



Alignment of Personnel Preparation Standards: The CEC Standards (2012), DEC Specialty Sets (2017), and NAEYC Standards (2010)



Data Report 6

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Alignment of Personnel Preparation Standards: The CEC Standards, (2010)

DEC Specialty Sets (2017), and NAEYC Standards (2012)

The Early Childhood Personnel Center 2 (referred hereafter as the ECPC 2) is a national technical assistance center funded by the Office of Special Education Programs as a five-year project, starting in January 2018. ECPC2 which is housed at the University of Connecticut's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities continues work begun in 2013 by the ECPC 1. ECPC 2 has as its overarching purpose to implement high quality technical assistance (TA) to build the capacity of state systems of early childhood intervention (ECI) to develop, implement, and sustain an early childhood intervention (ECI) comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD). ECI is defined as statewide service systems authorized under Part C and Part B, section 619 (619) of IDEA for eligible infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families. ECPC 2 is focusing its TA on identifying, implementing, and evaluating implementation supports to enable the ECI target workforce to facilitate or deliver effective, high quality, evidence-based practices (EBPs) through inclusive services and programs to improve outcomes for children and families.

Specifically, ECPC 2 has the following aims as requested in the RFP:

- To **increase the capacity of State IDEA Part C, Part B, section 619 (619)**, and other early childhood programs **to implement, scale up, and sustain a coordinated comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD)** to ensure local personnel have the competencies to deliver high-quality services and inclusive programs to improve outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families.

- **To increase the knowledge, skills, and competencies of State (and territory) IDEA Part C and 619 administrators** to lead systemic improvement efforts, actively engage in broader early childhood initiatives, use TA effectively, and build more effective and sustainable State systems that can support a competent early childhood workforce that can improve outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families.
- **To increase knowledge, skills, and competencies of early childhood IHE faculty and other professional development (PD) staff** to align programs of study to State and national professional organization personnel standards, integrate Division of Early Childhood recommended practices (RP) into programs of study, and utilize adult learning principles.

Purpose of the Report

Two of ECPC 2's five goals are to develop resources to be used in TA with the ECI workforce including faculty at Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs). Some of those faculty work in EI/ECSE programs while others are in blended Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education EI/ECSE programs. The ECPC 2, in collaboration with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and its Division for Early Childhood (DEC) appointed a workgroup to develop an alignment of the 2010 National Association for Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Preparation Standards (NAEYC, 2012), the 2012 CEC Professional Preparation Standards (CEC, 2015), and the DEC Specialty Sets (CEC, 2015) with the actual work completed in 2015 and the alignments available for public use in 2018. The standards alignment was completed to help higher education programs identify areas of shared knowledge, skills, and competencies across standards as well as specialized knowledge and skills specific to each discipline (Chandler et al., 2012). The alignment was

meant to help identify the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed by personnel who work in inclusive programs/settings and to design inservice professional development to promote those competencies (Snyder et al., 2011). Faculty can use the alignment to determine what assignments, activities, and field experiences may be used to meet both sets of Standards and the Specialty Sets as well as whether discipline specific experiences were needed for particular aspects (Stayton, 2015). Faculty may also use the alignment to develop blended ECE and EI/ECSE programs and to prepare accreditation reports and documentation. In addition, the alignment can be a useful guide for ECE higher education programs that want to integrate some content specific to young children with developmental delays and disabilities into their curricula, and similarly, for EI/ECSE programs to integrate general early childhood content (Stayton & Kemp, 2018). The purpose of this data report is to describe the Standards and Specialty Sets that were aligned and to describe the alignment process that was employed and share the results of that alignment.

Initial and Advanced Professional Preparation Standards Used in Alignments

This alignment includes the: a) 2012 CEC Special Educator Professional Preparation Standards (CEC, 2015), b) the 2017 DEC Special Education Early Childhood Preparation Specialty Sets (CEC, 2015), and c) the 2010 NAEYC Early Childhood Professional Preparation Standards (NAEYC, 2012). There are distinct initial and advanced CEC Standards and DEC Specialty sets. The initial and advanced NAEYC Standards share a common set of core Standards and include key elements (KEs) and supporting explanations that help differentiate between initial and advanced expectations. It should be noted, that after the alignment was completed, the DEC Specialty Sets were revalidated in 2017. The alignment workgroup examined the revalidated sets and determined that given that the changes mostly constituted

minor wording changes, the alignment remained accurate and relevant. Therefore, the alignment reported here should be considered applicable to the 2017 DEC Special Sets. The following sections will provide details on alignment for each set of standards.

CEC Initial and Advanced Standards

The 2012 CEC Preparation Standards provide a common core of knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected by all special education professionals, regardless of the specialization area. The initial standards may be used by baccalaureate or graduate programs that prepare candidates for entry-level special education positions. The advanced standards identify knowledge and skills for advanced study in special education and are intended for use in special education advanced degree programs (CEC, 2015). There are seven CEC Initial Preparation Standards with a range of two to seven key elements (KEs) per standard for a total of 28 key elements. There are also seven CEC Preparation Standards for Advanced Programs (CEC, 2015), however they are distinct from the initial standards. The advanced standards have a range of two to seven KEs per standard for a total of 28 KEs distributed across the seven standards. The KEs serve to further define and clarify the standards. For example, CEC Standard: Learner development and individual learning differences has two associated key elements which are:

1. “Beginning special education professionals understand how language, culture, and family background influence the learning of individuals with exceptionalities,
2. Beginning special education professionals use understanding of development and individual differences to respond to the needs of individuals with exceptionalities” (CEC 2015, p.22).

The full list of CEC Initial and Advanced Preparation Standards and KEs can be viewed on the CEC Standards website (<https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards>).

DEC Initial and Advanced Specialty Sets

Given that the CEC Standards are designed to provide a common set of standards for all special education professionals, regardless of the specialization area, divisions such as DEC have developed Specialty Sets, additional knowledge (K) and skills (S) statements that inform the standards by specifying their application in associated contexts. Thus, the DEC Specialty Sets are meant to be used in conjunction with the CEC Preparation Standards to define additional practices that Early Interventionists and Early Childhood Special Educators must know about and be able to do in order to work with children birth through eight years who are at risk or have developmental delays and disabilities and their families. The DEC Initial Specialty Set (2008) has 23 K statements and 57 S statements distributed across the seven CEC Initial Standards. The DEC Advanced Specialty Set (2009) has nine K statements and 24 S statements distributed across the seven CEC Advanced Standards. The DEC Specialty Sets can be viewed on the CEC Specialty Set website (<https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Special-Educator-Professional-Preparation-Standards/CEC-Initial-and-Advanced-Specialty-Sets>).

NAEYC Initial and Advanced Standards

The NAEYC Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Standards have been organized and published in a variety of ways over time (NAEYC, 2012). The 2010 revision identified six core Standards and field experience expectations that emphasized the unifying essentials of professional preparation for careers in ECE and were designed and intended to apply to the ECE profession as a whole, regardless of role, setting, or degree level (NAEYC, 2012). The six core standards have a range of three to five (initial) or six (advanced) KEs per standard for a total of 22 initial KEs and 23 advanced KEs. As with the CEC Standards, the NAEYC KEs define and clarify the standards in practice.

The supporting explanations for each standard also help differentiate between initial and advanced standards. For initial preparation, the supporting explanations describe expectations for entry-level ECE programs (i.e., preservice). The supporting explanations for NAEYC Advanced Standards describe expectations for graduate programs and advanced roles in the ECE profession, such as, accomplished or mentor teacher, program administrator, teacher educator, researcher and policy maker (NAEYC, 2012).

Methodology

Participants

Upon authorization by the DEC Executive Board, the DEC Executive Office, in collaboration with ECPC 2, appointed a 10-member workgroup to complete the standards alignment. The workgroup consisted of 9 individuals who were CEC/DEC members with 8 of these individuals also being members of NAEYC. The workgroup was supported by a research assistant employed by ECPC 1, bringing the group membership to 10. One member of the workgroup was initially a doctoral student when the work began and moved into an EI/ECSE post-doctoral position at the University of Connecticut with one of her responsibilities being to represent ECPC 1 on this workgroup. One member was an early childhood coordinator and parent advocate. The remaining workgroup members were higher education faculty with expertise in personnel preparation and personnel standards.

Procedures for Conducting the Alignment

The process and materials employed by an earlier alignment workgroup were reviewed and then modified for the purposes of this alignment. First, an alignment matrix template was created and modeled off the matrix used in that alignment (Chandler et al., 2012). Four matrices were then developed, one for each pair of standards: (1) CEC Initial Standards with the Initial

NAEYC; (2) CEC Advanced Standards with the NAEYC Advanced Standards; (3) DEC Initial Specialty Set with the NAEYC Initial standards; and (4) DEC Advanced Specialty Set with the NAEYC Advanced Standards. Each matrix oriented two sets of standards; one listed vertically and the other horizontally creating a table of cells. Each cell represented an intersection between the key elements (CEC and NAEYC) or knowledge and skills statements (DEC Specialty Sets) and an opportunity for potential alignment between the two sets of standards. Figure 1 provides an example of one section of the matrix use for CEC Advanced Standards with NAEYC Advanced Standards.

Development of Alignment Procedures and Decision Guidelines

A set of decision guidelines to describe the salient features of the CEC and NAEYC Standards and KEs and the DEC Specialty Sets K and S statements was created by a previous standards alignment work group (Chandler et al., 2012). Those guidelines were developed to facilitate work group members ability to focus on the same critical features of the KEs and Specialty Set statements as their independent alignments were completed.

Using the 2012 decision guidelines, a first reviewer independently conducted an alignment by reviewing each CEC initial KE for alignment with each NAEYC initial KE. A table of questions and rationale for decisions was created for each alignment that was not an explicit match. A second reviewer conducted their own individual alignment and then reviewed the questions and rationale from the first reviewer. Together, they created a revised alignment rationale and decision guideline document that was then shared with the entire workgroup. All workgroup members then reviewed the document and other materials and provided suggestions and edits. Discussion ensued and resulted in a final set of procedures and decision guidelines.

Figure 1

CEC and NAEYC Advanced Standards Alignment Matrix

| NAEYC Standards --> NAEYC Key Elements --> CEC Advanced Preparation Standards & Key Elements | | 1. Promoting Child Development and Learning | | | 2. Building Family and Community Relationships | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| | | 1a: Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs, from birth through age 8 | 1b: Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning | 1c: Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children | 2a: Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics | 2b: Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships | 2c: Demonstrating cultural competence and effective collaboration to involve families and communities in their children's development and learning |
| Advanced Standard 1: Assessment | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Special education specialists minimize bias in assessment. | | | | | | |
| 1.2 | Special education specialists design and implement assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of practices and programs. | | | | | | |
| Advanced Standard 2: Curricular Content Knowledge | | | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Special education specialists align educational standards to provide access to challenging curriculum to meet the needs individuals with exceptionalities. | | | | | | |
| 2.2 | Special educators continuously broaden and deepen professional knowledge, and expand expertise with instructional technologies, curriculum standards, effective teaching strategies, and assistive technologies to support access to and learning of challenging content. | | | | | | |
| 2.3 | Special education specialists use understanding of diversity and individual learning differences to inform the selection, development, and implementation of comprehensive curricula for individuals with exceptionalities. | | | | | | |
| Advanced Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Special education specialists design and implement evaluation activities to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities. | | | | | | |

Conducting the Alignment

Workgroup members used these guidelines as well as CEC and NAEYC Standards (CEC, 2015; NAEYC, 2012) documents to complete individual alignments for the CEC and NAEYC Initial and Advanced Standards and the DEC Initial and Advanced Specialty Sets. The four alignment matrices described above were used to identify potential areas of alignment. As noted,

four matrices were constructed, one for each pair of Standards/Sets. Each matrix yielded intersecting cells or opportunities where each CEC KE or DEC Specialty Set K or S statement could be examined for alignment with each of the NAEYC KEs. Each workgroup member indicated either aligned or not aligned for each cell/opportunity in each matrix. After each matrix was completed individually by workgroup members, conference calls were held to discuss results, provide additional guidelines/clarifications, and determine which items were found to be aligned. Standards were considered aligned when 80% or higher percent agreement (n=8/10) was obtained from initial independent coding. Items with 40% (n=4/10) to 70% (n=7/10) agreement were also identified. Discussion of these items served to clarify the application and interpretation of the decision guidelines. A second round of individual alignments was then completed for those items followed by subsequent conference calls which resulted in the finalized alignment. Each of the four alignments were finalized with cells representing identified alignment marked.

Approval and Dissemination of the Alignments

The workgroup completed the alignments in 2014- 2015. CEC, DEC, NAEYC, and ECPC 1 staff were copied on all e-mail correspondence and invited to participate in meetings and conference calls. The CEC, DEC, and NAEYC Executive Boards reviewed the alignments in spring 2015. The delay between completion of the alignment drafts and approval by the respective Executive Boards was due in part to changes in Executive Office staffing and adjustments in operating procedures for each of the three professional associations. After approval by each association, the alignments were made available on the ECPC 2 and DEC websites in 2018.

Results

As noted above, the alignment process resulted in four alignment matrices, one for each pair of standards: (1) CEC Initial Standards with the NAEYC Initial Standards; (2) CEC Advanced Standards with the NAEYC Advanced Standards; (3) DEC Initial Specialty Set with the NAEYC Initial Standards; and (4) DEC Advanced Specialty Set with the NAEYC Advanced Standards. The finalized matrices were examined to determine the degree of alignment between the various Standards and Specialty Sets at the KE and/or K and S statement levels.

For each matrix, the NAEYC Standards and KEs were listed horizontally, as the headings of each column in the table/matrix and the corresponding set of CEC Standards and KEs and the DEC Specialty Set K and S statements were oriented vertically as the first column of the matrix/table (see Figure 1). To analyze the alignment within each matrix, each row in each matrix was visually inspected to ascertain which CEC KEs or DEC K and S statements aligned with NAEYC KEs. This analysis was conducted at the initial and advanced levels and focused on the number and percent of CEC KEs and Initial DEC Specialty Set K and S statements that aligned with one or more of the 22 Initial or 23 Advanced NAEYC KEs. Further analysis led to identification of characteristics and patterns of alignment and non-alignment. Each analysis is presented below with reporting for the initial level followed by reporting for the advanced level.

Number and Percent of Initial CEC Key Elements and DEC Knowledge and Skill Statements Aligned with NAEYC Key Elements

Each of the 28 initial CEC KEs was examined to identify whether it aligned with one or more initial NAEYC KEs. Results are displayed in Table 1. A total of 22/28 (79%) aligned with one or more Initial NAEYC KEs with a range of 67-100% across the seven CEC Standards (see Table 1). Standards 1 (learner development and individual learning differences) and 3 (curricular

content knowledge) had the highest percent alignment (100%) and Standard 7 (collaboration) had the lowest percent alignment at 67%.

Each of the 23 K statements and 57 S statements from the DEC Initial Specialty Set were examined in the same way. Six of the seven CEC Standards areas had associated DEC K statements. Of these, alignment of the DEC K statements with the NAEYC KEs ranged from 0 – 100% with a total of 16/23 (70%) K statements aligning with at least one NAEYC KE. Knowledge statements for CEC Standard 2 (learning environments) had the highest percent alignment (100%) and for CEC Standard 7 (collaboration) had the lowest percent of alignment (0%). The DEC S statements were also examined for alignment with NAEYC KEs. This alignment ranged from 23-71% with a total of 28/57 (49%) aligning with at least one NAEYC KE. Skill statements for CEC Standard 2 (learning environment) had the highest percent alignment (71%) and for CEC Standard 5 (instructional strategies) had the lowest percent alignment (23%). Combined, 44/80 (55%) of the DEC Initial Specialty Set K and S statements were found to be aligned with at least one NAEYC KE. Standard 2 (learning environment) had the highest percent of alignment while Standard 5 (instructional strategies) had the lowest percent of alignment.

Table 1

Initial CEC KEs and Initial DEC Specialty Set K and S Statements That Aligned with One or More of the Initial NAEYC KEs

| <u>CEC Initial Standard</u> | <u>CEC Key Elements</u> | <u>DEC Knowledge Statements</u> | <u>DEC Skill Statements</u> | <u>DEC Combined K and S Statements</u> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual | 2/2 (100%) | 7/10 (70%) | 3/5 (60%) | 10/15 (67%) |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Learning Differences | | | | |
| Standard 2: | 2/3 (67%) | 1/1 (100%) | 5/7 (71%) | 6/8 (75%) |
| Learning Environment | | | | |
| Standard 3: | 3/3 (100%) | 2/3 (67%) | 2/4 (50%) | 4/7 (57%) |
| Curricular Content | | | | |
| Knowledge | | | | |
| Standard 4: | 3/4 (75%) | 3/4 (75%) | 7/11 (64%) | 10/15 (67%) |
| Assessment | | | | |
| Standard 5: | 5/7 (71%) | -- | 3/13 (23%) | 3/13 (23%) |
| Instructional Strategies | | | | |
| Standard 6: | 5/6 (83%) | 3/4 (75%) | 3/7 (43%) | 6/11 (55%) |
| Professional Learning & Ethical Practice | | | | |
| Standard 7: | 2/3 (67%) | 0/1 (0%) | 5/10 (50%) | 5/11 (46%) |
| Collaboration | | | | |
| TOTAL | 22/28 (79%) | 16/23 (70%) | 28/57 (49%) | 44/80 (55%) |

Abbreviations: CEC = Council for Exceptional Children; DEC = Division for Early Childhood

Note: These standards are published at <https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards> and

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/professional-standards-competencies>

There were some similarities and some differences across the alignments of CEC KEs and DEC K and Ss with NAEYC KEs. For example, a majority of the CEC KEs and DEC K and S statements were aligned with one or more NAEYC KEs [22/28 (79%) for CEC]. In general, there was a higher level of alignment between CEC KEs and NAEYC KEs than between DEC K and S statements and NAEYC KEs.

There also was a higher level of alignment between the DEC K statements and NAEYC KEs than between the DEC S statements and NAEYC KEs. Seventy percent (16/23) of the DEC K statements were aligned with NAEYC KEs while only 49% (28/57) of the S statements were

aligned. Despite this difference, the areas of highest alignment of particular standards was similar across K and S statements. For example, Standard 2 (learning environments) and 4 (assessment) had the highest percent alignment with for both DEC K and S statements. The finding for standard 2 contrasts with alignment of the CEC KEs where Standard 2 was one of two Standards with the least alignment to NAEYC.

Number and Percent of CEC Key Elements and DEC Knowledge and Skill Statements Aligned with NAEYC Key Elements - Advanced

The matrix presenting alignment between the Advanced CEC Standards and KEs and the Advanced NAEYC Standards and KEs contained 644 (28 CEC KEs x 23 NAEYC KEs = 644) intersecting cells or potential instances of alignment. Of those 644, the workgroup identified 15/644 (2%) instances of alignment. The matrix presenting alignment between the Advanced DEC Specialty Set K and S statements and the Advanced NAEYC Standards and KEs contained 759 [(9 DEC K statements + 24 S statements) x 23 NAEYC KEs = 759] intersecting cells or potential instances of alignment. The workgroup identified 18/759 (2%) as aligned.

As with the results of the initial alignment, the overall alignment of CEC KEs and DEC K and S statements was low (2%). Total alignment between CEC KEs and NAEYC KEs was 15/28 (54%) and total alignment between DEC K and S statements and NAEYC Standards was 13/33 (39%). Each of the seven CEC Standards had at least one KE that aligned with at least one NAEYC KE. The highest alignment was with CEC Standard 2 (curricular content) with 3/3 (100%) alignment. The area of lowest alignment was with CEC Standard 7 (collaboration) with 1/3 (33%) aligned.

Five of the 7 CEC Standards have associated DEC K statements and only 2 of those 5 (40%) had alignment between DEC K statements and NAEYC KEs. The highest alignment for

DEC K and S statements was within Standards 1 (assessment) and 7 (collaboration) each with 1/2 (50%) alignment. The least alignment for DEC K and S statements was found for Standards 2 (curricular content), 3 (programs, services, and outcomes), and 5 (leadership and policy) all with 0 (0%) alignment. There are DEC S statements for all 7 CEC Standards and 5/7 (71%) had at least one DEC S statement align with at least one NAEYC KE. The highest alignment between DEC S statements and NAEYC KEs was found for Standard 5 (leadership and policy) with 3/4 (75%) aligned and the lowest was found for Standards 3 (programs, services, and outcomes) and 7 (collaboration) each with zero alignment.

Table 2

Advanced CEC KEs and Advanced DEC Specialty Set K and S Statements that Aligned with One or More of the Advanced NAEYC KEs

| <u>CEC Advanced Standard</u> | <u>CEC Key Elements</u> | <u>DEC Knowledge Statements</u> | <u>DEC Skill Statements</u> |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Standard 1: Assessment | 1/2(50%) | 1/2 (50%) | 2/3 (67%) |
| Standard 2: Curricular Content Knowledge | 3/3 (100%) | 0/1 (0%) | 3/6 (50%) |
| Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes | 2/5 (40%) | 0/1 (0%) | 0/3 (0%) |
| Standard 4: Research and Inquiry | 2/3 (67%) | -- | 1/3 (33%) |
| Standard 5: Leadership and Policy | 3/5 (60%) | 0/3 (0%) | 3/4 (75%) |
| Standard 6: Professional Ethical Practice | 3/7 (43%) | -- | 2/3 (67%) |
| Standard 7: Collaboration | 1/3 (33%) | 1/2 (50%) | 0/2 (0%) |
| TOTAL | 15/28 (54%) | 2/9 (22%) | 11/24 (46%) |

Abbreviations: CEC = Council for Exceptional Children; DEC = Division for Early Childhood

Note: These standards are published at <https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards>

Similarities and differences across the alignments were observed at the advanced level. Compared to results at the initial level, results at the advanced level have a less similar and more mixed alignment between CEC alignment with NAEYC and DEC alignment with NAEYC. For example, Standard 2 (curricular content) was the area of highest alignment between CEC and NAEYC but the area of lowest for DEC K statements. Overall, more alignment was observed between NAEYC and DEC S statements than with DEC K statements; however, this may not be meaningful given the low number of DEC K statements at the advanced level. As with the initial results, there was higher alignment between NAEYC KEs and CEC KEs [15/28 (54%)] than between NAEYC KEs and DEC K and S Statements [K=2/9 (22%); S=11/24 (46%)].

Discussion/Conclusions

The Standards Alignment Workgroup was appointed in fall 2014 and charged with completing an alignment of the CEC Initial and Advanced Preparation Standards, DEC Initial and Advanced Specialty Sets, and NAEYC Initial and Advanced Preparation Standards. This work updated the previous alignment which was completed in 2010 and published in 2012 (Chandler, et al., 2012) as the personnel preparation standards had been updated by their respective organizations.

As detailed in the results section, 22/28 (79%) of the initial CEC KEs aligned with one or more initial NAEYC KEs. Alignment of the DEC K (16/23, 70%) and S (28/57, 49%) statements and the initial NAEYC KEs was lower than alignment with the CEC KEs. When considering the combined DEC K and S statements, alignment was 44/80 (55%). At the advanced level, overall alignment was found to be low, and in fact lower than for the initial alignment. Only 15/28 (54%) CEC KEs aligned with the advanced NAEYC KEs. Alignment was even lower for the DEC K and S statements with the NAEYC KEs (2/9, 22% and 11/24, 46%, respectively).

The highest alignment between the Initial CEC KEs and the Initial NAEYC KEs was for Standards 1 (Learner Development) and 3 (curricular content knowledge), while the lowest alignment was for CEC Standard 7 (collaboration). The highest alignment for the Initial DEC Specialty Set K and S statements with the NAEYC KEs were the K and Ss for CEC Standards 2 (learning environments). The lowest level of overlap was in for CEC Standard 5 (instructional strategies).

In a similar manner, the Advanced CEC KEs (15/28, 54%) had a higher overall alignment with the Advanced NAEYC KEs than the Advanced DEC Specialty Set K and S statements (K 2/9, 22% and S 11/24, 46%, respectively). The highest alignment for the CEC KEs was for Standard 2 (curricular content). The lowest areas of alignment for the CEC KEs was for Standards 3 (programs, services, and outcomes) and 7 (collaboration). Overall, alignment with the DEC K statements was very low. There are only K and S statements for 5 of the 7 CEC Standards, with alignment for Standards 1 (assessment) and 7 (collaboration) being 50% (1/2 K statements) and 0% for the remaining three Standards 2 (curricular content), 3 (programs, services, and outcomes), and 5 (leadership and policy). Alignment with the DEC S statements was higher, however, there are also more S statements than K statements. The highest area of alignment was for Standard 5 (leadership and policy).

The results of this alignment suggest that there are both similarities and differences in the CEC Standards, NAEYC Standards, and the DEC Specialty Sets at both the initial and advanced levels. Further, they support recommendations from the Power to the Profession initiative that a broad set of knowledge and skills to work with children across the age range birth through 8 years and their families is needed. And with this broad perspective, specialization in specific

areas may occur. With this in mind, there seem to be implications for higher education, professional development, and policy development.

- This alignment process identified the shared knowledge and skills required of early childhood educators and early interventionists/early childhood special educators as beginning professionals in the respective fields, as well as the specialized knowledge for each discipline. In the development or revision of blended higher education and professional development (PD) curricula, faculty and PD providers can use the alignment to determine what learning experiences may be used to meet both sets of Standards and the Specialty Sets (e.g., “course content”, activities, assignments, field based experiences) as well as what discipline specific experiences should be included in the curriculum.
- Higher education faculty in universities that seek CAEP accreditation for a blended ECE and EI/ECSE may also use the alignment to prepare accreditation reports and documentation.
- For those preservice and inservice programs that want to integrate some content specific to young children with developmental delays and disabilities into their curricula, and similarly, for EI/ECSE programs to integrate general early childhood content into the curricula, the alignments may serve as helpful resources.
- In developing or revising state certification/licensing requirements, these alignments should be used to guide policy development for blended certifications/licenses.

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