

CDE/ECE Faculty Initiative Project Instructional Guide

*California Preschool Learning Foundations,
Volume 1*

Introduction to The Faculty Initiative Project: *Supporting Faculty*

Responding to early childhood priorities in California, the Child Development Division (CDD) of the California Department of Education (CDE) has developed initiatives and published materials to support practitioners, young children, and families involved in early childhood education programs. The California Department of Education/Early Childhood Education (CDE/ECE) Faculty Initiative Project (FIP) has been charged with supporting faculty in institutions of higher education (IHE) across the state as they infuse these initiatives into their course work.

To support faculty as they prepare the child care workforce in California to successfully meet the challenges and requirements of implementing recent CDD initiatives and publications, the FIP is developing instructional guides to accompany several of these initiatives and publications. These instructional guides are intended to connect professional development in systems of higher education, the content of the CDD initiatives, and the knowledge and skills needed by practitioners in the field to implement the initiatives. Among the CDD initiatives and publications is the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* (PLF, V1). This publication contains foundations for social-emotional development, language and literacy, English-language development, and mathematics. The FIP has developed the *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* as a faculty resource for this publication.

About the Instructional Guides: *Activities and Resources for IHE Faculty*

Materials in the FIP instructional guides have been developed and organized to maximize flexibility with the intention of providing the greatest possible utility across the complexity of California's systems of higher education. The guides are organized in a way that allows faculty to select curricular content that suits their particular students' and their program needs.

The instructional guides are developed to maintain fidelity to the content of CDD's initiatives and to commonly accepted principles of adult learning, while responding to the complexity and variety of institutions of higher education in California. Ultimately, it is hoped that use of the instructional guides will enhance the knowledge and skills of the child care work force in California and enable teachers to more effectively support the children and families they serve.

The guides are designed for faculty teaching at institutions of higher education. The activities described in the instructional guides are intended to help faculty acquaint college students who are preparing for work in preschool settings with CDD publications. Any time students are mentioned in this guide, reference is being made to college students—not children in the preschool setting.

Purpose of the Instructional Guide for the Foundations: *Deepening Students' Understanding of the Content of the Foundations*

The purpose of the CDE/ECE Faculty Initiative Project's *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* is to support faculty in deepening their students' understanding of the foundations contained in the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1*. This instructional guide provides suggested activities and resources for use by faculty in community college and university courses in California. The activities in the instructional

guide are intended to promote college students' development of knowledge and skills as well as to support the development of habits and skills for reflection.

The foundations “. . . describe competencies – knowledge and skills – that most children can be expected to exhibit in a high-quality program as they complete their first or second year of preschool.” (PLF, V1, p. xi) They provide research-based identification of the skills and knowledge children need to be successful in school and in life. The foundations themselves are neither curriculum nor assessment but can serve as guides to help teachers develop curriculum and assessment practices.

The *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* also is not intended to support faculty in helping students assess children's learning and development in the foundations nor in helping students learn how to design curriculum to support children's learning and development. Future instructional guides will address forthcoming CDE preschool assessment and curriculum framework publications for these purposes.

California Preschool Learning Foundations Volume 1 addresses four domains: social-emotional development; language and literacy; English-language development; and mathematics. Each domain has a specific organizational format, but domains are generally organized as strands, substrands, foundations, and examples. The instructional guide also addresses each of the four domains. A map for the specific organizational format of each domain is provided at the beginning of each domain in this instructional guide.

Flexibility for Faculty: *Choose, Adapt, Tailor*

The material in the instructional guide is intended to provide great flexibility to faculty. The following options are examples of ways faculty can use the instructional guide:

- Select relevant content and/or activities based on course content and/or student learning outcomes
- Reorganize the activity segments or select sections of the materials to fit their students and priorities
- Expand or minimize content
- Tailor content to their local needs (e.g., prevalent home language varies from region to region in California)

Activities, approaches, and strategies are described broadly enough so that faculty can choose, adapt, tailor, and shape these to their own preferred teaching styles, students, and program needs. This flexibility is offered in the hope of providing maximum utility of the initiatives and publications that CDD is preparing for the child care community in California.

Structure of the Instructional Guide for the PLF, Vol. 1: *Core Instructional Components*

The materials in this instructional guide adhere to a framework of five core instructional components and are organized as follows:

1. *Motivator and/or Connection to Experience*

This component describes activities that connect content to the personal and/or professional experience of the learner. It establishes motivation by embedding the content within a situation or question that might be familiar to the learner and suggests ways to extend learning by providing challenges or issues to consider. *The Motivator and/or Connection to Experience* may include these elements:

- Critical questions
- Challenging situations—short vignettes might be text or video or audio
- Challenging quotes or text

The *Motivator and/or Connection to Experience* is often accompanied by a set of guiding questions for reflection. These are not intended to assess learning but to engage the learner in remembering and reflecting on (not evaluating) their own experiences, feelings, personal actions, or actions of others.

2. *Information Delivery*

This component is designed to introduce specific content to students in the class setting. The delivery of information may be brief or long and may be composed of a single topic or several related topics, such as key topics within a given chapter. *Information Delivery* may include these elements:

- Lecture content
- Mini-lecture content
- Direct engagement with content in an active way

3. *In-Class Activity*

This component describes activities that can be conducted within the time frame of a single class by individuals, pairs, small groups, or the whole class. These activities are intended to be active, thoughtful, challenging, and relevant to the content.

4. *Out-of-Class Activity*

This component describes activities that can be conducted outside of class time. Many of these activities are flexible enough to also be implemented within class time. An *Out-of-Class Activity* may include one or more of these activities:

- Readings
- Seeking Internet resources
- Interviews
- Child observations
- Research on a particular topic
- Visiting exemplary programs

5. *Assessment*

This component includes methods to evaluate student learning outcomes relevant to the content. Faculty often take multiple opportunities throughout their course to evaluate their students' progress towards learning goals. Included in this guide are varied assessments that faculty can tailor to their purposes. There are formative assessment activities that are designed to reinforce student learning and allow for self-assessment and reflection. There are other assessment

activities that can be used when further into the class as cumulative assessments, where students can ponder more complex aspects of what is learned in the classroom.

In this guide, some specific opportunities for assessment are included in activities. Because it is most appropriate for faculty to tailor more specific assessment content to teaching preferences and requirements, no detailed rubrics or test questions are included.

In addition to content and activities that address these five core instructional components, there are topics for additional study or research by students included as *Deepening Understanding* activities at the end of each domain.

Organization of Each Activity: *Flexible Segments*

Each activity is comprised of segments that allow faculty to make choices about implementation. The segments are italicized below as they are described.

Each activity begins with a section titled *Getting Ready*. This section can be found on the first page of every activity and provides an overview to help faculty decide if the activity fits into their purpose and goals for a class session. In this section there is a reference to the strands and a short description of the focus of the activity. A few tips for faculty preparation or reflection, labeled *Before you start*, are included before the activity. The activities themselves are divided into *Getting started*, *Keeping it going*, *Putting it together*, *Taking it further*, *Another way*, *Taking it out of class*, and *Assessment*. Not every activity includes all of these segments. Also note that assessments are included as segments within activities rather than as separate activities.

Throughout the Instructional Guide, you will sometimes see this symbol in the left margin below activity segments. This symbol indicates that there are PowerPoint slides that correspond to a particular part of the activity.



Slide 3

Knowledge and Skills: *Student Learning Outcomes, Course Objectives*

Each activity is accompanied by a description of the knowledge and skills students can gain from participating in that activity. The knowledge and skills can be found on the first page of each activity immediately following the *Getting Ready* section. The knowledge and skills associated with each activity might be useful in developing student learning outcomes, course objectives, or program objectives. Of course, the extent to which any student will attain the knowledge and skills will depend on both the breadth and depth with which faculty implement the activity.

These knowledge and skills have been aligned with early childhood professional standards from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (see Appendix B) and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) (see Appendix C). The alignment with the core NAEYC professional standards uses the most recently revised edition (July 2009). In this revision, Standard 4 was divided into two separate standards, including one focused on teaching methods and the other on early childhood content (see Appendix B). Following each knowledge concept or skill, the notation in parentheses refers to the specific standard(s) from the *NAEYC Standards for Professional Preparation* with which it has been aligned. In addition, a matrix of the overlap between the NAEYC Professional Teaching

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Standards and the NBPTS has been included as a reference (see Appendix A). Please refer to Appendix A for the corresponding standards cited in the knowledge and skills for each activity.