



ADMINISTRATIVE RULES OF MONTANA



10.58.531 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- (1) The program requires that successful candidates:
 - (a) identify, apply, and reflect on their knowledge of child development by:
 - (i) demonstrating an understanding of early childhood (birth-age 8) characteristics and needs across multiple, interrelated areas of children's development and learning including physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, and aesthetic domains as well as learning processes, bilingual/multilingual development, and motivation to learn; and
 - (ii) understanding and valuing developmental variations, experiences, strengths, interests, abilities, challenges, and approaches to learning for all children;
 - (b) base their practice on coherent early childhood theoretical perspectives, current understanding of the influence of theory and research about brain growth and development, executive function, motivation, the importance of play, and dispositions toward learning on development;
 - (c) apply their understanding of the multiple influences on the contexts of young children's development and learning including family, community, cultural, and linguistic contexts, temperament, approaches, and dispositions to learning (including initiative, self-direction, persistence, and attentiveness), motivation, attachment, economic conditions, health status, opportunities for play and learning, technology and media, and developmental variations;
 - (d) understand the potential influence of early childhood programs, including early intervention, on short- and long-term outcomes for children; and
 - (e) demonstrate the ability to use developmental knowledge including strengths of families and children to create physically and psychologically safe learning environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for children, with full family engagement in establishing the most effective environment for their child.
- (2) The program ensures that successful candidates identify, apply, and reflect on their knowledge of family and community partnerships by:
 - (a) knowing about, understanding, and valuing the complex characteristics and importance of children's families and communities including home language, cultural values, ethnicity, socioeconomic conditions, family structures, relationships, stresses, childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences, supports, and community resources;

- (i) understanding the effects of childhood trauma on social, emotional, physical, and behavioral development and be able to demonstrate trauma-informed classroom management strategies; and
 - (ii) demonstrating a knowledge of the implications of secondary trauma on whole-child well-being;
 - (b) collaborating with families as equal partners in creating respectful, reciprocal relationships;
 - (c) promoting and encouraging family engagement in all aspects of children's development and learning including assisting families to find curriculum and refer resources concerning parenting, mental health, health care, and financial assistance; and
 - (d) demonstrating essential knowledge and core skills in team building and in communicating with families and colleagues from other disciplines to encourage and value families' participation in curriculum and program development as well as assessment of children's learning.
- (3) The program ensures that successful candidates identify, apply, and reflect on their knowledge of observation, documentation, and assessment by:
- (a) understanding the importance of different types of developmentally appropriate assessments, including, but not limited to, observation, portfolio assessment, and work samples, as well as the importance of providing play-based experiences for children to demonstrate their skills and abilities;
 - (b) understanding the goals of assessment to summarize, analyze, and use assessment information gathered to:
 - (i) learn about children's characteristics, including the unique qualities of American Indians;
 - (ii) document all children's growth in all developmental domains and promote positive outcomes for each child;
 - (iii) make data-driven decisions to guide curriculum planning and instruction; and
 - (iv) evaluate effective curriculum to maximize children's development and learning;
 - (c) understanding assessments that have established reliability and validity that consider children's development, ability, culture, and language.
- (4) The program ensures that successful candidates identify, apply, and reflect on their knowledge of teaching and engagement by:
- (a) utilizing the environment, schedule, and routine as learning opportunities, including:
 - (i) designing learning centers and interest areas for indoor and outdoor spaces;
 - (ii) scheduling extended time for play; and
 - (iii) teaching through individual and small group contexts that personalize the learning for the child;
 - (b) creating a caring community of learners that:
 - (i) supports positive relationships among educators, families, and children;

- (ii) promotes the development of children's friendship skills; and
 - (iii) assists children in the development of security, self-regulation, responsibility, and problem solving;
 - (c) utilizing a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching skills and strategies supportive of young learners, such as:
 - (i) incorporating play, project based and experiential learning as core teaching practices;
 - (ii) integrating curricular areas;
 - (iii) scaffolding learning;
 - (iv) personalization of learning;
 - (v) teaching through social interactions;
 - (vi) providing meaningful child choice;
 - (vii) implementing positive guidance strategies; and
 - (viii) making appropriate use of technology;
 - (d) providing curriculum and learning experiences that reflect the principles of universal design for learning, the languages, cultures, traditions, and individual needs of diverse families and children, with particular attention to the cultures of the children and families in the classroom and to American Indians and tribes in Montana.
- (5) The program ensures that successful candidates identify, apply, and reflect on their knowledge of curriculum by:
- (a) designing, implementing, and evaluating developmentally meaningful, integrated, and challenging curriculum for each child using professional knowledge, Montana's Early Learning Standards, Montana Content Standards (K-5), and Indian Education for All; and
 - (b) integrating and supporting in-depth learning using both spontaneous and planned curricula and teaching practices in each of the academic discipline content areas including language and literacy; science; mathematics; social studies; the performing and visual arts; health and well-being; and physical development, skills, and fitness by:
 - (i) demonstrating knowledge and understanding of theory and research and applying knowledge in the areas of language, speaking and listening, reading and writing processes, literature, print and non-print texts, which are inclusive of texts from and about American Indians and tribes in Montana, and technology; and planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting on English/language arts and literacy instruction that promotes critical thinking and creative engagement;
 - (ii) demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and use of the fundamental concepts of physical, life, earth, and space sciences to design and implement age-appropriate inquiry lessons to teach science, to build student understanding for personal and social applications, to convey the nature of science, the concepts in science and technology, the history and nature of science, including scientific contributions of American Indians and tribes in Montana;

- (iii) demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and use of the major concepts, and procedures, and reasoning processes of mathematics that define number systems and number sense, operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis statistics and probability in order to foster student understanding and use of patterns, quantities, and spatial relationships that can represent phenomena, solve problems, and deal with data to engage students in problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, connections, and representation, including culturally inclusive lessons and examples relating to American Indians and tribes in Montana;
 - (iv) demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and use of the major concepts and modes of inquiry from the social studies, the integrated study of history, government, geography, economics including personal financial literacy, and an understanding of the social sciences and other related areas to promote students' abilities to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society, including the cultural diversity of American Indians and tribes in Montana, and interdependent world;
 - (v) demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and use of the content, functions, and achievements of the performing arts (dance, music, drama) and the visual arts as primary media for communication, inquiry, perspective, and engagement among students, and culturally diverse performing and visual arts inclusive of the works of American Indian artists and art in Montana;
 - (vi) demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and use of the major concepts in the subject matter of health education to create opportunities for student development and practice of skills that contribute to good health for all young children; and
 - (vii) demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and use of human movement and physical activity as central elements to foster active, healthy life styles, including health nutrition, and enhanced quality of life for all students;
 - (c) basing curriculum planning on the understanding of the particular significance of social, emotional, and behavioral development as the foundation for young children's school readiness and future achievements.
- (6) The program ensures that successful candidates identify, apply, and reflect on their knowledge of professionalism by:
- (a) identifying and involving oneself with the distinctive history, values, knowledge base, and mission of the early childhood field to become an informed advocate for all young children and their families.
 - (b) upholding and using state and national codes of ethical conduct for the education of young children and other applicable regulations and guidelines;
 - (c) collaborating with multiple stakeholders, including:
 - (i) teachers in preceding and subsequent grade levels to increase continuity and coherence across ages/grades;
 - (ii) families and interdisciplinary professionals to meet the developmental needs of each child; and

- (iii) relevant community and state resources to build professional early learning networks that support high quality early learning experiences for young children and their families;
 - (d) using formal and informal assessments, early learning professional knowledge, reflection, collaborative relationships, and critical thinking to analyze and continuously improve professional practices with young children and their families;
 - (e) engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice; and
 - (f) developing and sustaining the habit of reflective and intentional practice in their daily work with young children.
- (7) The program ensures successful completion of clinical and student teaching experiences that:
- (a) are well-planned and sequenced in a variety of settings (i.e., state-licensed child care, Head Start, or community programs);
 - (b) provide the opportunity to connect early childhood classroom experiences to home and community settings;
 - (c) include experience in two different age groups (grades 3-6 and grades 5-8); and
 - (d) include a K-3 student teaching experience in a P-12 school setting.

Authorizing statute(s): 20-2-114, MCA

Implementing statute(s): 20-2-121, MCA

History: NEW, 2014 MAR p. 2936, Eff. 7/1/15; AMD, 2023 MAR p. 86, Eff. 7/1/23.