



Pennsylvania Association
Education of Young Children



July 15, 2024

Karen Molchanow, Executive Director
State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126

Dear Ms. Molchanow:

The Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children (PennAEYC) is a statewide, non-profit membership organization of over 3,000 early childhood care and education professionals. As the Pennsylvania affiliate of the National AEYC, we strive to be an effective voice for high-quality early childhood care and education through policy development, advocacy and professional development and supports for early childhood professionals. On behalf of PennAEYC, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer comment on the State Board of Education's Academic Standards and Assessment proposed rulemaking (Regulation # 6-354).

We support the proposed new strand for Education and Early Childhood Development within the Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) standards. We recognize that the FCS standards aim to prepare students for personal, family and work responsibilities and empower students for the challenges of living and working in a diverse, global society. We understand and support that this proposed addition of the strand will support the instruction aligned to Pennsylvania's new Career and Technical Education Program of Study in Education. We also support the proposed substrands for Education and Early Childhood Development: developmental stages, learning environments, health and safety, literacy, collaborative relationships and careers.

We believe that these proposed additions will prepare learners in exploring and finding careers, obtaining employment and training. Our hope is that with these proposed additions learners will choose early childhood education as a career given the skills that are a part of the standards for FCS. We also note that educator preparation programs will need to integrate instruction in the updated standards into the coursework they deliver to those becoming teachers. As you know, the early childhood workforce is struggling and has been in a crisis in recent years due to the low compensation in the sector. In addition to recruitment and retention initiatives, it is important to grow the workforce that holds the necessary credentials and meets the standards and guidelines.

Additional specific comments on the proposed rulemaking:

- §4.23 (c)(8) related to high school education is missing the inclusion of the principle of child development under family and consumer sciences.
- Within the Academic Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences and the strand, Education and Early Childhood Development, in Appendix D-1:
 - Health and safety substrand – We recommend an addition of a standard for the Kindergarten to grade 2 band. The standard could focus on implementing strategies to teach health, safety and sanitation habits.

- Collaborative relationships substrand – We recommend an addition of a standard for the grades 3 to 5 band. The standard could focus on applying developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive guidelines for behavior.
- Careers substrand - We recommend an addition of standards for the Kindergarten to grade 2 and the grades 3 to 5 bands. The standard could focus on explaining the roles and functions of individuals engaged in early childhood, education, and services for Kindergarten to grade 2 and analyzing opportunities for employment, entrepreneurial endeavors, and emerging careers for the grade 3 to 5 bands.
- Within the Academic Standards for Career Education and Work and the strand, Personal Interests and Career Planning in Appendix E-1:
 - Research careers substrand – We recommend an addition of a standard for the Kindergarten to grade 2 grade band. The standard could focus on analyzing potential career choices to determine the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and opportunities associated with each career.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide public comment. Please contact our Senior Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, Kimberly Early, at kearly@pennaeyc.org should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jen DeBell
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children