.
3. Demonstrate empathy for families.
4. Express a positive attitude while working with families.
5. Support and facilitate family and child interactions as primary contexts for development and learning.

v. Communication
1. Support families in facilitating children's development by providing services in their native language.
2. Guide children in resolving conflict through positive communication.
3. Establish communication systems for young children that support self-advocacy.
4. Communicate verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect and responsiveness to cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives.
5. Understand how learner diversity can affect communication.
6. Foster respectful communication among all members of the learning community.

vi. Child Development
1. Use a variety of strategies to teach children social and problem-solving skills.
2. Implement strategies that encourage social development in various roles such as leadership.
3. Create opportunities for children to practice their increasing autonomy.

        4. Adapt and modify learning experiences to advance each child's social development.

        5. Support learners in decision making, invention, collaboration, and independent work.

        6. Apply evidence-based practices to support children's social and emotional competence and self-regulation.

        7. Encourage individuality and expression of ideas.

    vii. Curriculum

        1. Design learning experiences using strategies that build self-direction and ownership of learning.

        2. Implement a meaningful curriculum that emphasizes social skills, relationships, and friendships.

        3. Evaluate suitability of curriculum for children's social and emotional development.

        4. Develop learning experiences that engage learners in collaborative and self-directed learning.

        5. Extend learner interaction with ideas and people both locally and globally when possible.

    viii. Collaboration

        1. Demonstrate the skills to collaborate with and coach other adults to engage in interactions that support children's development.

        2. Create and model positive, open, respectful relationships with children, families, and professionals.

        3. Work with others to create environments that support collaborative learning and encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

        4. Collaborate with learners, families, and colleagues to build safe, positive learning climates of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.

        5. Collaborate with other professionals to develop shared values and expectations for respectful interaction, individual responsibility, group responsibility, and quality work.

c. Dispositions

    i. Conceptualization of children ("Image of the child")

        1. Explain the role of infants and children as citizens of the world.

        2. Believe that all learners can achieve at high levels.

        3. Respect children as individuals with differing personal background, family background, and perspectives

        4. Value the role of learners in promoting each other's learning.

        5. Persist in helping each child reach their full potential.

6. Demonstrate respect for human dignity and individual rights.
7. Demonstrate empathy and positive attitude when working with children, families, and other professionals.
8. Demonstrate a commitment to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.
9. Demonstrate verbal and nonverbal communication that is inclusively supportive for all children, families, and caregivers.
10. Demonstrate the skills of being a thoughtful and responsive listener and observer.

8. **Domain 8: Assessment, Observation, and Documentation**
   a. **Assessment, Observation, Documentation - Knowledge**
       i. Describe procedures to observe children's behavior, document their developmental growth and learning, and assess progress to support, verify, and document learning experiences in collaboration with families and other professionals.
      ii. Explain how to use assessments (formal and informal, formative and summative) to make informed choices about instruction and for planning in early learning settings (NAEYC 3a).
     iii. Explain the importance of partnering with families and other professionals in the process of assessment (e.g., including family perspectives, involving families in interpretation and when feasible, planning for children based on assessments)
      iv. Describe multiple purposes of assessment:
           1. to inform development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children, and modify teaching practice in support of each child's learning and development;
           2. to identify when and how children need additional support or challenge;
           3. to meaningfully connect curriculum to assessment and progress monitoring activities. (Rule 24)
       v. Describe developmentally appropriate approaches to assessment – both formal/standardized and authentic assessment tools (NAEYC 3b) as well as functional assessments for determining reasons for behaviors.
      vi. Understand assessment practices that can guide a) Development of functional goals/targeted outcomes, b) Selection of appropriate strategies to support children's learning, including the use of assistive technology, and c) Positive learning outcomes, as well as guide teachers' reflections on their teaching efforts and modifications as needed. (Rule 24)
     vii. Identify and describe multiple modes of assessment and factors to consider when choosing an assessment.
    viii. Identify influences on children's performance on assessments (e.g., familiarity with the adult, physical well-being, etc.).
      ix. Describe potential sources of bias in assessments and their use.
       x. Know how to design, adapt, or select appropriate assessments to address specific learning goals and individual differences, and to minimize sources of bias. (InTASC)
      xi. Explain how to determine reliability and validity of assessment results.
     xii. Demonstrate awareness of how assessment relates to broader systems, early interventions, and quality initiatives.

xiii. Describe what makes an assessment high quality and meaningful in the early learning context.

xiv. Explain ethical use and considerations of assessment (e.g., developmental, cultural, linguistic considerations).

xv. Explain processes of assessment, evaluation, and diagnosis for delays and disabilities.

xvi. Explain the IEP and IFSP processes and the role of the educator in these processes.

b. Assessment, Observation, Documentation - Skills

i. Use observation, documentation, and assessment (formal and informal, formative, and summative) of all developmental domains to:
1. identify individual needs, interests, and strengths;
2. develop goals and targeted outcomes;
3. make informed choices about instruction and for planning in early learning settings; (NAEYC 3a, NAEYC 3b)
4. modify learning experiences in collaboration with the child's family and other professionals; and
5. aid in tracking progress according to typical developmental patterns, taking family and community cultural contexts into consideration.

ii. Use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, ability, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child (NAEYC 3b).

iii. Use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies ethically and responsibly, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child. (Rule 24)

iv. Use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide decision making.

v. Analyze assessments and request assistance from specialists when needed to meet mental health and developmental needs of each child.

vi. Document each child's learning and development for maintaining records, communicating with families, and displaying examples of the child's work and creative expression.

vii. Analyze and interpret observational and assessment data (formal/informal, formative, and summative) in accurate and meaningful ways according to the varied learning contexts of each child.

viii. Use observation and assessment data to analyze reasons for behaviors and identify ways to support children in overcoming challenging behaviors.

ix. Select, adapt, and design assessment tools that are appropriate according to developmental, cultural, ability, linguistic factors.

x. Adapt assessments to consider the child's dominant language and additional languages if the child is learning more than one language.

xi. Utilize descriptive feedback in ways that are positive and useful for each student's self-efficacy and learning progress.

xii. Use observations and assessments to identify prior learning knowledge and learner strengths/needs/interests. (InTASC)

xiii. Apply state guidelines that distinguish at-risk, developmental delay, and disability.

xiv. Participate in IEP and IFSP processes, implement plans to support children's learning and development, document progress, and communicate with families and other professionals as needed.

xv. Use observation, documentation, and assessment data to reflect on and improve practice.

xvi. Communicate results of assessments to children and families.

9. **Domain 9: Professionalism**
   a. **Professionalism – Knowledge**
      i. Kim: Consider competencies that align with the Step Up to Quality - Education, Experience, Professional Development, Leadership, etc. Consider aligning competencies in the Professional Core Competencies already in existence, State Standards, Rule 24, and National Accreditation Standards
      ii. Rule 24: **Standard 7. Element 1.** Identify and become involved with the early childhood field. Understand how foundational knowledge and current issues influence professional practice, understand legal, ethical and policy issues related to educational, developmental, and medical services for infants and young children and their families, and integrate knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education to better serve children and their families.
      iii. **Standard 7. Element 4.** Advance the profession by engaging in informed advocacy activities for young children and the early childhood profession, including advocating for infants and young children and their families and for the professional status and working conditions of those who work with them, and by mentoring and providing guidance and direction to para-educators, tutors, and volunteers.
      iv. Rule 24: **Standard 7. Element 2.** Know about and uphold ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines and use professional Ethical Principles and Professional Practice Standards to guide one's practice. Integrate family systems theories and principles into professional practice, respect family choices and goals, and apply evidence-based and recommended practices for infants and young children, including those from diverse backgrounds.
      v.
   b. **Professionalism – Skills**
      i. Engagement with Professional Communities
         1. Engage with the early childhood field and serve as informed advocates for young children, families, and the profession (NAEYC 6a).
         2. Describe and uphold ethical and other early childhood professional guidelines (NAEYC 6b)
         3. Be continuous learners (NAEYC 6d). Seeking to improve practice by pursuing knowledge and accepting constructive criticism and feedback (NE Core Competencies,).
         4. Seek professional growth and learning to best support the populations served (culture, gender, languages, abilities, ways of knowing).
      ii. Engagement with Colleagues
         1. Collaboration -

      2. Maintain professionalism and respect for children when communicating with other adults about children's behavior.
   iii. Leadership
      1. **Rule 20: Leadership and Collaboration 005.02J** - Seeks opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with students, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure student growth, and to advance the profession.

c. Professionalism – Dispositions
   i. Demonstrates professional work ethic
   ii. Displays positive and professional attitude
   iii. Values respectful relationships
   iv. Identify as a member of the Early Childhood Education profession.