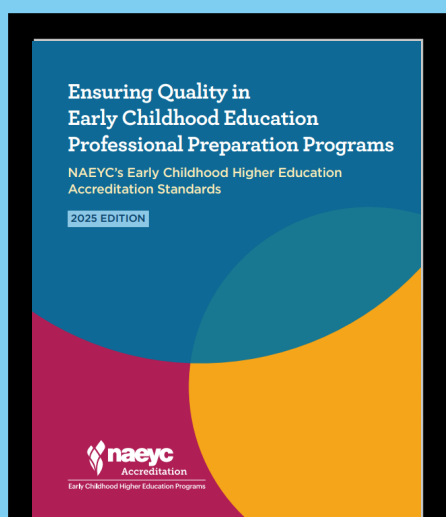


# Two Sets of Standards -One Goal- Strengthening the Early Childhood Education Profession

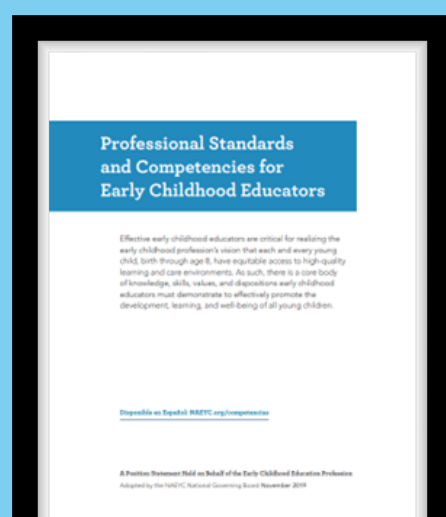
## Higher Education Accreditation Standards

-Define essential features of quality in early childhood education (ECE) degree programs



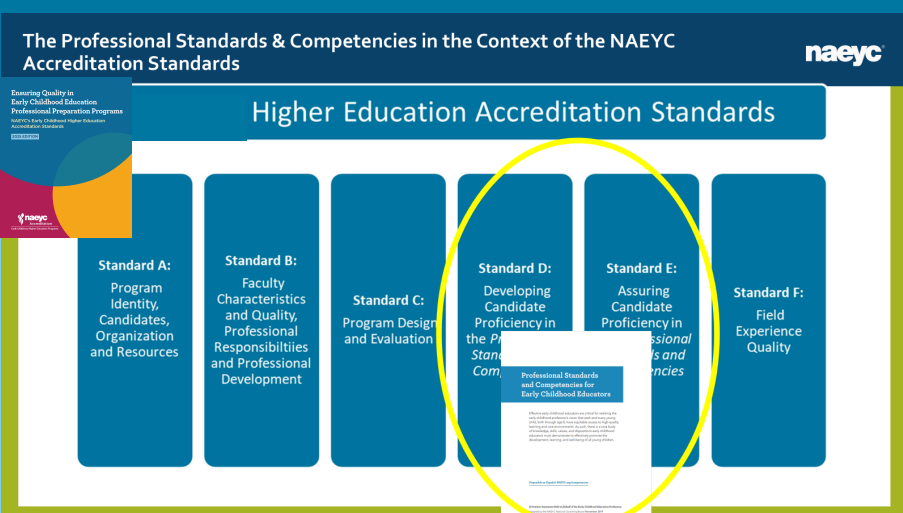
## Professional Standards & Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (PS&Cs)

-Define what early childhood educators should know and be able to do



## WHERE THEY INTERSECT

The accreditation standards ensure that higher education programs prepare candidates to meet the expectations of the profession (i.e., PS&Cs) and that the program uses candidate performance data on the PS&Cs to improve teaching and learning within the program.



**Accreditation Standard D: Developing Candidate Proficiency**  
Higher ed. programs must design coursework/curriculum that intentionally aligns to the PS&Cs.

**Accreditation Standard E: Assuring Candidate Proficiency**  
Higher ed. programs must assess candidate performance on the PS&Cs and collect & utilize the performance data.

## TOGETHER...

The Professional Standards & Competencies are the target for a knowledgeable and skilled ECE profession.

Higher Education Accreditation Standards D & E are the means to ensure that graduates of higher education programs are prepared to hit that target.



## WHY THIS MATTERS

Because accreditation ensures that ECE higher education programs are aligned with current expectations of the profession.

Because both sets of standards are used to inform ECE higher education programs' curriculum, assessment of candidate learning, and continuous improvement efforts.

This leads to a competent ECE workforce of early childhood educators equipped with knowledge, skills, and dispositions rooted in national professional expectations.

## REFERENCES

**NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation Standards**  
National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2025). Ensuring quality in early childhood education professional preparation programs NAEYC's early childhood higher education accreditation standards.  
[https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/accreditation/higher-ed/2025\\_higher\\_education\\_accreditation\\_standards\\_final.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/accreditation/higher-ed/2025_higher_education_accreditation_standards_final.pdf)

**Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators**  
National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2020). Professional standards and competencies for early childhood educators. [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/standards\\_and\\_competencies\\_ps.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/standards_and_competencies_ps.pdf)