



ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression

Focus: Academic Domain



Introduction to the ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression

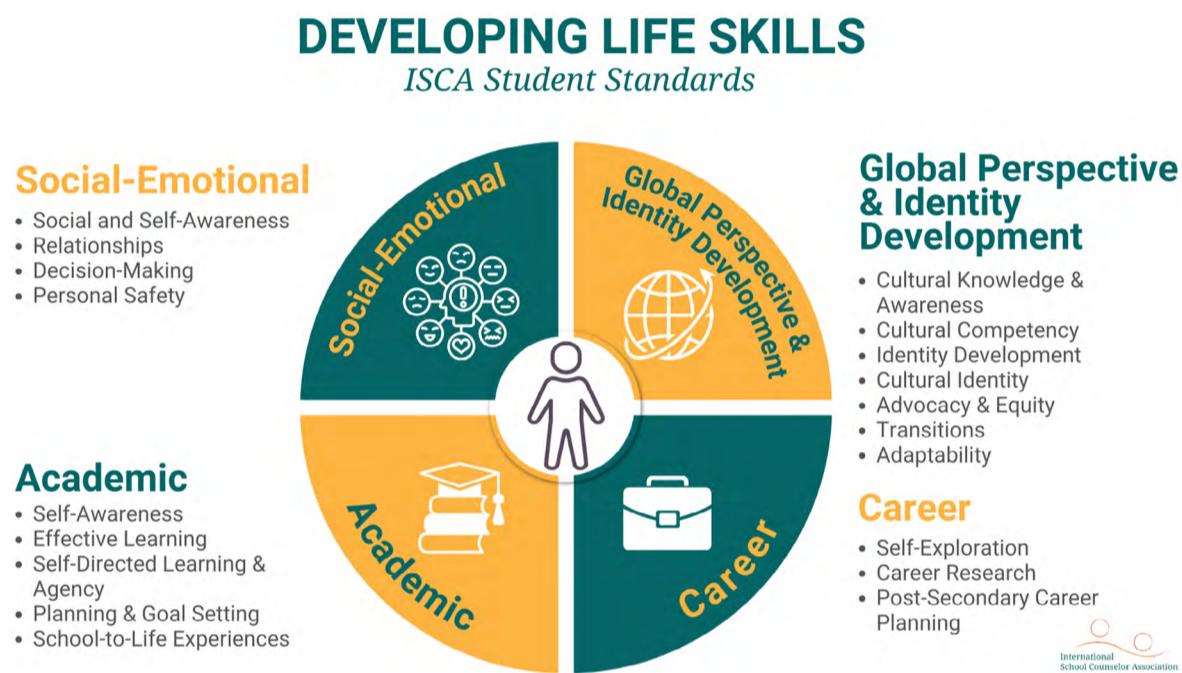
The **ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression (2024)** provides clear learning outcomes for social-emotional learning, global perspective, identity development, academic skills, and career readiness. By adopting this tool school-wide, every member of the school community—counselors, teachers, and administrators—can play a vital role in nurturing these essential skills. This tool is most effective when adopted school-wide, with each member of the school community playing a distinct role in fostering these skills. While school counselors play a central role, the responsibility for helping learners develop these essential life skills extends beyond them. These skills should be integrated throughout all aspects of the school experience and across all disciplines, ensuring that every learner is supported in their holistic development.

What are the ISCA Student Standards?

The **ISCA Student Standards (2022)** are internationally recognized content standards that outline the specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills across four domains: social-emotional, global perspective and identity development, academic, and career. In May 2022, ISCA revised these student standards to meet several critical goals, including incorporating identity development within the Global Perspective and Identity Development Domain, promoting equity, reducing harm, improving access for all learners, and aligning with the most recent research and developments in education.

While school counselors use the standards to guide the planning and implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program, the ISCA Student Standards are meant to be adopted school-wide and articulated within and across the curriculum. When all educators adopt these standards, schools create a unified and integrated approach to the development of all learners. Throughout this document ISCA is intentionally using the term “educators,” which encompasses school counselors, administrators, and subject/academic teachers. ISCA chose the term “learner” instead of “student” because “student” suggests a limited focus on skills needed only for school, while “learner” emphasizes the concept of lifelong learning.

The infographic below highlights the four main domains of the ISCA Student Standards and the specific standards within each domain. It illustrates how these components collectively support the development of essential life skills.



What Is a Learning Progression?

A learning progression is an organized sequence of outcomes that a learner is expected to meet at various stages of their educational journey. It provides a clear developmental pathway, enabling educators to design learning experiences that support ongoing growth and progression.

The **ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression (2024)** specifies **what learners are expected to know and be able to do by the end of a grade band**. A school's instructional program should emphasize developing learners' abilities to acquire and apply these standards. The curriculum must ensure appropriate accommodations for the diverse populations of learners in schools. These standards are not instructional or assessment tasks, but statements of what learners should achieve after instruction. Decisions on how to best help learners meet these program goals are left to individual schools.

The ISCA Learning Progression DOES Provide	The ISCA Learning Progression DOES NOT Provide
An organized sequence of learning expectations or benchmarks	A curriculum
A clear pathway for the development of learners	Specific requirements about the design of lesson plans or organization of units
Statements of the observable learning outcomes	Instructional or assessment tasks
Specific details about what learners should know and do by the end of each grade band, allowing for flexibility in how and when these skills are integrated into the curriculum	Rigid instructions on where specific skills should be integrated into the curriculum or at which exact grade level they should be taught
Support that encourages continuous growth and achievement	Specific information about how to help learners meet program goals

Why Was the Learning Progression Created?

The **ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression (2024)** was created to address the increasing need for schools to design a holistic learning experience for students—one that integrates social-emotional learning, global perspective and identity development, academic skills, and career readiness into a cohesive framework. Traditionally, this responsibility has often been assigned primarily to counselors. This tool empowers schools to adopt a school-wide approach, ensuring that every educator contributes to the comprehensive development of each learner throughout their educational journey. The Learning Progression encourages educators to work collaboratively, ensuring that all learners receive a consistent, high-quality education that prepares them for postsecondary education, future careers, and global citizenship.

ISCA's objective was to develop a tool that offers sufficient guidance while granting educators the freedom to apply the ISCA Student Standards in their own unique school environments. As such, the Learning Progression provides a common language for schools to follow and outlines skills that are clear and directive without being overly prescriptive.

How Was It Created?

As an organization, ISCA is committed to ongoing research and development. As such, the Learning Progression was created through a rigorous process that reflects the latest insights and best practices in education, ensuring that it meets the evolving needs of learners and educators alike. Our dedicated team of international school counselors, curriculum developers, school leaders, expert reviewers, and consultants—representing various specializations and developmental levels, including higher education—mapped out the progression of all standards, ensuring they are developmentally appropriate and sequential. This comprehensive approach aligns with current educational best practices and the latest research, allowing for a more cohesive and effective implementation of the ISCA Student Standards. The ISCA Learning Progression underwent several rounds of feedback and review. The drafts were shared at ISCA events, including the virtual collaborative and annual conferences, enabling hundreds of counselors and other educators to contribute their expertise. A complete list of official contributors and resources that guided our research can be found at the end of this introduction.

Intended Audience for the Learning Progression

The **ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression (2024)** is for:

- **School Counselors:** To design developmentally appropriate lessons and activities, essential for building a comprehensive school counseling program.
- **Teachers:** To integrate social-emotional learning, global perspective, identity development, academic skills, and career readiness across all subjects and grade levels.
- **Administrators:** To support and lead school-wide initiatives that align with strategic goals related to holistic student development.
- **Curriculum Leaders:** To ensure that the curriculum meets diverse learning needs and aligns with the ISCA standards for comprehensive education.
- **Other School Staff:** To play a role in fostering essential life skills in students, contributing to a unified approach to student development.
- **Parents and Learners:** To provide clear expectations and support equity in education, helping to understand and meet the learning goals across different cultural and educational contexts.

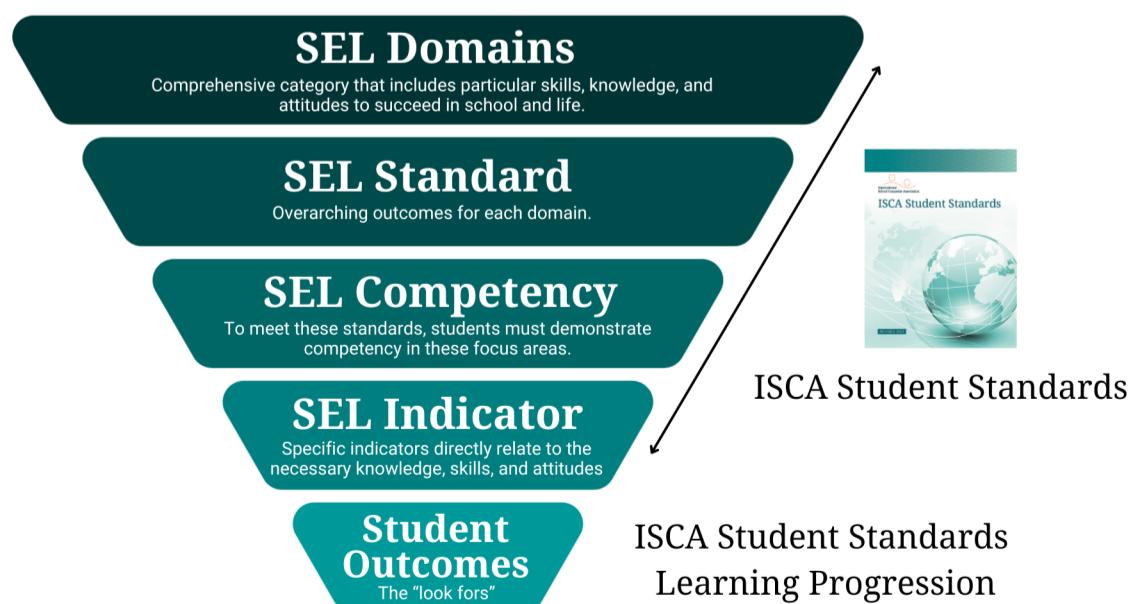
How Is the Learning Progression Organized?

Grade Bands

The learning outcomes that are outlined in the progression identify what learners should independently know and be capable of achieving by the end of each grade band from Pre-K, K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. These are based on the US/American grade structures and can be adjusted to suit the developmental stages and naming conventions used in your school. These grade-banded learning outcomes are intentionally designed to support developmental progress by strategically guiding learners toward deeper learning in the subsequent grade band. **They build upon the preceding level, indicating that learners should demonstrate proficiency in both the previous and current grade bands.**

Organization

The learning progression is organized around the four domains of the ISCA Student Standards: social-emotional, global perspective and identity development, academic, and career. Each domain is further broken down by standards, structured as follows:



Coding Structure

The coding structure helps educators quickly identify where specific skills or knowledge are situated within the broader framework of the standards, competencies, and indicators across different domains. It provides a systematic way to organize and reference learning objectives and expectations within educational materials and assessments.

Using the following as an example, the coding system can be interpreted in this way:

- **C:A2:1 Identify career trends and occupations**
- **C:** Represents the **Career Domain**
- **A2:** Indicates **Standard A, Competency 2** within the Career Domain.
- **1:** Refers to **Indicator 1**, which specifies a particular skill or knowledge area related to **Competency 2** under **Standard A** in the **Career Domain**.

Language/Terminology in the Learning Progression

We refer to learners using “they/their” pronouns to promote gender neutrality and inclusivity, ensuring that all learners are represented without bias. This usage aligns with current best practices in academic language, reflecting a commitment to diversity and respect for individual identities.

Using the Learning Progression

Using the **ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression (2024)** involves guiding learners through a structured process of nurturing essential life skills.

Educators can use the Learning Progression to:

- establish clear learning goals aligned with the standards
- assess learners' current proficiency levels
- track progress over time
- provide ongoing feedback to support development
- adjust instruction based on collected data
- encourage learners to reflect and assess their progress toward goals
- celebrate milestones achieved
- review and communicate with learners and families to ensure transparency and collaboration in fostering growth in these crucial life skills

Important Notes: You have the flexibility to apply these standards based on your school's specific needs and priorities. Decisions should be made collaboratively, considering identified gaps, redundancies, and priorities. Regular evaluation is crucial for monitoring progress and adjusting approaches to optimize learning outcomes.

ISCA has developed essential tools and expert tips to support schools as they implement the ISCA Student Standards and Learning Progression in their programs. For more information visit: www.iscainfo.com.

About ISCA

The International School Counselor Association (ISCA) is the leading association formed by international school counselors for counselors. ISCA cultivates a safe, open-minded environment to promote community, connection, and professional learning. Our comprehensive programs are culturally competent and empower counselors to effectively advocate for learners. By joining ISCA, members can enhance their professional development, expand their knowledge, and engage with a global community of international school counselors.

Visit ISCA at www.iscainfo.com to learn more and become a part of our community. Moreover, to learn more about developing a comprehensive counseling program, order a copy of the ISCA International Model (2022) at www.iscainfo.com/The-Model.

Acknowledgments

This work would not have been possible without the dedication and expertise of our distinguished Working Group. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to these professionals for their unwavering commitment to the creation of these learning outcomes. Their collaborative efforts, insightful contributions, and tireless work have been instrumental in shaping a progression that is both rigorous and adaptable to diverse educational contexts.

Lead Developers

Cheryl Brown

Brooke Fezler

Kristine Mizzone

ISCA Working Group Members

Chrystal Kelly

Kathryn Manu

Kristine Mizzone

Elizabeth Mohr

Marilyn Wilson Odhiambo

Acknowledgments (continued)

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Expert Reviewers

Jane Baron	Lynn Kogelman
Valerie Besanceney	Sarah Kwawu
Tanya Crossman	Jaime LaDawn Roya
Stephanie Finnel	Andrew McGeehan
Corey Gagne	Aaron Moniz
Katie Greeley	Julie Rainer
Jennifer Hammonds	Stuart Roe
Annalice Hayes	Marija Sitar
Janice Holland	Shanna Temple
Lindsay Kehl	Kindall Tyson

Progression Preview and Feedback at the ISCA 2023 Bangkok and 2024 Athens Conferences

The progression was shared at the ISCA Annual Conference in 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand, and again in 2024 in Athens, Greece. Over 600 counselors and educators had the opportunity to review, edit, write, and contribute to the development of the learning progression. We are deeply grateful for their time, insights, and unwavering support, which have been invaluable in shaping this important work. Together, the contributions of our Working Group and Expert Reviewers have culminated in a robust Learning Progression that is poised to make a significant impact on student learning outcomes worldwide. We are deeply grateful for their expertise, dedication, and unwavering support in this endeavor.

Academic				
Standard A:	Students will demonstrate the dispositions, knowledge, and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and throughout life			
	By the end of PK	Grades K–2	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8
A:A1:1 Display a positive disposition towards learning and willingness to embrace new ideas, challenges, and/or learning opportunities	Express curiosity and joy when trying new activities.	Demonstrate a positive attitude when facing challenges and exploring new ideas and/or activities.	Engage in new learning experiences and academic challenges with a positive and curious mindset.	Express a willingness to learn unfamiliar and/or challenging topics.
A:A1:2 Identify and apply attitudes, behaviors and strategies which lead to successful learning	Follow basic classroom routines that build a foundation for self-regulation, organization, and time management.	Practice basic strategies and develop habits for self-regulation, organization, and time management.	Apply some strategies for self-regulation, organization, and time management, recognizing how these lead to successful learning outcomes.	Take initiative to learn new and/or challenging topics and explain the benefits of embracing new ideas, challenges, and/or learning opportunities.
A:A1:3 Articulate self-efficacy as a learner	Demonstrate a growing sense of confidence and accomplishment when trying new learning tasks.	Use positive self-talk to express confidence in their ability to learn and succeed.	Acknowledge and celebrate achievements and progress and demonstrate a sense of confidence as a learner.	Consistently adapt and refine self-regulation, organization, and time-management strategies, explaining how these lead to successful learning outcomes.
A:A1:4 Use mistakes as opportunities for growth in the learning process	Demonstrate perseverance when mistakes are made or setbacks occur.	Demonstrate resilience by trying again after making mistakes.	Distinguish between a growth mindset and a fixed mindset and explain how mistakes can lead to new discoveries in learning.	Recognize the correlation between academic achievements and ongoing effort and dedication, expressing belief in their capabilities to achieve goals or desired outcomes.
A:A1:5 Take pride in work and achievement	Show signs of positive self-recognition during simple accomplishments.	Acknowledge and celebrate academic achievements.	Engage in positive self-reflection about their work and academic achievements.	Recognize the importance of mindsets in learning.
A:A1:6 Use self-awareness to build on personal strengths and take steps to meet challenges	Begin to express preferences for certain activities based on emerging strengths.	With support, recognize their emerging strengths and areas of challenge.	Recognize their strengths and areas of challenge and apply strategies and resources to support learning.	Connect past successes to personal efforts and strategies, expressing confidence in their capability and competence as a learner.
Competency A1 Self-Awareness as a Learner				
	By the end of PK	Grades K–2	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8
A:A2:1 Apply critical-thinking skills	Begin to ask simple questions, show curiosity about the world, and engage in activities (e.g., puzzles and sorting games to practice basic problem-solving skills).	Look closely at information, derive important details, and make connections between ideas or events.	Analyze simple data or information and derive conclusions from given data or information.	Solve multistep problems, considering various factors and potential solutions.
A:A2:2 Apply time-management skills to use time productively and accomplish tasks by deadlines	Begin to develop a sense of time through experiencing basic concepts, such as sequences and routines (e.g., “First...then...,” visual timelines, transition songs).	Recall the order of activities and assignments for the day or week and begin to demonstrate an understanding of the passage of time as it relates to their school day (e.g., checking tasks off when they are completed, engaging in countdown activities).	Use assignment planners or digital calendars to record homework assignments, projects, and due dates.	Estimate how long an assignment will take by carefully reading the instructions to find key requirements and goals, break big tasks into smaller, manageable ones to finish on time, and prioritize and organize tasks from most to least important.
A:A2:3 Demonstrate the ability to persist with tasks when faced with challenges and adapt approach in order to achieve objectives/goals	With support, show a readiness to attempt challenging activities.	Recognize learning challenges, adopt a flexible, growth-oriented mindset, and seek assistance from teachers or peers when challenged with difficult tasks.	Recognize aspects of their learning that are challenging and seek appropriate support to persist with difficult tasks.	Express what was learned from setbacks and adjust strategies to overcome challenges and achieve goals.
A:A2:4 Fulfill individual role and responsibilities when working within a group through cooperation and compromise	Play alongside and/or with others and begin to take turns and share items.	Share, take turns, cooperate, and compromise with others when working in a group.	Apply collaborative skills such as active listening, respectful disagreement, acknowledgment of the opinions of others, and compromise.	Establish and maintain close, interpersonal working relationships by applying collaborative skills (e.g., active listening, respectful disagreement, acknowledgment of the opinions of others, compromise).
A:A2:5 Produce original work and exercise academic honesty	Treat the work of others with kindness.	Identify examples of honesty and draw connections between personal and academic honesty.	Recognize academic dishonesty and complete assignments independently, and acknowledge sources when using others' ideas or information.	Produce original work and exercise academic honesty, and explain the potential consequences of academic dishonesty both within the school setting and in terms of long-term educational goals.

Standard B:	Students will apply future-ready skills in preparation for a variety of postsecondary paths including college and career				Competency B1 Self-Directed Learning and Student Agency
	Competency B1 Self-Directed Learning and Student Agency				
	By the end of PK	Grades K–2	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
A:B1:1 Develop own personal approach to learning, including application of organizational and study skills	Follow simple classroom routines for cleaning up and putting materials in their designated places.	Take responsibility for tidying up and maintain an organized learning environment.	Utilize basic study techniques, such as note-taking and/or reviewing lessons, and apply simple organizational systems to locate their personal learning materials and assignments.	Apply more advanced study skills such as effective note taking, using study strategies like summarizing and highlighting and utilizing digital tools for organization.	Choose organizational and study strategies that work best for them and apply these strategies with regularity, leading to effective learning habits.
A:B1:2 Identify creative approaches to learning and tasks	Explore ideas and interests through creative play.	Generate multiple ideas for how to approach projects or tasks.	Experiment with new approaches to learning and develop creative solutions to problems.	Develop creative ideas, solutions, and approaches to learning, independently and in collaboration with others.	Develop and implement creative solutions to complex problems, leading and motivating others in collaborative projects and initiatives.
A:B1:3 Demonstrates independence as a self-directed learner	Make choices about how to play and assist with tasks in the learning environment.	Assume responsibilities within the learning environment.	Make choices and solve problems related to their own learning.	Evaluate options before making choices about their learning.	Take ownership of their learning by making choices, solving problems, and monitoring progress toward goals.
A:B1:4 Demonstrate the motivation and resilience to achieve and sustain individual potential	Demonstrate the ability to try again when challenges are experienced during play.	Demonstrate the ability to calm themselves down when faced with frustration and recover from minor academic setbacks or challenges.	Demonstrate the ability to recover from academic setbacks or challenges, adapt to change, apply strategies for problem-solving, seek help when needed, and persevere through difficult tasks.	Demonstrate the ability to recover from academic setbacks or challenges, adapt to change, apply strategies for problem-solving, seek help when needed, and persevere through difficult tasks.	Demonstrate the ability to recover from academic setbacks, learn from their mistakes, remain focused on long-term objectives, and persevere during times of high stress and difficult tasks.
A:B1:5 Demonstrate an active role in deciding what and how one will learn	Make age-appropriate choices through the exploration of interests and self-directed play.	Select from various options to interact with learning materials and demonstrate understanding in ways that align with preferences and strengths.	Choose topics that align with their interests and decide how to explore and understand those subjects.	Take initiative with their learning by selecting engaging topics, deciding how to study them, actively participating, seeking help as needed, and reflecting on progress and strategies.	Assume responsibility for their learning and set a personal learning plan based on their interests and preferred learning methods.
A:B1:6 Assess the task at hand and evaluate their own level of knowledge and skills needed to accomplish the task	Break down basic daily tasks with help (e.g., understanding the steps or skills required for tidying toys or transitioning between activities).	Deconstruct academic tasks into parts and describe what one might need to know and be able to do to accomplish the task.	Deconstruct academic tasks into specific components and identify new knowledge and skills that will be needed to accomplish the task.	Gather information from a variety of reliable and relevant sources when making decisions.	Assess the existing knowledge and skills required to complete tasks, then create a plan based on this assessment.
A:B1:7 Apply decision-making protocols that are informed by data gathered from a variety of reliable and relevant sources	Choose between options when making a decision.	Use basic information such as facts, details, or simple knowledge when making decisions.	Distinguish between reliable and unreliable, and important and unimportant information when making decisions.	Follow a process when making data-informed decisions that are based on a variety of reliable and relevant sources.	Articulate what they need to be a successful learner, seek assistance, and use resources available to them.
A:B1:8 Use communication skills to self advocate and seek help as a reflective learner	Express their needs and wants during learning experiences.	Make simple requests, such as asking for clarification or help with a task.	Identify when they need help related to their learning and seek assistance from adults or classmates.	Apply a variety of communication skills and tools, including verbal and written communication, technology use, collaboration, and self-reflection, to effectively advocate for their learning needs and preferences.	ISCA Student Standards Learning Progression

Competency B2 Planning and Goal Setting					
	By the end of PK	Grades K–2	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
A:B2.1 Develop and implement an annual plan of study to maximize academic ability and achievement	With support, identify their favorite activities from the school year.	Identify their favorite activities from the school year and begin to articulate why certain activities or subjects were enjoyable.	Reflect on and articulate strengths, interests, and areas of improvement based on past school experiences.	Assess and rank the academic and cocurricular activities enjoyed most at the end of the year and show an understanding of high school academic options.	Explore course options and create an academic plan that aligns with strengths and interests in cocurricular activities.
A:B2.2 Use assessment tools to guide goal setting and educational planning	Participate in simple self-exploration tasks to discover emerging interests, preferences, and abilities.	With support, reflect on learning experiences, discuss strengths, and set short-term and specific goals.	Reflect on assessment results to gain self-awareness and set learning goals.	Examine assessment results to identify action steps and achieve learning goals.	Analyze assessment data to identify strengths and areas for improvement and develop detailed educational plans with steps to achieve goals.
A:B2.3 Establish attainable long- and short-term goals	With support, choose a simple and achievable goal related to specific activities, skills, or behaviors.	Choose a goal that is realistic and achievable with effort.	Choose a long-term goal and break it down into smaller, manageable goals that can be achieved in a relatively short period of time.	Identify both long- and short-term learning goals that are realistic, attainable, and challenging.	Identify both long- and short-term learning goals and explain why they are attainable.
A:B2.4 Choose and implement specific strategies that will lead to goal attainment	Apply simple strategies with guidance to achieve specific goals during play-based activities.	Select and use specific strategies that help achieve their goals.	Apply a variety of strategies to achieve goals.	Apply a variety of strategies to achieve goals, reflecting on how well the chosen strategies have worked.	Examine the outcomes and results achieved with the strategies chosen to better attain goals.
A:B2.5 Monitor progress toward goals and use problem-solving strategies to adjust approach when necessary	Assess their progress toward a learning goal by identifying what has been done and what still needs to be accomplished.	With support, identify any challenges or obstacles they may be facing and apply a problem-solving strategy.	Describe progress toward learning goals to determine if they are on target to meet them, identify challenges faced, and apply problem-solving strategies accordingly.	Reflect on progress toward learning goals, explain strategies used, and adjust action plans when facing challenges.	Explain progress toward learning goals, reflect on effective strategies, and show the ability to adjust action plans when challenges arise.
A:B2.6 Reflect on learning and self-assess areas of strength and areas for growth	Share what they learned, enjoyed, or found challenging in specific activities.	Recognize activities or tasks where confidence or success is felt, as well as areas for growth.	Engage in reflective and self-assessment processes to gain insights into areas of strength and areas for growth.	Take action on insights gained through self-assessment by setting goals, developing strategies, and seeking support where needed.	Examine strengths and areas for growth in different subjects, identifying common patterns.
Standard C: Students will make connections between school and life experiences					
	By the end of PK	Grades K–2	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
Competency C1 School to Life Experience					
A:C1:1 Examine the relationship between school success/academic achievement and future career success	Meet developmental goals related to academic and social skills that lay a foundation for future academic success.	Identify the skills that are required to be a successful learner and explain how these skills relate to their future career aspirations.	Explain the relevance and importance of school success/academic achievement in shaping their desired careers.	Explain how school success/academic achievement can be a critical determinant of future career success.	
A:C1:2 Articulate the value of lifelong learning as it pertains to seeking, obtaining, and maintaining life goals	Begin to recognize the ways in which people of all ages continue to learn and grow.	Discuss how people continually learn and adapt throughout their lives.	Communicate their reflections about how past learning experiences have contributed to personal growth and goal achievement.	Articulate the value of lifelong learning and its direct impact on their ability to seek obtain, and maintain life goals.	
A:C1:3 Explain how the skills learned in school apply to postsecondary and career readiness	Discuss the skills used by professionals in their community.	Recognize how professionals apply what they learned in school to help them in their careers.	Identify and list specific skills they are developing through academic coursework and extracurricular activities, and compare the identified skills with the skill sets required for postsecondary life.	Analyze the extent to which the skills they are developing through academic coursework and extracurricular activities align with the demands of their postsecondary and/or career aspirations.	
A:C1:4 Seek cocurricular and community experiences to develop a broad range of interests in abilities	Engage in diverse activities to explore interests and develop foundational skills through play.	Begin to engage in cocurricular and community experiences that align with their interests.	Engage in a variety of cocurricular and community experiences and explain how these support the development of their interests and abilities.	Actively seek out cocurricular and community experiences to discover their passions and interests and provide direction for future educational and career paths.	
A:C1:5 Demonstrate the ability to balance school, studies, extracurricular activities, leisure time, and family life	Follow a structured routine that includes a balance of educational activities, playtime, and rest periods.	Follow a structured routine that includes designated times for school, homework, extracurricular activities, leisure, and family time.	Apply basic time-management skills to allocate time for homework, extracurriculars, and leisure activities.	Apply effective time-management skills, prioritize tasks and assignments to ensure they meet academic deadlines while still participating in extracurriculars and maintaining personal commitments.	

Resources

The following resources were utilized in the research and development of this tool.

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