**Section 26.110 Curriculum: General**

The competent early childhood teacher understands and demonstrates the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the content areas and creates and integrates meaningful learning experiences that develop children's competence across all developmental areas and content areas.

a) Knowledge Indicators – The competent early childhood teacher:

1) demonstrates current knowledge of integrated learning experiences for children from birth through grade 2 and understands the central concepts and tools of inquiry in each of the following content areas: language and literacy (English language arts); mathematics; science; health, safety, nutrition and movement (physical development and health); art, music and drama (fine arts); and social science;

2) understands conceptually sound and meaningful curriculum for children from birth through grade 2; and

3) demonstrates an understanding of current research, best practice and professional standards.

b) Performance Indicators – The competent early childhood teacher:

1) plans, implements and evaluates integrated, conceptually sound, meaningful learning experiences for children from birth through grade 2; and

2) structures a variety of learning experiences that reflect the standards set forth in this Subpart A.

c) National Standards

Each early childhood preparation program shall align to "2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs" (2010) published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1313 L Street, Suite 500, Washington DC 20005 and posted at https://www.naeyc.org/accreditation/higher-ed/standards. (No later amendments to or editions of these standards are incorporated.)Recognized institutions seeking initial approval for early childhood education preparation programs on or after January 1, 2015 shall align to the standards set forth in this subsection (c).

d) Gateways to Opportunity Credential Entitlement

Beginning September 1, 2019, each early childhood education program shall become entitled by the Gateways to Opportunity Illinois Professional Development System, by aligning its coursework to the benchmarks for the ECE Credential Level 5 (see http://www.ilgateways.com/en/gateways-credential-entitlement-information).

1) Satisfactory evidence of entitlement status either shall be the name of the program's recognized institution listed at http://www.ilgateways.com/en/entitled-institutions or a letter communicating the name and level of the credential of entitlement and the date upon which the entitlement was granted.

2) The program shall resubmit the evidence required under subsection (d)(1) to the State Superintendent of Education each time a renewal of entitlement is granted.

(Source: Amended at 45 Ill. Reg. 14807, effective November 10, 2021)