

TITLE: Adoption of the Council for Exceptional Children’s Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Educator Standards

The Hawai’i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) adopts the Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Educator (EI/ECSE) Standards.

According to [CEC \(2020\)](#), “In the event an initial program prepares P-12 Educators, a program will use the following criteria to determine which set of initial standards are applicable:

- If the program prepares B through 8 years – use the EI/ECSE standards.
- If the program prepares Pre-K through 12 (or some grade) – use EI/ECSE for the 3-8 portion of the program.
- If the program prepares B-5 years or KG – use the EI/ECSE Standards
- If the program prepares K-12 or K-12+ – use the Initial K12 Special Educator Standards.”

Hawai’i Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) may continue to use early childhood standards officially adopted prior to **October 27, 2023**, for candidates currently enrolled in their programs. The attached standards should be implemented by EPPs no later than **July 1, 2025**, for new candidates admitted into their programs by that date.

The adoption of the EI/ECSE standards shall not replace the CEC Initial K12 Special Educator Standards.

Upon Board approval, the HTSB Executive Director or the Executive Director’s designee will inform Hawai’i EPPs with Early Childhood Special Education programs of the adopted standards and publish the new standards on the HTSB website.

Rationale/Background:

The CEC EI/ECSE Standards are the first standards that focus on preparing educators who work with children ages birth through 8 years old that have or are at risk for developmental delays and require support services. These standards also provide guidance for educators when working across various settings within the Early Childhood Special Education programs.

More information about the CEC EI/ECSE Standards can be found [linked here](#). Other HTSB adopted content standards can be found in [NBI 20-26](#) and on the HTSB website [linked here](#).

Cost:

All costs are included in the current staff job duties/responsibilities.

Submitted by: Branden Kawazoe
Referred to: Teacher Education Committee

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

Standard 1: Child Development and Early Learning

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 2: Partnering with Families

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

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

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

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

Standard 3: Collaboration and Teaming

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

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

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

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

Standard 4: Assessment Processes

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

determination, outcome/goal development, planning instruction and intervention, monitoring progress, and reporting.

4.1 Candidates understand the purposes of formal and informal assessment, including ethical and legal considerations, and use this information to choose developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, valid, reliable tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program

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

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

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

Standard 5: Application of Curriculum Frameworks in the Planning of Meaningful Learning Experience

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

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

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

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

Candidates plan and implement intentional, systematic, evidence-based, responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction to support all children's learning and development

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 7: Professionalism and Ethical Practice

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

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

Standard 8: EI/ECSE Field and Clinical Experience

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

Supporting Explanation:

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

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

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

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

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