



Public Comment Prepared for the Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
Regarding Commission Meeting Agenda Item 4B  
February 7, 2019

PEACH so appreciates Phyllis Jacobson and Erin Sullivan for their collaboration with the stakeholders and their work on revising the performance expectations and program guidelines multiple times in multiple venues. The process of drafting the TPEs, APEs and PPGs has engaged the involvement of a great number of us—CTC staff, ECE stakeholders and other professionals—around the state. The process has involved thousands of hours of careful research, attention, communication, surveys, analyses, documentation, revisions and quick-turn-around responses. We know this work is critically important to the future of our young children, ECE teachers and the quality of their preparation and ongoing professional development.

PEACH notes the integration of specific CA ECE Competencies in the current draft of ECE Performance Expectations and Preparation Program Guidelines. The current draft also incorporates more frequent mention of five key areas CTC cites as identified by the field, these include (a) dual language learners, (b) social-emotional development, (c) the importance of play as learning, (d) working with families and the community, and (e) children ages 0-5 with special needs. PEACH also reviewed the document for additional key areas noted by PEACH in prior CTC meeting public comment. Three of these additional key areas that were identified in the current drafts include (f) inquiry-based pedagogy, (g) 0-3 infant-toddler development and learning, and (h) health, nutrition and safety.

PEACH and many other ECE stakeholders recognize that these proposed ECE TPEs, APEs, and PPGs will likely play a critical role for professionals working in public ECE programs serving children birth to age 8 for many years. Because of the correlation of ECE teacher and administrator knowledge and skills to children's and families' quality learning experiences and outcomes, the TPEs and APEs must reflect the ECE-specific knowledge and skills required by teachers and administrators to build developmental and learning strengths in children 0-8 and their families. As such, ***PEACH recommends that the following modifications and next steps be accomplished to finalize the current drafts contained in item 4B as necessary before approval. With these proposed modifications, PEACH supports CTC approval of the proposed TPEs, APEs, and PPGs contained in Item 4B and looks forward to working with CTC to implement these TPEs, APEs, and PPGs in our higher education programs.***

#### ***PEACH Recommended Modifications***

Since Item 4B was published, our PEACH collaborative of faculty members have conferred over conference calls, face-to-face meetings, researched cited ECE concepts among CSU, UC, CCC and private IHE faculty and other ECE colleagues. In addition, PEACH members responded to an online survey. The following recommended modifications and next steps resulted from these multiple forms of collaboration.

#### **ECE Inquiry-Based Pedagogy**

**The current TPE descriptions of play, social-emotional development, families, 0-5 with special needs, and DLLs in ECE need to reflect the centrality of ECE teachers' inquiry-based pedagogical practices and that the ECE teacher adopts a wholistic view of children's development across all developmental domains, with knowledge and appreciation of individual, cultural and linguistic strengths and dynamics and in collaboration and partnership with children's families.**



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The ECE teacher engages in a continual inquiry process of child observation, documentation of individual and whole-group children’s developmental strengths, emerging skills, and developmental accomplishments. It is this process that serves to support the ECE teacher’s planning of ECE learning environments, implementation and assessment of learning experiences and assessment of children’s development, documenting children’s emerging knowledge, skills and interests to guide future planning, learning experiences to build upon and support children’s learning and development based on children’s expressed interests and in recognition that learning is integrated across all developmental domains in the early childhood period. ECE teachers’ planning and implementation of learning environments and learning experiences is similar to preparing and equipping a science laboratory and an art studio for child-initiated exploration and learning.

**Dual language learners – PEACH agrees with CQEE that dual language learners should be presented in a strengths-based and asset-based perspective and that any wording that reflects DLL from a deficit perspective should be changed.** CQEE notes, “The educational goal reflected [in the TPEs] is for DLLs is to become English proficient without a concomitant emphasis on home language development. This view is not in alignment with the current research and also overlooks current policies for English learners reflected in California’s Department of Education English Learner Roadmap.” In light of the large proportion of dual language learners in California’s early childhood population, we urge that ECE specialists in Dual Language Learning (DLL) consult and contribute to the finalization of the TPEs, APEs and PPGs who deeply understand the strengths and the needs of DLL children as well as strategies essential to optimizing DLL children’s learning and family engagement. In addition, ECE TPEs must include knowledge and skills related to first and second language acquisition as well as language development across 0-8 years. Also, a broadened concept of “literacy” throughout the TPEs needs to make explicit ECE teachers’ knowledge and appreciation of infants’, toddlers’ and preschoolers’ initial acquisition, development and maintenance of first or home language, as well as recognition of the strengths of dual language development and how language development and emergent literacy in home language(s) enhances the child’s capability to develop and become proficient in English language and emergent literacy. Administrative support for these teaching skills and this knowledge of DLL learning process and the role continued use of home language has in enhancing infant, toddler, or preschooler acquisition of English and English proficiency needs to be included in APEs.

**Social-Emotional Development – The first five years are a critical period of social-emotional development and ECE TPEs must be reflective of this.** The treatment of social emotional development in the current drafts confuses social emotional development and social-emotional skills. In multiple instances the use of “social-emotional skills” should be replaced with “social-emotional development” The California Infant-Toddler and Preschool Curriculum Frameworks center ECE teachers’ role of forming and maintaining relationships with children and families, and, further promoting children’s social-emotional development through accurate identification and “reading” of children’s emotional cues and responding appropriately, validating children’s sense of self, and modeling behaviors reflecting respect for all people. These practices support all children’s cognitive, social-emotional, and physical health developmental needs by creating a learning environment that encourages and supports children’s expression of emotions and ideas that are teachers meet with curiosity and responsiveness. Research results demonstrate that these adult skills also reduce an infant’s intensity and length of crying (cited in the Infant Toddler Curriculum Frameworks). The ECE teacher’s interaction with children both **builds and maintains relationships** so that children feel welcomed and at ease to explore. Further, the ECE teacher’s relationship **with each child’s family** communicates acceptance and welcomes the family,



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deepening the **child's feeling of belongingness** in the program. The ECE teacher's attention to a child's social-emotional development, then, is expressed across all the key areas cited above for the child and family. As noted in the Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1, p. 39, "[S]upporting learning in this social emotional domain is implicit in the [ECE teacher's] design of the classroom environment, in the formal and informal moment-by-moment interactions they share with children and in many other planned and spontaneous activities... Social-emotional development is supported in an early childhood classroom only when adults are mindful of the many ways they influence preschool children's self-awareness, social skills, emotional understanding, personality, and other qualities."

**Play is a Primary Context for Learning – CTC's draft TPEs cites the "importance of play as learning."** As an "Overarching Principle" across the California ECE Competencies, Foundations, Curriculum Frameworks and Program Guidelines, **"play is a primary context for learning."** As noted in the Preschool Curriculum Framework, (p. 87, Concluding Thoughts), "[t]o be effective in accomplishing early learning goals, **an active, play-based program must allow children to freely choose and pursue interests and activities, both alone and with others. It must encourage them to translate their own thoughts, ideas, and preferences into new activities and experiments.** It must give them access to these opportunities for activity and exploration in a thoughtfully planned environment for a substantial portion of each preschool day. And most importantly, it must be planned and led by teachers who actively participate as co-explorers in children's chosen activities." As noted in the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Vol 1, "Play is at the heart of young children's explorations and their engagement in learning experiences (p.6)." In addition, the California Infant Toddler Curriculum Framework notes, "[B]ecause infants move through distinct developmental periods so rapidly, adults need to respect and be responsive to each child's learning agenda" (p. 6).

**However, the characterization of the concept of "play as a primary context for learning" is not adequately captured in the TPEs across all three ECE Teacher job roles.** The draft TPEs include a performance expectation for beginning Teacher Assistant, Teacher, and Master Teacher, (pp.20, 32, and 47) stating, "[Understand] [Describe] [Describe and apply] general principles of effective pedagogy for young children, including ways in which children's play as a teacher-guided, children-centered intentional learning opportunity can contribute to children's academic learning, growth and development"

This performance expectation confuses the nature of ECE teacher intentional planning, the nature and context of child-initiated play, as well as the essential role of children's growing sense of agency in the child-initiated play process. It is essential that the TPE be comprehensive when describing the role of child-initiated play and exploration in learning and development across all developmental domains, observing and following the child's lead/interests and scaffolding children's explorations and learning experiences.

APEs need to include the required related knowledge and skills regarding "play as a primary context for learning" that administrators demonstrate to support teachers, children, as well as families in ECE programs.

**Working with Families and the Community** - PEs should state explicitly the expectation that teachers demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain positive primary relationships with young children as well as positive, respectful relationships with children's families that build trust and provide emotional security. In addition, ECE teachers and administrators need to know and appreciate an



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ecological perspective of the child and the role of family's strengths as protective factors. In a child's development and learning. Forming partnerships with families develops a constructive synergy between and among ECE teachers, families and children that can positively involve and impact child development curriculum planning, implementation, assessment, and reflection. For example, teachers' sharing documentation of a child's accomplishment in the program with the child's family can generate deepened knowledge and understanding of the child and family for the teacher; the family may also gain additional respect for their child's developmental process and the role of the ECE teacher and program in the child's growth, development and learning. This also requires that ECE teachers develop cultural literacy, in order to develop respectful, constructive partnerships with families, to acknowledge and engage family strengths, and to inform best practices in the program for optimal developmental and learning outcomes of their children.

***Children ages 0-5 with special needs*** – TPEs need to reflect requirements for ECE teacher knowledge and skills related to IFSPs (for children with special needs 0-3) as well as IEPs (for children with special needs 4-5). With the identification of special needs, a child's strengths and the child's family's strengths also need to be acknowledged by the ECE teacher.

***Knowledge and skills of Infants and Toddlers 0-3*** – PEACH strongly recommends inclusion of more specific knowledge and skills specific to the California Infant-Toddler Learning Foundations and the California Infant-Toddler Curriculum Framework.

***Health, Nutrition, and Safety*** – It is critical that the TPEs describe the knowledge and skills ECE teachers and administrators must have related to program practices affecting children's health, nutrition and safety as an interconnected, comprehensive system, as well as curriculum practices to build children's knowledge and practices around health, nutrition and safety. As noted in the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2, "An integrated and comprehensive approach is most effective when preschool children are taught about health. Health education does not stand alone in the preschool curriculum. It is integrated with the other eight domains: social-emotional development, language and literacy, English-language development, mathematics, visual and performing arts, physical development, history-social science, and science. Health is comprehensive...A developmentally appropriate curriculum promotes overall health (e.g., wellness, safety, oral health, nutrition) and integrates topic areas. (p. 226 - 227).

***Program Preparation Guidelines (PPGs)*** - The PPGs must include requirements of qualified IHE faculty to demonstrate ECE-specialized knowledge and skills related to infant-toddler development, dual language learners, working with families, working with children 0-5 with special needs and of ECE inquiry-based pedagogy and program observation, documentation-reflection and planning process. PPGs also need to state that, to be qualified to teach in ECE IHE programs, faculty should demonstrate knowledge and skills related to development of children ages 0 to 3, 3-5, 5-8 and milestones of first and second language acquisition and dual language development for these ages of children and related knowledge and skills regarding working with their families. We acknowledge that in order to support knowledge and skills of the profession more courses dedicated to infants and toddlers, Dual Language Learners, and children with special needs are needed at many of the IHEs.



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### ***Summary and Proposed Next Steps***

We are in a new and exciting time with a new governor who campaigned on quality ECE. We may successfully get state support for our children's access to quality ECE programs and program policies that reflect best ECE practices for children's development and learning. We believe that the CD Permit could become the state's ECE workforce gold standard for competency-based, ECE-specific preparation, with support for ongoing, in-service professional development. With these opportunities, it is essential that the TPEs, APEs, and PPGs be strongly focused on an ECE- explicit focus. The development of ECE TPEs, APEs, and PPGs will have far-reaching influence. This effort will impact student learning outcomes to be met in ECE coursework completed by ECE teachers working with children in programs, both private and public. We must take this timely opportunity to ensure that the ECE TPEs, APEs, and PPGs support and align with ECE best practices for California's ECE teachers, children, and families.

**PEACH recommends that CTC invites the CD Permit Advisory Panel to collaborate with CTC staff to finalize and vet descriptions of the ECE concepts reflected in the key areas identified by the field and to clearly represent an ECE perspective. This continued conversation with our CTC statewide ECE professional and the CD Permit Advisory Panel Members is essential to ensure that the TPEs, APEs and PPGs clearly reflect ECE concepts and best practices**

Thank you for the Commission's continuing attention to the importance of quality early childhood learning and development and for continued development of these draft documents so that they appropriately reflect best practices in early childhood education.



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