

NEW MEXICO TEACHER ASSESSMENTS™

TEST FRAMEWORK

FIELD 05: NEW MEXICO ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER COMPETENCY™ (EARLY CHILDHOOD)

Subarea		Range of Competencies	Test Proportion
I.	Child Development and Learning	0001–0004	28%
II.	Instruction, Assessment, and the Learning Environment	0005–0009	44%
III.	The Professional Environment	0010–0013	28%

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NEW MEXICO TEACHER ASSESSMENTS™

Field 05: New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency™ (Early Childhood)

Child Development and Learning
Instruction, Assessment, and the Learning Environment
The Professional Environment

SUBAREA I—CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

This section focuses on what teachers should know about how children develop and learn. It addresses how factors in children's lives, including their social and cultural environments, affect growth and learning. It also addresses how teachers can promote growth and learning by responding to each child's specific strengths and needs.

0001 Understand child development (from birth to age eight), developmental, cultural, linguistic, and other differences among children, and effective strategies for supporting children's growth and development.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of theories of development and stages and processes of development in various domains (i.e., physical-motor, social, cultural, emotional, cognitive, and language)
- recognize relationships between development in one domain and development in other domains (e.g., relationships between language development and aspects of cognitive, social, and emotional development; relationships between social and emotional development and learning)
- analyze interactions between environmental factors (e.g., sociocultural and political contexts, home environment) and development in various domains
- understand diverse family literacy practices and how these practices affect children's language and literacy learning
- demonstrate knowledge of how children acquire and use verbal, nonverbal, and alternative means of communication
- demonstrate knowledge of individual differences in development, similarities and differences between children who are developing typically and those who have special needs, and the significance of individual developmental differences and cultural context for teaching and learning
- use knowledge of children's developmental characteristics and needs to identify teaching and learning strategies that facilitate development of the whole child

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0002 Understand how children learn and how to use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate practices to promote children's exploration and learning.

For example:

- analyze processes by which young children construct knowledge and acquire skills and concepts, including the role of play and other experiences in learning
- demonstrate knowledge of individual differences in learning and the significance of these differences for early childhood programs
- analyze factors that influence children's learning (e.g., interactions with peers, interactions between children and adults), and identify strategies for adapting environments and experiences to help ensure all children's success in learning
- identify activities, approaches, and resources that encourage children's exploration and promote a positive attitude toward learning
- apply knowledge of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate strategies for facilitating children's exploration and learning in varied contexts, including strategies for helping children reflect on their own thinking and learning

0003 Understand factors that influence children's growth and development, and use this knowledge to create environments in which all children can grow and learn.

For example:

- analyze ways in which diverse family patterns and other aspects of the home environment may affect children's development and learning
- know how community factors (e.g., cultural and socioeconomic diversity) may affect children's development and learning, and identify strategies for using the community as a resource to promote learning
- analyze ways in which factors in the school environment (e.g., tracking, inclusion, grouping patterns, student-teacher interactions, acknowledgment of children's achievement and progress) may affect children's self-concept and learning
- analyze ways in which individual factors (e.g., risk factors, developmental variations) may affect children's development and learning
- demonstrate knowledge of strategies for creating and modifying environments and experiences to respond to the individual needs of all children, including those with disabilities, developmental delays, special abilities, and cultural and linguistic differences

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0004 Understand different types of diversity, and know how to create learning opportunities and environments that are responsive to differences among children and that foster children's appreciation of and respect for diversity.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity and its significance for child development and learning
- recognize developmental patterns associated with developmental delays and specific disabilities
- apply knowledge of strategies for working effectively with and meeting the needs of children with various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, disabilities, talents, family situations, socioeconomic circumstances, and prior learning experiences
- demonstrate knowledge of differences in children's strengths and needs, and recognize the instructional implications of these differences, including the importance of acknowledging that every child can learn and of communicating high expectations for all children's learning and progress
- identify practices that support inclusion and cultural and linguistic diversity in early childhood environments
- recognize the importance of creating a supportive and nurturing environment for all children, including the use of strategies to foster children's understanding and appreciation of diversity

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SUBAREA II—INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT, AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This section focuses on what teachers should know about how to help children become successful learners. It addresses how teachers should organize instruction, use assessment, and interact with children to help them learn. It also addresses how to enhance children's motivation and encourage their use of positive, productive learning behaviors.

0005 Understand how to design, implement, and evaluate learning experiences that promote all children's development and learning.

For example:

- know the role of various factors (e.g., learning goals, children's language and literacy development, other characteristics of children, available time and resources) in instructional planning for young children, and recognize the importance of planning blocks of uninterrupted time for children to persist at self-chosen activities
- apply knowledge of procedures used for instructional planning (e.g., defining lesson or unit objectives, developing effective lesson plans, choosing learning activities, sequencing activities) and integrating curriculum
- demonstrate knowledge of developmentally and culturally appropriate instructional practices (e.g., play, small-group projects, open-ended questioning, group discussion, learning centers, cooperative learning, inquiry experiences, observational learning) and their use in promoting children's academic and social competence and in helping children develop intellectual curiosity, acquire skills and concepts, solve problems, and make decisions
- know how to select and use various methods and resources, including print, manipulative, technological, and human resources, that facilitate learning and are appropriate for children's developmental levels, special needs and abilities, and linguistic and cultural backgrounds
- apply knowledge of strategies for evaluating instruction on an ongoing basis and for modifying instruction to enhance children's development and learning

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0006 Understand how to structure and manage supportive, challenging learning environments that encourage positive social interactions and enable all children to develop and learn.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of alternative program models and learning environments that meet all children's needs, including children with special needs
- demonstrate knowledge of effective, developmentally and culturally appropriate schedules and routines in early childhood education, and analyze ways in which physical setting, schedules, routines, and transitions affect children's development and learning
- apply knowledge of strategies for creating and adapting indoor and outdoor learning environments that encourage active involvement, initiative, responsibility, and a growing sense of autonomy
- demonstrate knowledge of effective, developmentally and culturally appropriate individual and group guidance techniques and strategies for promoting positive interactions, helping children learn to handle their emotions appropriately, and encouraging children to have positive attitudes about themselves and others
- know how to create and manage learning environments that provide opportunities for individual children and collaborative groups to construct their own knowledge and engage in decision-making, problem-solving, and inquiry experiences
- demonstrate knowledge of developmentally and culturally appropriate strategies for promoting children's independence, interdependence, and self-confidence

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0007 Understand the importance of a healthy, safe environment for children's development and learning, and know strategies for providing an emotionally and physically safe environment for early childhood programs.

For example:

- analyze relationships among children's health, nutrition, and learning, and know how to recognize and respond to individual children's needs regarding emotional and physical health, nutrition, and safety
- know how to plan and use indoor and outdoor learning environments in ways that ensure children's physical and emotional well-being and safety
- know how to use basic health appraisal and management procedures, and make referrals when necessary
- recognize signs of emotional distress, child abuse, and neglect in young children, and know appropriate procedures for addressing given situations (e.g., initiating discussions with family members, referring to appropriate professionals, reporting suspected abuse or neglect to designated authorities)
- know how to provide a consistent daily schedule for rest/sleep, as developmentally appropriate, and how to establish an environment that provides children with opportunities to practice healthy behaviors related to nutrition, injury prevention, and physical and psychological well-being
- know how to provide children and families with effective, culturally responsive learning opportunities that encourage health-promoting behaviors

0008 Understand how to use effective and culturally responsive communication to promote children's active inquiry, learning, collaboration, self-esteem, and positive interactions in the learning environment.

For example:

- recognize effective communication techniques for various situations and needs in early childhood learning environments (e.g., collaborating with and responding to children, conveying and clarifying ideas, resolving conflicts, questioning, engaging in active listening)
- analyze ways in which individual and group differences can affect communication, and know how to interact with all students in ways that demonstrate respect and sensitivity
- demonstrate knowledge of the effective use of communication, including nonverbal communication, to promote children's understanding, foster positive interactions with peers and adults, and encourage children's development and use of expressive language
- apply knowledge of strategies for modifying communication to facilitate children's understanding
- analyze communication issues in various teacher-child interactions (e.g., communicating expectations, providing feedback, maintaining children's self-esteem)

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0009 Understand how to use varied and culturally responsive assessment strategies, including observation, to learn about children, plan instruction, monitor children's progress, and modify the teaching/learning process to enhance children's development and learning.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of characteristics, uses, and limitations of formal and informal assessment tools and strategies (e.g., teacher observation, portfolios, peer assessment, parent/guardian interviews, checklists, screening tools, standardized tests), and evaluate the appropriateness of specific assessment tools and strategies for given purposes
- recognize the importance of gathering assessment data from multiple sources in order to make educational decisions about children, and know how to maintain records of children's development, behavior, and progress in ways that safeguard confidentiality and privacy
- analyze the influence of cultural and linguistic differences, developmental levels of learning, and teacher practices and academic expectations on the assessment outcomes of diverse learners
- demonstrate knowledge of the role of families as active participants in the assessment process, and identify effective ways to involve families and other team members, as appropriate, in assessing children's development, strengths, and needs
- apply skills for interpreting assessment results and using results to plan and modify instruction and to make educational decisions about children
- identify effective strategies for sharing information about the purposes, methods, and outcomes of assessments with children and parents/guardians in clear, supportive ways

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SUBAREA III—THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

This section focuses on the role of teachers as professionals in a complex environment. It addresses strategies teachers can use to ensure ongoing professional development and improvement in their own teaching. It also addresses ways to collaborate with others to create an effective learning environment for children, as well as foundational knowledge regarding early childhood education programs and the rights and responsibilities of all those involved in early childhood education in New Mexico.

0010 Understand the importance of reflecting on and continually assessing one's own practice, and know how to utilize resources and opportunities to enhance professional development and effectiveness.

For example:

- apply strategies for critical reflection and self-assessment with regard to effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development; strengthening rapport with children, parents/guardians, and colleagues; and avoiding cultural, gender, and other biases
- know how to use various resources and opportunities (e.g., journals, colleagues, professional associations, inservice training, community activities, continuing education) to promote professional growth and enhance knowledge and skills in working with young children and adults
- apply knowledge of strategies for collaborating with other members of the school community (e.g., other teachers, mentors, supervisors, support personnel) to enhance skills and solve problems
- demonstrate knowledge of how to evaluate and respond to feedback (e.g., from supervisors, parents/guardians, colleagues)

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0011 Understand how to foster positive, culturally and linguistically responsive interactions and collaborative relationships with parents/guardians, families, other professionals, and community agencies in support of all children's learning and well-being.

For example:

- know how to create a safe and welcoming environment for families and how to use family-centered skills and strategies to promote effective, ongoing communication and collaboration with families and encourage families' active involvement in their children's education
- apply knowledge of skills and strategies for working effectively with families from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, and recognize the importance of demonstrating respect for cultural and other differences and incorporating families' goals for their children into classroom and/or intervention strategies
- demonstrate knowledge of the complexity and dynamics of family systems, including the effects of family stress on children and other family members
- know the roles of professionals who provide related services for young children and their families, and know strategies for collaborating with colleagues and other professionals to respond to children's needs and to enhance the learning environment
- identify strategies for involving community members in contributing to the learning environment and for using community resources (e.g., cultural institutions, social agencies) to enhance teaching and learning
- apply skills and strategies for initiating and maintaining positive, productive relationships with parents/guardians, families, community agencies, and other professionals to meet the needs of all children

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0012 Understand the foundations of the early childhood profession; the organization, operation, and evaluation of early childhood programs; issues and trends affecting early childhood education; and roles of early childhood educators in various contexts.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of early childhood education and current thought and practice in the field
- apply knowledge of basic principles of administration, organization, and operation of early childhood programs, including supervision of staff and volunteers
- identify techniques and procedures for systematic, ongoing evaluation and modification of early childhood programs to ensure quality of the total environment for children, families, and the community
- demonstrate awareness of conditions affecting children, families, and early childhood professionals and current issues and trends in early childhood education
- demonstrate knowledge of the various roles of the early childhood educator (e.g., advocate for children, families, and programs; member of the assessment team for Individual Family Service Plans [IFSPs] and Individual Education Plans [IEPs]) and how to implement those roles appropriately and effectively

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0013 Understand the rights and responsibilities of individuals involved in early childhood education, ethical guidelines for early childhood educators, and laws and regulations related to programs and services for children.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of early childhood education teachers in various contexts (e.g., teaching children with identified disabilities, referring children with suspected disabilities, choosing curriculum materials, implementing discipline, addressing suspected child abuse and/or neglect)
- apply knowledge of children's rights in various contexts (e.g., equal access to programs and services, provision of appropriate education for children with special needs, confidentiality of records and personal information)
- apply knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians in various contexts (e.g., access to children's confidential records, program attendance, program services to meet children's needs)
- demonstrate knowledge of legislation and other public policies affecting children, families, and the early childhood profession
- demonstrate knowledge of federal, state, and local regulations regarding programs and services for young children
- demonstrate knowledge of professional codes of ethics and conduct for early childhood educators, and incorporate these into professional practice
- apply knowledge of constitutional guarantees and legislation affecting early childhood education (e.g., instruction of bilingual students and English language learners, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, due process)