Early Childhood Education

WHERE THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE BEGINS

PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CODE | 2027

ADVENTIST EDUCATION
Journey *to* Excellence 2.0

2686 Townsgate Road, Westlake Village, CA, 91361
805.413.7316 adventistfaith.com

Foreword

The *Early Childhood Education Code (ECE Code)* is produced by the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education Early Childhood Education Division. It reflects all currently voted policies.

The official *ECE Code* will be produced and maintained online at the Pacific Union Conference website, https://www.adventistfaith.com/education**,** under the "ECE Resources" tab. Periodic updates, as needed and voted by appropriate administrative bodies, will be made on the website.

Hard copies may be produced for individual use, but the online edition should be used for current *ECE Code* reference. A comprehensive index and glossary are included for use in referencing the *ECE Code*. Electronic search capabilities are included for ease of use.

The Pacific Union Conference *Early Childhood Education Code* is a separate document from the Pacific Union Conference *Education Code* for TK-12.

— Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 296

Believing in the education of all students in Seventh-day Adventist schools, we exist to inspire the continual improvement of students and educators to become "something better."

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The Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists coordinates a system of church schools for the education of its youth, birth through graduate school. The purpose and aim of this educational program is to promote the harmonious development of the whole person—spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social.

The *ECE Code* is a compilation of policies and provisions relating to the establishment, organization, administration, operation, and maintenance of the Early Childhood Programs (ECPs) in the Seventh-day Adventist school system. [See Section ECE.A12-104.] It clarifies and details the role and responsibilities of persons, committees, and boards of each entity—ECP, local conference, and union conference.

The policies contained in the *ECE Code* are developed and adopted through the cooperative efforts of the ECP directors, local conference and union conference administrators, and boards of education. Because of this broad-based involvement, the *ECE Code* is accepted as the basis for the organization, administration, and operation of all the ECPs operated by local conferences within the Pacific Union Conference.

When there is no provision, stipulation, or prohibition for an area under consideration, a local conference or institution may: a) develop a policy, procedure, or practice to meet a local need; or b) recommend that a policy be adopted for inclusion in the *ECE Code*. If a policy exists, the higher standards of either the state or *ECE Code* will apply.

The additions, revisions, or deletions in the *ECE Code* become effective only when voted by the Pacific Union Conference Board of Education. The *ECE Code* is consistent with the policies and provisions adopted by the Pacific Union Conference, North American Division Office of Education, and the General Conference Department of Education. The official *ECE Code* will be produced and maintained on the Early Childhood Education website, http://paucearlychildhood.adventistfaith.org/administration. Hard copies may be produced for individual use, but to ensure current policy reference, the online edition should be used. A comprehensive index and glossary as well as electronic search capabilities are included for ease of use in referencing the policies.

This *Early Childhood Education Code* is a separate document from the Pacific Union Conference *Education Code*. Refer to the *Ed Code* for policies relating to the TK-12 system.

PHILOSOPHY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST®
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION | ECE.A11

ECE.A11-104 Mission of Seventh-day Adventist Education

The mission of the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education is to facilitate the establishment of developmentally appropriate standards and policies and to support the local conference officers of education for the operation of high-quality EC-12 schools that are consistent with the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education.

ECE.A11-108 Philosophy

Early childhood education programs (ECPs) have their foundation in the biblical imperative for purposeful training of the young child. We are blessed with the sacred duty of imparting the teachings of Scripture, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:13, KJV).

The Pacific Union Conference recognizes that early education and care of young children is the beginning of a continual growth process. "Too much importance cannot be placed upon the early training of children. The lessons learned, the habits formed, during the years of infancy and childhood, have more to do with the formation of the character and the direction of the life than have all the instruction and training of after years" (Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 380).

Schools/ECPs seek to nurture the minds of young children, strengthening their ability to be thinkers rather than mere reflectors of the thoughts of others (Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 17), teaching them to provide loving service rather than pursue selfish ambition, maximizing the development of their potential, and guiding them to appreciate all that is beautiful, true, and good.

In partnership with the home and church, it is essential that a balanced education beginning with early childhood be established to meet the needs of a child's spiritual, physical, intellectual, and social, emotional development. This focus has the full intention of affirming the value of each child and family, bringing them closer to Christ. [*See NAD Working Policy* FED 05 10]

ECE.A11-112 Goals for Learning in a Seventh-day Adventist Early Childhood Program (ECP)

The goals for learning in Seventh-day Adventist ECPs are included in the *Journey to Excellence* framework developed by the NAD.

A. Followers of Jesus and sharers of His love, grace, and the hope of His second coming.
B. Reflective thinkers and creative problem-solvers.
C. Effective communicators.
D. Caring and compassionate people.
E. Responsible and contributing citizens.
F. Healthy and resilient individuals.
G. Self-directed and lifelong learners.

ECE.A11-116 The Seventh-day Adventist Early Childhood Program (ECP) Is Integral to the Mission

A. The gospel commission given in Matthew 28:18-20 states that teaching is integral to sharing the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.
B. Adventist schools/ECPs have an intentional age-appropriate evangelistic work for the students/children of the church and to children from faith-seeking community families.
C. Adventist education is founded on an inspired philosophy that seeks to educate the whole child—body, mind, and soul—so that the divine purpose and full potential of God's creation might be realized.
D. Adventist schools/ECPs make a lifelong impact on children by teaching the distinctive Adventist worldview in academic, spiritual, social, and practical lessons fostering Christian character development and teaching the beliefs and values of the Church.
E. Adventist educators utilize a faith-infused curriculum and Christ-centered instruction to lead children on a learning journey to something better than what this world has to offer.
F. Adventist education emphasizes the principles of service to God and mankind, introducing children to service in the church, in the community, and in His eternal kingdom.

To ensure the fidelity of Adventist education to its mission as an integral part of the church:

G. Members of governing boards, certificated educators, and ECP directors are active church members supportive of the philosophy, mission, and goals of Adventist education.
H. The ECP director employed by the church shall meet the qualifications for employment and applicable certification and shall be granted wages and benefits aligned with policies authorized for denominational employees.
I. ECPs are to use approved curriculum, reviewed, adopted, and/or developed under the direction of the North American Division and union conference offices of education.
J. The legal title of Adventist school property remains at all times in the legal corporation of the local conference.

[*See NAD Working Policy* FEA 05 20]

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM | ECE.A12

ECE.A12-104 Definition of an Early Childhood Program (ECP)

A Seventh-day Adventist ECP is a purposefully organized entity of a Seventh-day Adventist church or school that provides for the education and care of young children under the direction of trained personnel in accordance with PUCOE ECE policies, procedures, guidelines, and relevant government regulations. In addition, it may include programs for extended care for school-age children. Age groups serviced are determined by the local state licensing agency.

An ECP is an entity of the local conference educational system, authorized by the local conference board of education and administered by the local ECP board or local Education/ECE conference board.

ECE.A12-108 The Early Childhood Program Organization and Structure

The philosophy, goals, and objectives of an ECP are to be defined in terms of the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education and are to be in harmony with the *ECE Code*. Basic to all other requirements for the establishment of an ECP, the following shall be met:

A. Give evidence of commitment to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and educational philosophy.
B. Indicate a willingness to assume responsibility for the developmentally appropriate learning process.
C. Indicate a willingness to cooperate with other denominational agencies in the achievement of the broad objectives of the ECP and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
D. Assume financial responsibility for the employment of personnel with personal and professional qualifications appropriate to their positions.

ECE.A12-112 Pre-Kindergarten

Early Childhood Program Pre-Kindergarten classrooms are governed by state licensing regulations and the Pacific Union *ECE Code*.

ECE.A12-116 Transitional Kindergarten [Revised 04/2026]

Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is governed by the Pacific Union TK-12 *Education Code*, defined as the first year of a two-year Kindergarten program, and is not part of an early childhood education program. (See Ed. Code A14-118 Transitional K/Kindergarten Definition.)

ECE.A13-104 Union Office of Education

The union office of education is an administrative office operating as authorized by the union executive committee and aligned with North American Division *Working Policy*. Office of Education leaders promote Adventist education's purpose and best practices; lead in union policy development, educator certification, school/ECP accreditation, and educator's professional development; and provide counsel to local conferences, schools, and ECPs.

The personnel of this office may include but are not limited to:

A. Vice president for education.
B. Associate directors of education.
C. Certification registrar.
D. Office support staff.

ECE.A13-108 Functions of the Union Office of Education

The administrative and leadership functions of this office are to:

A. Coordinate a cohesive Early Childhood education system across the union.
B. Develop and administer the union-approved budget for ECE.
C. Establish and convene ECE directors' workshops.
D. Act as the NAD ECE PDP agency for ECP personnel within the union.
E. Advise the Union Board of Education on educational policies, standards, and practices.
F. Cooperate with the North American Division Office of Education in developing and coordinating the curriculum in ECPs.
G. Facilitate ECP accreditations.
H. Prepare and submit statistical reports as required by the NAD office of education.
I. Use the NAD ECE standards as guidelines to operate the ECE system.
J. Cooperate with higher education in the Pacific Union Conference.
K. Serve as member(s) and/or consultant(s) to union subcommittees in matters pertaining to early childhood education.
L. Serve as ex officio member(s) of the local conference ECP boards within the union.
M. Participate with the local conference offices of education in providing in-service education programs for early childhood educators.
N. Provide leadership in developing, supporting, and coordinating Early Childhood Education programs and personnel to meet the unique needs of early learners.
O. Research, communicate, and assist in creating protocols and reports that meet requirements for Early Childhood Education.

[*See NAD Working Policy* FEA 15 15]

ECE.A13-112 Union Board of Education

The Union Board of Education is the policy formulating body of the EC-12 system. It derives its authority from the Pacific Union Conference executive committee. It is to meet at the call of the chair.

ECE.A13-116 Functions of the Union Board of Education

The administrative and leadership functions of this board are to:

A. Consider for adoption recommendations for changes, deletions, or additions to the *Education Code* and *Early Childhood Education Code* as submitted by the union Education Council, the union Educational Leadership Council, and other organizations that may be authorized by the union office of education.
B. Counsel local conference schools and churches on the opening of new ECPs according to procedures detailed in the Steps for Opening an ECP.
C. Give guidance to the overall development of the EC-12 educational system within the union.
D. Oversee EC-12 school accreditation.
E. Oversee the employment policies of EC-12 educational personnel.

ECE.A13-120 Membership of the Union Board of Education

The members of the Union Board of Education are elected for a five-year term by the Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee.

The membership of the Union Board of Education shall include the following:

A. Ex officio

1. Union vice president for education, chair.
2. Union associate director of education—secondary.
3. Union associate director of education—elementary.
4. Union associate director of Early Childhood Education.
5. One union officer or designee.

B. Appointed

1. California conferences–two superintendents of schools.
2. Arizona, Hawaii, and Nevada-Utah Conferences–one superintendent of schools.
3. One conference elementary associate superintendent of schools.
4. One conference secondary associate superintendent of schools.
5. One conference ECE associate superintendent.
6. One elementary school principal.
7. One secondary school principal.
8. One Early Childhood Education center director.

ECE.A13-124 Curriculum Advisory

A. Membership

The membership of the Curriculum Advisory shall include the following:

1. Union associate directors of education–secondary, elementary, ECE–co-chairs.
2. Superintendent and/or associate superintendents from each local conference.

ECE.A13-124 Curriculum Advisory (Cont'd)

3. One representative from La Sierra University School of Education Department of Curriculum and Instruction.
4. One representative from Pacific Union College Department of Education.
5. Invitees–As determined by the union office of education.

B. Meetings

The Curriculum Advisory shall meet a minimum of twice annually.

C. Functions

The Curriculum Advisory functions are to:

1. Assist in the development and promotion of continuous school improvement that positively impacts children's learning and development.
2. Develop plans and procedures for orientation and implementation of curriculum materials.
3. Develop curriculum in-services and/or special curriculum studies as needed.
4. Recommend revisions to policy and practice regarding curriculum issues.
5. Receive reports and review curriculum proposals and recommendations from local conference offices of education.
6. Support local conferences and the NAD in implementing and maintaining a distinctive SDA curriculum.

THE LOCAL CONFERENCE | ECE.A14

ECE.A14-104 Local Conference Office of Education

The local conference office of education is the administrative office operating within a structure authorized by the local conference executive committee.

The personnel of this office may include but are not limited to:

A. Superintendent of schools.
B. Associates and/or assistants.
C. Office support staff.
D. Other personnel as authorized.

ECE.A14-108 Functions of the Local Conference Office of Education

The administrative and supervisory functions of the local conference office of education are the responsibility of the superintendent of schools.

A. The administrative functions are to:

1. Serve as executive secretary and agent of the local conference board of education in administering, coordinating, and supervising early childhood education programs within the local conference in accordance with the ECE policies of the union board of early childhood education.
2. Serve as the agent of the local conference ECP board of education in the employment of all Early Childhood Program personnel, assuming responsibility for the coordination and implementation of recruitment, placement, transfer, and/or termination of Early Childhood Program personnel in consultation with ECP administration, committees, and/or boards.
3. Prepare job descriptions and establish areas of responsibility for each member of the local conference office of education staff.
4. Encourage professional growth for all Early Childhood Program personnel and provide leadership in planning and implementing annual in-service education programs.
5. Provide for an annual orientation for new personnel.
6. Provide leadership in the development of short- and long-range plans for early childhood education in areas such as budgeting, ECP accreditation, curriculum, facilities, personnel, establishment of new ECPs, or consolidation or closure of existing ECPs.
7. Maintain an effective working relationship with the local conference administration and the constituency. Acquaint the constituency with the imperative of Seventh-day Adventist Christian education.
8. Develop long-range educational plans for the local conference ECE system.
9. Maintain an effective working relationship with the union office of education participating in union-wide councils and program development.
10. Oversee and sign any governmental paperwork for opening a local ECP and annual renewal of licensing forms and fees.

ECE.A14-108 Functions of the Local Conference Office of Education (Cont'd)

11. Assume responsibility for the preservation of all records of discontinued ECPs.
12. Assume responsibility for the development and maintenance of school health and safety programs aligned with governmental requirements.
13. Provide teachers with information on the approved NAD ECE curriculum materials.
14. Gather data and process reports required by the union and NAD office of education and government agencies.
15. Consider applications for the establishment of new ECPs in consultation with the local conference board of education.
16. Plan and lead ECP accreditation visits and collaborate with the union office of education.
17. Arrange periodic in-service meetings for local ECP board personnel.
18. Ensure appropriate background screening for all employees and volunteers involved in the ECPs.
19. Ensure that each ECP has an annual board-voted program and handbooks for parents and staff.

B. The financial functions are to:

1. Counsel with the local ECP boards in the preparation of annual ECP budgets to ensure adequate funding for ECP operations.
2. Develop an annual EC-12 conference education budget in cooperation with the local conference treasurer/chief financial officer that includes but is not limited to such items as salaries and wage-related expenses at the currently approved wage rate factors, school subsidies, funding for curriculum development and professional in-service programs, and contingencies.
3. Submit the annual EC-12 conference education budget for approval and funding to the local conference board of education and conference executive committee.
4. Work in cooperation with the local conference treasurer ensuring that ECPs are audited annually in accordance with General Conference and NAD policies and that copies of the audited statements are filed in the local conference office of education.
5. Ensure that funds of the ECP are not co-mingled with the funds of other entities, including the host church or school.

C. The curricular functions are to:

1. Provide leadership in guiding the administrators, teachers, and ECP board members in implementing the NAD-approved ECE curriculum.
2. Consider recommendations of the union conference curriculum advisory and implement curriculum policies and practices adopted by the union conference office of education.
3. Approve requests for innovative programs to meet specific needs and evaluate implementation.
4. Conduct or participate in pilot studies/programs in cooperation with the union and/or NAD offices of education.
5. Initiate and conduct research projects and surveys as needed.
6. Coordinate participation of local conference personnel in curriculum study committees at the local conference, union conference, and NAD levels.
7. Provide leadership in the supervision and evaluation of educational personnel in harmony with employment policies.
8. Inform ECPs of current state or federal legislation pertaining to educational requirements.

ECE.A14-112 Local Conference Board of Education

A. Responsibilities

The local conference board of education is the body authorized by the local conference executive committee to provide oversight and governance for the local conference ECPs and the conference office of education in accordance with the policies authorized by the union.

B. Membership

Members of the local conference board of education shall be elected by the local conference executive committee from nominations presented by the local conference office of education. The local conference constitution and/or the local conference executive committee may determine the length of term for members.

The membership of the local conference board of education shall include the following:

1. Local conference president, or designee, chair.
2. Local conference superintendent of schools, executive secretary.
3. Other conference officers. Local conference office of education associates, assistants, and supervisors.
4. Union vice president for education or designee.
5. A minimum of eight additional members selected from the following categories: pastors, lay members, school board chairs, principals, ECP directors, and EC-12 teachers as specified by the local conference constitution.

C. Executive committee of the board of education

The local conference board of education may appoint an executive committee of the board. It shall meet as necessary and function between the regularly scheduled meetings of the board. The committee shall consist of, but may not necessarily be limited to, the following: the chair of the board and other officers of the local conference and the local superintendent of schools (executive secretary).

ECE.A14-116 Functions of the Local Conference Board of Education

A. Administer and supervise the ECPs in accordance with the *ECE Code*.

B. Adopt policies, procedures, or practices to meet the needs of the local conference Early Childhood Programs when there is no stipulation, provision, or prohibition in the *ECE Code*.

1. Develop long-range educational plans for the local conference ECPs.
2. Develop an annual EC-12 conference education budget.
3. Develop the procedure for initiating and processing a request to establish an ECP.
4. Develop child health and safety policies in compliance with state law as they apply to ECPs.
5. Develop a policy for the selection, screening, and training of volunteers.
6. Develop and maintain a written Injury and Loss Prevention Program (ILPP).
7. Develop a process for the termination of non-exempt classified employees.
8. Appoint an ECE superintendent to the PUCOE ECE Division.

ECE.A14-116 Functions of the Local Conference Board of Education (Cont'd)

C. Serve as agent of the local conference executive committee in employment, assignment, transfer, and retirement of ECP personnel.

D. Cooperate with local ECP boards for long-range planning of the local conference school/ECP system.

E. Periodically review the operating budget and financial statements of the local conference office of education.

F. Ensure the review of salaries and wages of ECP personnel to determine compliance with the approved salary schedules and wage rates.

G. Participate in the ECP accreditation process by:

1. Reviewing ECP accreditation reports as the basis for granting an accreditation status.
2. Approving or denying applications to establish new ECPs and/or consolidate existing ECPs.

H. Appoint subcommittees as needed to expedite the work of the local conference board of education.

ACCREDITATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS | ECE.A15

ECE.A15-104 Accreditation – Rationale

Early Childhood Program (ECP) accreditation provides a means by which ECPs examine the organization, programs, and services offered with accepted standards of quality and assists in planning for ongoing ECP improvement.

ECE.A15-108 Denominational Accreditation

All ECPs in the Pacific Union Conference are encouraged to seek and maintain denominational accreditation through the North American Division Commission on Accreditation (NADCOA) in affiliation with the National Associate for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). ECPs will utilize the approved denominational accreditation instrument and cooperate with the NADCOA, Pacific Union Conference, and the local conference office of education, which oversees denominational accreditation for Seventh-day Adventist ECPs in the Pacific Union Conference. Seeking additional accreditation for a program is optional.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM CONSTITUENCY | ECE.A16

ECE.A16-104 Membership Defined

An ECP that is part of a school or church will fall under their constituency.

ECE.A16-108 Meetings of the Constituency

The ECP will meet in conjunction with the TK-12 school or church constituency, and they are to meet annually or as specified in the school or church constitution. The functions of the constituency are to:

A. Establish and adopt a constitution in harmony with denominational policies and based on the model provided by the local conference office of education.
B. Receive reports on the operation of the ECP.
C. Provide adequate financing for the general operating costs.
D. Approve financial plans for major capital improvements as recommended by the ECP board, with the guidelines outlined in the ECP constitution.
E. Consider plans and policies for the operation of the ECP in harmony with the *ECE Code*.
F. Encourage the organization and maintenance of a parent/teacher organization.

ECE.A16-112 Parent Advisory

The parent advisory is an organization of ECP parents and interested church/school members whose purpose is to provide parent education and unite the home, the ECP, and the church/school in providing Seventh-day Adventist education for all children.

Objectives and responsibilities of the parent advisory:

A. Aid and educate parents in parenting skills, including health and nutrition, discipline, and spiritual development.
B. Strengthen the relationship between the home, ECP, local SDA school, and church.
C. Aid in the recruitment of children for the ECP.
D. Assist the ECP in fundraising to help provide funds for needed equipment and materials.
E. Provide activities that promote social interaction between the home, ECP, local SDA school, and church.
F. Assist the ECP in the recruitment of volunteers for such activities as teaching assistance, field trip drivers, homeroom parents, plant improvement and beautification, and other special projects requiring volunteer assistance.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM BOARD | ECE.A17

ECE.A17 The Local Early Childhood Program (ECP) Board

Each Conference Education Board shall decide the ECP governance model to use in the conference's ECPs. They may include the establishment of local ECP boards, or the ECP may be governed directly by the Conference Board of Education.

ECE.A17-104 Local Early Childhood Program (ECP) Board [Revised 04/2026]

An ECP may organize an ECP board, elected by the local church or school board. With prior conference approval, an existing school or church board may act as an ECP governing board.

The local ECP board should meet at a regular time and place during the school year and as often as needed during the summer months.

ECP board meetings are open meetings, except when sensitive topics are being discussed. In this instance, the board chair may call for an executive session, which is a closed meeting of the board in which only the regular and ex-officio members are present. Non-members do not have the privilege of addressing the board unless granted by the chair. Additionally, non-members may not participate in discussions, make a motion, or vote on motions presented before the board. The board may invite interested persons to be present to provide needed information. However, such persons should be excused prior to discussion and vote by the ECP board.

ECE.A17-108 ECP Board Membership

The ECP constitution and/or working policy should contain provisions regarding the membership of the ECP board that meet the following criteria.

The ECP board should be composed of members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who represent a cross section of the school or church board and who are supportive of Seventh-day Adventist education. This membership is to include as voting members the chair, vice-chair, executive secretary (the ECP director), and pastoral representation from the constituent church(es) based on the ECP constitution/working policy. In addition, the board is to include the following as ex officio voting members: local conference officers and local conference and union office of education personnel.

The ECP board members (other than ex officio members) are to be elected by the local school and/or church in accordance with the ECP constitution or working policies.

The school and/or church should ensure that multiple members of the same family (related by blood, adoption, or marriage) are not elected to the same ECP board. Board membership of ECP employees and/or their relatives (related by blood, adoption, or marriage) has the potential to create misunderstanding and the appearance of vested interest, especially on personnel issues regarding colleagues. ECP employees and/or their relatives are ineligible for membership on the board of the ECP where employed. An employee of another Adventist ECP in the same conference shall be ineligible to serve on an ECP board unless otherwise specified by governing documents. This policy does not prohibit a person from serving on the board of an ECP when that person is employed part-time as school treasurer and is not a regular school employee.

It is expected that elected board members will have their own preschool-age children enrolled in the Seventh-day Adventist ECP of which they are a board member. An exception may

ECE.A17-108 ECP Board Membership (Cont'd)

be allowed if the ECP has determined that the child's special learning needs are best met in another setting.

The ECP board members (other than ex officio members) are to be elected by the local school and/or church in accordance with the ECP constitution or working policies. Non-constituent Seventh-day Adventist individuals may be considered for board membership where it is deemed their professional talents or skills will assist the ECP in its mission. The ECP's governing documents must outline the limited number of seats on the board and how these individuals are selected.

ECE.A17-112 Functions of the ECP Board

A. Basis for operation of the ECP

The ECP board sees that the ECP is well run within the guidelines and policies adopted by the NAD, the union, the local conference, and the local board.

B. Authority of the board and/or members

The board has authority only when meeting in official session. The board acts as a whole and individual members or committees cannot act in place of the board, except when asked to do so by the board. Actions of the board are implemented through its executive secretary, the ECP director.

C. Specific functions of the ECP board

Cooperate with the union and local conference offices of education in matters of curriculum implementation and instruction.

D. Fiscal management

Assume responsibility for the planning and funding of a balanced annual operating budget.

E. General operation

Support the ECP director in the administration of the school program, including:

1. Participate in the process of AAA/NADCOA ECP accreditation as scheduled by the local conference office of education or the union office of education.
2. Create an ECP calendar annually that follows closely with the conference school calendar.
3. Annually approve the ECP parent/ staff handbooks.
4. Act upon the recommendation of the ECP director in situations involving serious disciplinary or severe special-needs cases and serve as the ultimate authority in deciding if the child(ren) can best be served elsewhere.

F. Personnel

1. The employment, changes in employment status, or termination of ECP personnel are by authority of the local conference board of education in consultation with the local ECP board. Thus, the local conference board of education is the employing organization, referred to hereinafter as the employer.

ECE.A17-112 Functions of the ECP Board (Cont'd)

Note: A discussion that requires confidentiality, such as employment status of ECP personnel or dismissal of a child, is to be conducted in executive session and chaired by the conference education superintendent or designee.

G. Policy development and implementation

1. Develop local school policies and ensure implementation of the policies contained in the *ECE Code*, the local conference office of education and local conference board of education.

H. Board governance and operations

1. Organize the board in harmony with local conference policies and the ECP constitution.
2. Ensure that official minutes of each meeting of the board be kept.
3. Appoint the personnel committee members and form other committees as needed.
4. The local superintendent of schools and/or designee and ECP director are members of the personnel committee.
5. The local superintendent of schools or designee is chair of the personnel committee.

I. School/church/community relations

1. Support a parent-teacher organization/parent advisory.
2. Promote the ECP to the constituency church(es).
3. Promote the ECP to the community.

ECE.A17-116 Responsibilities of the ECP Board Chair

A. The board chair responsibilities

The major responsibilities of the board chair encompassed in the following are to:

1. Preside at board meetings and expedite the work of the board in session.
2. Cooperate with the ECP director as executive secretary of the board and chief administrator of the school.
3. Assist in the implementation of policies and board actions in counsel with the local superintendent of schools or designee in schools without a designated administrator.
4. Encourage board members, parents, and other constituent church members to communicate with the ECP director and other school personnel when there are problems, concerns, or suggestions.
5. Become knowledgeable about the ECP, its mission, and program, and articulate this to parents and constituent church members.
6. Act in concert with the ECP director as liaison between the ECP, the constituent church, and/or school in matters that are pertinent to the constituency.
7. Allow the staff to manage day-to-day operations of the school
8. Avoid unilaterally acting or speaking for the board or the school

ECE.A17-120 Code of Ethics for ECP Board Members

A. Definition of a code of ethics

A code of ethics is an expression of personal ideals that should guide those who serve as board members of a Seventh-day Adventist ECP.

The success in and contribution to the ECP of the church and/or school will be in direct proportion to the behavior and ethics of those responsible for that program.

In all actions as a board member, the first commitment is to the well-being of all the children and families in the program.

B. Responsibility for ethical behavior

In fulfilling this responsibility, the ECP board members should:

1. Base decisions on the philosophy, mission and goals of Seventh-day Adventist education and reject proposed actions that are merely expedient.
2. Demonstrate attitudes and personal conduct that reflect the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and refrain from actions or involvements that might prove embarrassing to the church or the ECP.
3. Work with other board members in a spirit of decency, harmony, and cooperation.
4. Recognize that a position on the board is not to be used for personal gain.
5. Recognize that the authority of the ECP board is derived from the church and/or school that operate the ECP.
6. Accept the denominational policies as a basis for decisions regarding the ECP and its program.
7. Recognize that the authority of the board is only expressed by its actions as a board and that an individual member is to act or speak on behalf of the board only when authorized to do so.
8. Abide by and uphold actions of the board and maintain the confidentiality of deliberations and actions, especially as related to personnel.

ECE.A17-121 Pastor ECP Relationship

The pastor plays a critical role in the successful operation of the ECP, most often serving as an ExOffico ECP board member. The pastor's visible support is essential for a successful ECP. It is recommended or best practice, that pastors do not serve as a school board chair.

Church and school employees should respectfully work together showing support for each other's programs.

ECE.A17-124 Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Agreement

A board member has a duty to be free from the influence of any conflicting interest or commitment or from representing it in negotiations or dealings with third parties. Annually, each board member shall sign a "Conflict of Interest Statement." [See *NAD Working Policy* E 85 40 for the "Model Statement of Acceptance."]

Board members must also maintain confidentiality regarding discussions and actions of the board. It is strongly recommended that each board member sign a confidentiality agreement annually.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM DIRECTOR | ECE.A18

ECE.A18-104 The Early Childhood Program (ECP) Director

The leader of a local ECP is the administrative director with specific responsibilities and duties as assigned by the local conference and as described by denominational policy and governmental regulations. As outlined by governmental regulations, this generally qualifies the director as a salaried/exempt employee.

ECP administrators should be Seventh-day Adventist who are active in the church and have the interest necessary for leading in the education and care of young children. [*See NAD Working Policy* FED 30-35]

ECE.A18-108 General Administration

A. Serve as executive secretary of the board, which includes ensuring minutes are prepared and provided to all board members.
B. Serve as a member of the finance and personnel committees.
C. Serve as agent of the ECP board in administering the ECP in accordance with the *ECE Code*, and any additional policies adopted by the local conference board of education and the ECP board.
D. Ensure compliance with state regulations and coordinate with the Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing on ECE program licensing.
E. Provide leadership to the spiritual program and activities and in the development and maintenance of a positive spiritual climate.
F. Responsible for the organization of the ECP, including:

    1. Implementation of an annual ECP calendar that aligns closely to the one adopted by the local conference board of education.
    2. Planning regularly scheduled staff meetings.
    3. Assignment of teaching responsibilities and other duties to the members of the ECP staff.

G. Serve as chief financial officer and operate the ECP on a sound financial basis within the approved budget.
H. Develop and maintain a record-keeping system to ensure the security of all ECP and board records, including:

    1. Children's assessment, health records, and licensing forms.
    2. Minutes of staff meetings and staff committees.
    3. Minutes of the ECP board meetings.

I. Provide information as requested to the local conference, union, and NAD offices of education.
J. Administer safety education programs.
K. Provide leadership to the ECP accreditation process in cooperation with the local conference and union offices of education.
L. Facilitate strategic planning initiatives.
M. Prepare an ECP parent handbook for annual board approval.
N. Annually secure signatures of at least one parent indicating receipt of the ECP parent handbook.

ECE.A18-112 Employment of Personnel

A. Serve as an agent of the ECP board in all sections relating to the employment status of program personnel.
B. Cooperate with the local conference office of education in conducting an annual pre-service orientation of newly employed teachers with the philosophy and goals of Seventh-day Adventist education.

ECE.A18-116 Supervision of Instruction and Curriculum Development

Provide leadership and supervision of the educational program through areas such as, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

A. Regular classroom visitations.
B. Formal teacher evaluations.
C. Conferences with individual teachers.
D. Curriculum planning with teachers.
E. Assistance in classroom management.
F. In-service and professional growth activities for the staff.
G. Use of NAD- and union-adopted curriculum, standards, and other instructional materials in the classroom.

ECE.A18-120 Evaluation of Early Childhood Program (ECP) Personnel

Evaluation of ECP personnel is a major responsibility of the ECP director. The ECP director or designee is to evaluate each employee as indicated for the employment status.

ECE.A18-124 Early Childhood Program (ECP) Director Community Relations

A. Develop and maintain positive community relations.
B. Develop and maintain positive relations with TK-12 schools and constituent churches.
C. Present the ECP as its official spokesperson to the church and/or school, to the ECP board, and to the public in general.
D. Articulate and communicate to the board the policies and programs of the ECP.
E. Arrange ECP tours for prospective families.

ECE.A18-128 Facility Management

Serve as the agent of the ECP board in periodic inspection, equipping, and maintenance of the ECP facility, ensuring efficiency and safety of the total operation.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS | ECE.A19

ECE.A19-104 Other Employment Positions

A. **Supervisor**: Has overall supervision of multiple ECP sites/programs and does not qualify to be counted in the student/child census of any site/program. This person may be considered a local conference office of education ECE liaison or a union associate director for Early Childhood Education.

B. **Administrative director**: Has direct responsibility of the overall operation of an ECP with 51% or more of work hours spent on non-clerical administrative tasks and non-teaching/caregiving.

C. **Assistant director**: Supports the director and assists with responsibilities for the overall operation of an ECP and assumes responsibility in the director's absence.

D. **Head teacher/lead teacher**: Has direct responsibility for program planning and provides for the care, supervision, and management of young children.

E. **Assistant teacher**: Assists the head teacher and is under their supervision in the care, supervision, management, and instruction of young children; meets established requirements to be left alone with young children.

F. **Teacher aide**: Assists the head teacher or assistant teacher in the care, supervision, and management of young children; is under the teacher's direct supervision and never left alone with sole responsibility for a group of young children.

G. **Before- and after-school care teacher**: Has the responsibility for the supervision and management of children during specific times.

H. **Support service positions**: Fulfill various job assignments that assist with specific functions that do not include direct childcare or instruction, including but not limited to such positions as administrative assistant, receptionist, accountant, cook, custodian, maintenance, etc.

ECE.A19-108 Employment Status

Upon employment, each ECP employee will be classified as full-time or part-time based on the hours assigned and fulfilled on duty each week. Full-time employment is defined as 38 hours of on-duty work per week, and part-time employment is any assignment with less than 38 hours worked per week. At the time employment begins, each ECP employee will also be classified as follows:

A. **Non-exempt/hourly**: Except where assigned responsibilities qualify the individual as administrative personnel as outlined in the criteria below, ECP employees shall be categorized as non-exempt personnel, paid on an hourly basis, and considered "at will" employees that may be discontinued with or without cause and with or without notice, subject to locally applicable labor laws.

B. **Exempt/salary**: (Before any employee is considered to be exempt, the job description should be approved by human resources and legal.) Persons employed in one of the following administrative job categories that meet the requirements of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for an exempt classification should be placed on salary. Exempt employees are considered at will unless provided a contract with a defined term of service. Contracts may or may not be renewed at the end of service. These individuals shall be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

ECE.A19-108 Employment Status (Cont'd)

1. **Supervisor**: Has overall supervision of multiple ECP sites/programs and does not qualify to be counted in the student/child census of any site/program. This person may be considered a local conference office of education ECE liaison or a union associate director for Early Childhood Education.
2. **Administrative director**: Has direct responsibility of the overall operation of an ECP with 51% or more of work hours spent on non-clerical administrative tasks and non-teaching/caregiving.

ECE.A19-112 Wage Scale

Hourly ECP employee remuneration is based on the wage scale adopted by the local conference board of education incorporating prevailing community rates that meet or exceed applicable governmental regulations, including minimum wage laws. The wage scale shall be reviewed and revised as necessary.

ECE.A19-116 Criteria for Employment

ECP staff employed by the local conference, while on the job or representing the institution, shall affirm their commitment to uphold the mission, beliefs, and values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; shall abide by all denominational ECE policies; and shall demonstrate the personal qualities and interests that will ensure the safety and well-being of young children. ECE employment positions shall have approved job descriptions that are consistently applied across the local conference. [*See NAD Working Policy* FEB 10 25]

Any person employed in any capacity in a Seventh-day Adventist ECP shall: a) not have any felony conviction, b) have met health and immunization screening requirements, and c) not have demonstrated unethical or immoral conduct that placed or could place children at risk. To ensure children's safety, each prospective employee shall meet all applicable governmental requirements and shall have completed a comprehensive criminal background check prior to reporting to work.

ADMISSIONS | ECE.A20

ECE.A20-104 Nondiscrimination in Admissions

The Seventh-day Adventist Church admits children of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to children at its ECPs and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or sex.

A statement of nondiscrimination is to appear in each ECP parent handbook. The following model statement contains the basic elements that are to be included in the nondiscrimination statement.

> (Name of ECP) admits children of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to children at the ECP. (Name of ECP) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or sex.

ECE.A20-108 Children with Exceptional Needs

All parents/guardians should be interviewed by ECP administration to determine whether the ECP can provide the most appropriate care and learning environment. The ECP administrator, in consultation with the local conference office of education and teachers, must determine if the ECP has the resources to serve a child with exceptional mental, physical, or social needs. When children with exceptional needs are accepted, there must be a waiver/contract signed by the ECP and the parents/guardians that outlines the expectations for the child. Ongoing assessment will determine whether the environment continues to be appropriate and if the ECP can continue to serve the needs of the child.

ECE.A20-112 Health Requirements for Admission

See the local State licensing childcare health requirements for admission.

ECE.A20-116 Immunizations

Immunization requirements of the respective states apply to Seventh-day Adventist ECPs. Proof is required for entry to the ECP in the union and must be presented to the ECP office when the child initially registers. It is the responsibility of the ECP director to enforce the immunization regulations and to ensure that an up-to-date record is maintained for each child. Immunization requirements will be provided by the local superintendent of schools/designee for each ECP in the local conference.

ECE.A20-120 Medication Administration and Storage

A. Prescription medications

Any child who is required to take medication as prescribed by a physician, surgeon, or physician assistant may be assisted by designated ECP personnel if the ECP has on file the following:

1. A written statement from such physician, surgeon, or physician assistant detailing the name of the medications, time schedules, amount, and method by which such medications are to be taken and,
2. A written statement from the parent or guardian of the child indicating the desire that the ECP administer the medication to the child in matters set forth in the physician's, surgeon's, or physician assistant's statement.

Refer to your state childcare licensing agency for guidelines on administering medications. (California programs can refer to Title 22 LIC 9221.)

Such medication must be delivered to the ECP in the original container bearing the pharmacy label. This label is to contain the name and place of business of the seller, the serial number and the date of such prescription, the name of the person for whom such a drug is prescribed, the name of the member of the medical profession who prescribed the drug, and directions for use as prescribed by the member of the medical profession.

All medication must be stored safely and securely. A strict system of logging administered medications must be maintained for each child. All medications should be returned to the parent/guardian at the date ending the prescription. New medication documentation (as stated above) is required for each new medication prescription. New medication documentation should also be provided if there are changes to the medication, dosage, frequency of administration, or reason for administering the medication.

B. Over-the-counter medications

Licensed ECPs are permitted to administer over-the-counter (OTC) medications to children in their care, provided specific requirements are met. Refer to your state childcare regulations on administering OTC medications.

ECE.A20-124 Emergency Information and Authorized Student Release

The following current emergency information must be on file at the start of each school year and readily available to administration and teachers both at the school and on field trips:

A. Parent/guardian contact information.
B. Alternate contact persons.
C. Consent for emergency medical treatment.
D. Authorized persons to whom the child(ren) may be released.
E. Severe known allergies (if none, state "None").

Each child must have a list of these authorized individuals in their permanent files; no two children may share a list of authorized individuals. The individual removing the child from the program shall be required to show photo identification to staff members and properly sign the child(ren) out. Refer to your state licensing regulations.

For liability reasons, persons 17 years of age or younger and program employees shall not be allowed to sign in/sign out any client's child(ren) or arrange for the transportation of any client's child(ren) to and from the program.

ECE.A20-128 Court Orders

Official court orders regarding access to the child(ren) will be followed, and a copy of the court order(s) must be kept in the child(ren)'s permanent file.

ECE.A20-132 At-Risk Behavior of Authorized Individuals or Others

Program staff members may deny access to any person, including authorized individuals, whose behavior presents a risk to the child(ren) present in the facility.

ECE.A20-136 Photos and Stories for Newsworthy Use

If a program will be using pictures of the children, families, or staff members, the following rules should be followed carefully.

A. There must be no intrusion into anyone's solitude, seclusion, or private property without permission.
B. Private information, whether by photo or story, must not be published without permission.
C. Photographs or stories that present the subject in a false or negative light, even if true, must not be published.
D. Photos must not be appropriated for commercial use without permission.

In addition, ECP directors/administrators should observe the following privacy preventative measures.

A. Photos intended for public distribution should avoid direct, front-facing portraits of children without permission.
B. Photo captions and the accompanying story should never use the child's full name.

ECE.A20-140 Photos/Stories for Commercial Use

If a particular picture is not newsworthy, publication may be considered an invasion of privacy.

Including anyone's picture in an advertisement, brochure, or social media without their permission—or the permission of their guardian in the case of minors—may be considered to be a misappropriation of the name or likeness of a living person for purposes of trade or advertising without that person's consent, and therefore it is illegal.

Each program must include a photo release form in their registration packets for clientele as a means for children and their families to safeguard their privacy rights.

Sample release statement:

> I hereby give permission for my child to be photographed for preschool promotional and advertisement purposes and to have school portraits taken.

ECE.A20-144 Parental Involvement

Each ECE program shall adopt policies and practices that create an effective partnership between the ECE program and parents. Policies shall include, but not be limited to, regular and emergency communication procedures, visitation protocols (including custody, parent meetings, and conferences), monitoring child development, conflict resolution, children's health guidelines and procedures, etc. A program should include information for parents in a parent handbook that is distributed upon admission and updated annually. A current copy shall be sent to the local conference office of education.

ECE.A21-104 Continuing Education for ECE Professionals

Authorized Early Childhood Education professionals are eligible for continued education as per the following.

A local conference office of education is granted a specific number of units per year that can be allocated to full-time early childhood professionals. Full-time early childhood professionals who hold a B.S. degree in ECE, Child Development, or a related field may enroll in graduate level classes.

The total hours granted to a local conference office of education is based on the allocation of one quarter hour per year for each Early Childhood professional. During an academic year, an Early Childhood professional may not be allocated more than 12 quarter hours of the total hours available to the local conference office of education.

ECE.A21-108 Conflict of Interest and/or Commitment

A. Statement of policy

"Conflict of interest" shall mean any circumstance under which an employee or volunteer by virtue of financial or other personal interest, present or potential, directly or indirectly, may be influenced or appear to be influenced by any motive or desire for personal advantage, tangible or intangible, other than the success and well-being of the denomination.

Because of the common objectives embraced by the various organizational units and institutions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, membership held concurrently on more than one denominational committee or board does not of itself constitute a conflict of interest provided that all the other requirements of the policy are met. While serving as an officer, trustee, or director of multiple denominational entities is thus acknowledged and accepted, an officer, trustee, or director serving on an organization's board is expected to act in the best interest of the organization and its role in denominational structure.

"A conflict of commitment" shall mean any situation that interferes with an employee's ability to carry out duties effectively. Elected, appointed, or salaried employees on full-time assignment are compensated for full-time employment; therefore, outside or dual employment or other activity, whether compensated or not, that in any way interferes with the performance of an employee's duties and responsibilities is a conflict of commitment. A conflict of commitment also exists in situations where an employee functions contrary to the values and ethical conduct outlined in the organization's statement of ethical foundations and conduct or when an employee functions contrary to established codes of ethical conduct for employees in particular professions (e.g., legal, investments). All trustees, officers, board members, employees, and volunteers of denominational organizations shall be subject to this policy.

ECE.A21-108 Conflict of Interest and/or Commitment (Cont'd)

B. Conditions constituting conflict

A trustee, officer, board member, employee, or volunteer has a duty to be free from the influence of any conflicting interest or commitment when serving the organization or representing it in negotiations or dealings with third parties. Both while on and off the job, an employee is expected to protect the best interests of the employing organization. The following list, though not exhaustive, describes circumstances and conditions that illustrate conflict of interest or commitment:

1. Engaging in outside business or employment that encroaches on the denominational organization's call for the full services of its employees even though there may be no other conflict.
2. Engaging in business or employment that is in any way competitive or in conflict with any transaction, activity, policy, or objective of the organization.
3. Engaging in any business with or employment by an employer that is a supplier of goods or services to any denominational organization.
4. Making use of the fact of employment by the denominational organization to further outside business or employment, associating the denominational organization or its prestige with an outside business or employment, or using one's connection to the denomination to further personal or partisan political interests.
5. Owning or leasing any property with knowledge that the denominational organization has an active or potential interest therein.
6. Lending money to or borrowing money from any third party, excluding financial institutions, who is a supplier of goods or services or lending to/borrowing from a trustor or anyone who is in any fiduciary relationship with the denominational organization or is otherwise regularly involved in business transactions with the denominational organization.
7. Accepting or offering of any gratuity, favor, benefit, or gift or of any commission or payment, monetary or non-monetary, of greater than nominal value, in connection with work for the denominational organization other than the compensation agreed upon between the denominational organization and/or the employee.
8. Making use of or disseminating, including by electronic means, any confidential information acquired through employment by the denominational organization for personal profit or advantage, directly or indirectly.
9. Using denominational personnel, property, equipment, supplies, or goodwill for other than approved activities, programs, and purposes.
10. Expending unreasonable time during normal business hours for personal matters or for other organizations, to the detriment of work performance for the denomination.
11. Using one's connections within the organization to secure favors for one's family or relatives.
12. Employees shall not accept loans from church members or churches.

C. Statement of Acceptance

1. By employees

At the time of initial employment, an employee shall sign a statement indicating acceptance of the conditions of employment as outlined in the organization's employee handbook. This acceptance shall constitute the employee's declaration of compliance and resolve to remain in compliance with the conflict of interest and/or commitment policy. On an annual basis the employer shall provide employees with a copy of the Statement of Ethical Foundations, plus a copy of the conflict of interest

ECE.A21-108 Conflict of Interest and/or Commitment (Cont'd)

and/or commitment policy and shall inform employees regarding the duty to disclose potential conflicts of interest and/or commitment.

2. By administrators, department directors, and trustees

The administrator or designee of the organization concerned shall receive annually a statement of acceptance and compliance with the policy on conflict of interest and/or commitment from each administrator, department director, member of the board, and any other person authorized to handle resources of the organization. (The employing organization may determine that other individuals shall also be required to submit annually a statement of acceptance and compliance.) Submission of the statement by persons identified above shall constitute a declaration of compliance with the policy and shall place the individual under obligation to disclose potential conflicts of interest and/or commitment that may arise during the ensuing year. All statements of acceptance and compliance shall be reviewed annually through a process and reporting mechanism as determined by the board/executive committee of the organization.

ECE.A21-112 Professional Development

EC-12 educators are encouraged to participate in a variety of professional development activities, including conferences and conventions facilitated by the ECP, school, local conference, union, and division. Financial assistance shall be provided to support ECP educators' participation in these activities. [See *NAD Working Policy* FEB 15 05.]

The North American Division (NAD) Professional Development Program (PDP) is available for ECE educators to support and encourage professional growth in the ECE field. This is a voluntary program and is only recognized within the NAD. PDP certificates are issued by the Pacific Union office of education in collaboration with the local conference. Details regarding ECE PDP certificates are contained in the North America Division of Early Childhood Education Professional Development Program booklet.

Completion of the early childhood PDP does not qualify a candidate for Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) denominational PK-12 educators' certification.

ECE.A21-114 Volunteers – Screening Policies

It is the responsibility of the ECP to select, screen, and manage trustworthy individuals to fill volunteer positions for ECP activities. The local conference office of education, in conjunction with conference administration, must develop a policy for the selection, screening, and training of volunteers that also aligns with state licensing childcare regulations. [See *NAD Working Policy* FB 25.]

RECORDS MANAGEMENT | ECE.A22

ECE.A22-104 Records Management

The normal operation of the ECP results in the production and the accumulation of a large volume of files and records of varying degrees of administrative and historical value. In order to preserve documents of permanent value and to avoid the unnecessary preservation of unneeded materials, each ECP will find it advantageous to establish a records management system.

The administrators, business managers, and other employees in all organizations should evaluate the legal, financial, and cultural worth of various types of files and records produced in all offices. The political unrest through which the world is constantly passing seriously affects property rights, for example, and demands the proper preservation of denominational property records. Corporate papers and board minutes not only tell the history of an organization but may be called upon in case of litigation. Many other documents and general files that seem to be of little value beyond the initial retention period grow rapidly in historical value as time passes and may serve future administrators in re-studying issues and problems.

ECE.A22-108 Records Retention [Revised 04/2026]

Each ECP should establish a records center—that is, a storage place to protect documents from fire, deterioration, and unauthorized access.

A. The record center should have non-current documents or files designated for either short-term or permanent storage. The record center should not be used for the storage of current files—that is, those that are consulted several times a year in a normal course of business.
B. Documents and files stored in the records center awaiting later destruction shall be boxed in such a way as to make clear the dates of destruction under the provision of a records retention schedule approved by the local conference office of education.
C. Documents and files to be preserved permanently may be kept in hard copy, microform, or digital form, at the discretion of the appropriate governing body. Hard copy and microform may be stored in the same storage facility with less permanent items but should be physically separated from them and clearly labeled. In the event of digital storage, copies of vital records, including board and major committee minutes, should also be stored off-site. Guidelines for digitization of records, including best practices, can be obtained from the North American Division Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

ECE.A22-112 Discontinued Early Childhood Program (ECP) – Permanent Records

The local conference office of education is responsible for the preservation of all records of discontinued ECPs.

If a new ECP succeeds one that is discontinued, the old records are to be transferred to the new ECP; otherwise, such records are to be transferred to the local conference office of education.

ECE.A22-116 Ownership of Records

The local conference office of education shall adopt a policy regarding the ownership of records, files, and documents created by the employee in the course of employment. Such a policy shall include parameters for which records, files, and documents shall remain at the school. The term “records” includes, but is not limited to, information recorded on or transmitted by paper, film, audio and video tape, email, or other electronic media or sound media, as well as charts, drawings, and maps. Such a policy should exclude materials closely related to an employee’s professional career or graduate education.

ECE.A22-120 Permanent Record – Child

A permanent record is to be established for each child. The record is to include name, date and place of birth, sex, parent information, and verification of immunizations or waiver. The individual permanent record is to be available only to authorized personnel and the parents.

ECE.A22-124 Health Records – Child

An ECP health record for each child is to be maintained. This record is to be kept up to date by ECP personnel in cooperation with medical personnel. Arrangements for the services of medical personnel are the responsibility of the ECP director and ECP board.

ECE.A22-132 Access to Children’s Records

Parents of children currently or formally enrolled have the right to access their child’s permanent records maintained by the ECP relating to the children in the family or the individual child. Each local conference shall adopt procedures to grant requests by parents to inspect and review records during regular ECP hours. Access shall be granted no later than five days following the date of the request.

ECE.A22-136 Health Records – Employees

Health records are maintained at the employee’s payroll center or the local conference office of education and on-site for local state licensing to review.

ECE.A22-140 Major Fundraising Projects

Major fundraising projects are to have local school board approval.

ECE.A22-144 Safety of Children on Campus

Each local conference office of education should develop health and safety policies in compliance with state law as they apply to ECPs.

A. Drills

Safety drills should be effectively conducted throughout the school year as required by state and local law and at a minimum should include fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown drills.

ECE.A22-144 Safety of Children on Campus (Cont'd)

B. Emergency planning

Each ECP shall have an annually updated emergency plan in place and should review it with staff at the start of each school year. Ensure that the plan addresses natural hazards, technological hazards, biological hazards, and adversarial, incidental, and human-caused threats. It shall address prevention/ protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. The plan will also include safety processes for first aid and CPR.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM AND FACILITIES | ECE.A23

ECE.A23-104 Opening an Early Childhood Program (ECP)

Establishing an ECP is the responsibility of the local church or school board when it has been determined that the needs and interests of its constituency would be served. Programs should be established with a mission to serve young children and their families with a program of early childhood education that is infused with Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and values. The opening of an ECP shall be voted by the local church or school board and the local conference board of education. The program is governed by the local conference and must operate in harmony with denominational policies, guidelines, and governmental regulations.

In the establishment of a program, the governing board shall:

A. Give evidence of commitment to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and educational philosophy.
B. Demonstrate sufficient financial resources for start-up and sustainability of operations.
C. Consult with the local conference and union offices of education to ensure compliance with denominational policies and state licensing regulations for opening and operating an early childhood education program.
D. Utilize denominational resources such as the Steps for Opening an ECP and applicable material from entities such as Adventist Risk Management, the Office of Human Resources, etc.
E. Adopt employment and remuneration practices aligned with denominational policies to support the employment of qualified ECP personnel as appropriate to job description.

Local conference ECE superintendent: The chief executive officer (conference president) delegates an authorized superintendent from within the local conference office of education staff. Via an executive committee resolution and a designation of facility responsibility form (California programs refer to the form LIC 308), this individual is responsible for assisting with and signing all application forms. The ECE superintendent also provides oversight of the facility's strategic planning, governmental licensing forms, and content of supportive documents as set forth by governing agencies and the policy manual.

ECE.A23-108 Local Host Site Duties

It shall be the duty of each local church and/or school host site to support the local conference-associated ECP by ensuring that plans are in place for the capital improvement needs of the local ECE program.

ECE.A23-112 Operational Cessation

A decision to close an ECP facility must be recommended to the local conference executive committee by the local ECP board through the local conference office of education.

Many state licensing agencies require programs to provide their clientele with a 30-day closure notice. The minimum of a 30-day closure notice is a courtesy extended to all who will be affected by the program's closure.

ECE.A23-112 Operational Cessation (Cont'd)

During the closure process, the program leaders and board members should attempt to preserve the future evangelistic opportunities of the church/school. The integrity of the Adventist Church as a body of Christ's representatives must be maintained.

A. Top priorities for the distribution of information:

1. Local conference office of education ECE superintendent.
2. Local conference office human resource and risk management director(s).
3. Pacific Union Conference associate director for ECE.
4. Director and staff.
5. Licensing analyst.

B. Clientele hold meetings in succession with:

1. Local conference office of education ECE superintendent.
2. Pacific Union Conference associate director for ECE.
3. Director.
4. Staff.

C. Clientele give written notice to those listed above as soon as possible, stating:

1. On-going commitment to children and families.
2. Brief explanation for closure (optional).
3. Short list of other childcare/preschool facilities in the area without any recommendations.
4. Contact information for the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

D. After closing the doors:

1. The local government licensing office must be notified of final closure.
2. All records must be placed in a secure, tamper- and weather-proof storage area; records are still confidential material.
3. The following documents must be sent in their entirety to the local conference office of education ECE superintendent and retained indefinitely [*See NAD Working Policy,* B 60, October 2006]:

    a. Licensing forms, documents, and files.
    b. Board meeting minutes and resolutions.
    c. Personnel records.
    d. Children's enrollment and health records.
    e. Billing/financial records, both vender and clientele.

4. Maximize the effectiveness of the Record Retention Schedule [*See NAD Working Policy*, B 60, October 2006]: document it, sign it, and follow it. This has the effect of making records management efficient and affords some protection should the entity become involved in litigation in which records are questioned.
5. Assets remaining after all claims and debts have been satisfied shall be the responsibility of the local host site to be dispensed as appropriate and in accordance with any applicable law.

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ECE.C10-104 Definition of Curriculum

The Seventh-day Adventist system of education defines curriculum as all learning experiences, both formal and informal, recognizing the value of integrating the home, ECP, and church. The Bible serves as the foundation for the curriculum taught in NAD Seventh-day Adventist ECPs. The Adventist curriculum is developed by integrating spiritual values with learning standards for all developmental domains of young children.

ECE.C10-108 Curriculum Materials

Each program should adopt and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum materials that reflect the beliefs and values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and that are approved by the North American Division.

The goals for curriculum in Seventh-day Adventist schools are included in the *Journey to Excellence* framework developed by the NAD.

A. Followers of Jesus and sharers of His love, grace, and the hope of His second coming.
B. Reflective thinkers and creative problem-solvers.
C. Effective communicators.
D. Caring and compassionate people.
E. Responsible and contributing citizens.
F. Healthy and resilient individuals.
G. Self-directed and lifelong learners.

Curriculum materials prepared under the sponsorship of and adopted by the NAD are basic to the structure for learning experiences.

ECE.C11-104 Curriculum Materials Classification

Curriculum materials adopted by the NAD curriculum advisory are placed in classification levels. The general guidelines and a description of the classification levels for these materials are listed below.

A. Level #1 - Materials classified as level #1 are required for use in the Early Childhood Programs in the union.
B. Level #2 - Materials classified as level #2 are recommended for supplementary use in the ECE programs in the union.
C. Level #3 – Acceptable materials placed in level #3 have been reviewed and are considered acceptable for use in schools in the union.

For more detailed information regarding NAD ECE curriculum, visit the NAD ECE website: http://ecec.nadeducation.org.

ECE.C11-108 Request to Use Alternative Supplemental ECE Curriculum

Alternative supplemental curriculums are to be evaluated and approved annually by the local conference office of education. Requests for approval of supplemental curriculum must be submitted by the ECE program. Refer to the Alternative Supplemental Request form on the PUC ECE website. The local conference will review the request and make one of the following recommendations:

A. Approved for level #2 use by the ECE program and adoption by the local conference.
B. Not approved for use.

ECE.C11-112 Instruction

Increasing knowledge of child development from research and years of observation has resulted in accepted best practices for the instruction of young children. Plans for on-going staff development by the union, local conference, and local program director should be created to equip ECE employees with the specialized knowledge and effective instructional skills needed in the education and care of young children.

ECE.C11-116 Local Early Childhood Program (ECP) Calendar

Each ECP is to create a yearly calendar to meet the needs of the ECP. The calendar must be approved by the local ECP board and shared with the local conference board and/or office of education.

ECE.C11-120 Opening and Spring Reports

ECP opening reports are considered official at the close of the third week of school.

ECP spring reports are considered official five days after the close of the school year.

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ECE.F10-104 Finances

All ECE programs must maintain independent and discrete financial accounting systems. Funds of the ECE program are not to be co-mingled with the funds of other entities, including the host church or school.

All money received by and for the ECE program is to be turned over promptly to the ECE administrator or ECE treasurer in the absence of the administrator. Receipts shall be given for all funds received. These funds belong to the ECE program and may be disbursed only by board policy. Such funds are to be held by the ECE program and may not be borrowed or in any way diverted by any other entity from the objective for which they were intended.

In order to operate a fiscally sound ECE program, the organizing church or school will:

A. Support the financial viability and operations of the program.
B. Ensure that revenue generated by the ECE program will first fund ECE program improvements unless, otherwise voted by the ECE board to fund other church/school projects.
C. Ensure financial audits are conducted according to local conference office policy.

ECE.F10-108 Financial Reports

The ECP will work with the school and/or church finance committee to make sure monthly ECE financial reports are made available to the members of the responsible boards.

Glossary

Early Childhood Program Board – The operating board of local ECPs within the Pacific Union Conference. This board operates within the policies of the *Early Childhood Education Code* and the local conference office of education.

General Conference – The highest governing organization of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, responsible for coordinating global mission, establishing church policies, and providing administrative leadership and support to regional church organizations and institutions.

Journey to Excellence – A commitment to ongoing growth and quality in Adventist education—spiritually, academically, and missionally.

Local Conference – The administrative unit within the Pacific Union Conference responsible for the operation of EC-12 schools. This unit is the employing organization for EC-12 education employees in local schools within the Pacific Union Conference.

NAD – The North American Division. This administrative unit of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is responsible for the operations of the church within Bermuda, Canada, and the United States of America.

NADCOA – North American Division Commission on Accreditation.

NAD Working Policy – This document provides the authoritative voice of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America and contains the accumulated policies adopted by the General Conference.

NCPSA – National Associate for Private School Accreditation.

Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists – The administrative unit responsible for coordination of the operations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the territory of Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and Utah.

Union – Refers to the Pacific Union Conference.

Union Executive Committee – The highest administrative authority within the Pacific Union Conference. This committee makes final decisions on educational policies referred by the Education Council.

Union Office of Education – The administrative unit within the Pacific Union Conference responsible for coordination of EC-12 education.

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