

| TERM | ALIGNMENT |
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| Definition | <p>The horizontal (coordination within an age/grade level), vertical (what came before and what will follow), and temporal (across a period of time) relationships among early learning standards, curriculum, teaching practices, and assessment. Alignment at the early childhood level (birth through age 8) forms the basis for the formulation of standards and assessment for older students.</p> |
| Related Terms | <p>Assessment; Curriculum; Early Learning Standards; Expectations; Standards</p> |
| Explanatory Comments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective settings for children from infancy through primary level (and beyond) assure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ expectations for children’s development and learning and curriculum (available learning experiences) at any level are reasonable, and ○ that the expectations of a previous or succeeding level merge seamlessly. • When the definition of learning expectations for younger children form the basis of a standards system, the succeeding levels flow naturally with a greater likelihood that the expected outcomes for older children will be reasonably achievable. Beginning the process with expectations for older students risks imposing unreasonable expectations and using inappropriate teaching methods with younger children with the unsubstantiated expectation of higher achievement at upper levels. • The defined curriculum and the learning experiences actually available to children should encompass, but not be limited to the knowledge and skills defined in early learning standards. • The process of developing and aligning standards and assessments should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be based on whether they are reasonable (the developmental perspective) and desirable (parent and societal preferences) ○ proceed to how they can be developed and learned through the curriculum and teaching practices, and ○ consider how they can be assessed. • Assessment (what is assessed and how) should not drive decisions about what to expect or what and how to teach. |
| Web Sources | <p>Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (2002). <i>A lexicon of learning: What educators mean when they say...</i> Retrieved March 14, 2006, from http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.4247f922ca8c9ecc8c2a9410d3108a0c/</p> <p>Education Resources Information Center. <i>Thesaurus: Informal assessment</i>. Retrieved November 29, 2007 from http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=Thesaurus&_nfls=false</p> <p>Jones, J. (2003). <i>Early literacy assessment systems: Essential elements</i>. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. Retrieved November 29, 2007, from http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICEARLYLIT.pdf</p> <p>Kauerz, Kristie. (2006, January). Ladders of learning: Fighting fade-out by advancing PK-3 alignment. Issue Brief #2. Washington, DC: New America Foundation. Retrieved November 29, 2007, from http://www.fcd-</p> |

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| | <p>us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=463891 National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). <i>Assessment glossary</i>. Author. Retrieved November, 29, 2007, from http://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/glossary.html Scott-Little, C., Kagan, S.L., & Frelow, V.S. (2003, Fall). Creating the conditions for success with early learning standards: Results from a national study of state-level standards for children’s learning prior to kindergarten. <i>Early Childhood Research & Practice</i>, 5,(2). Retrieved November 29, 2007, from http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v5n2/little.html</p> <p>Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. (2004). Alignment in SEDL’s Working Systematically Model: 2004 Progress report to schools and districts. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved November 29, 2007, from http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/Labs/ReIFinalReport/X/SEDL_Response.doc</p> |
| <p>Other References</p> | |