

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

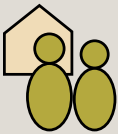
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The trolley has long been part of Pittsburgh's landscape, connecting neighborhoods, supporting routines, and helping people get where they need to go. For many CCAC students, it's a daily mode of transportation between school, work, and home.

In this conceptual framework, the trolley becomes a metaphor for student learning—a journey that moves through classrooms, placements, and community sites, returning to core ideas with more clarity each time. Students board from many starting points, but all travel a shared path of foundational knowledge, applied practice, and reflection. The trolley also holds symbolic meaning from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, where it invited children into exploration through empathy, play, and curiosity. This framework reflects that same spirit and is grounded in the values of connection, service, equity, and reflection.

III FACULTY

Faculty are the track that guides and supports the trolley's journey. They create a stable path that connects theory to practice and links the past with the future. As students move through the program, faculty provide direction, insight, and thoughtful challenge. They help learners stay grounded in best practices while preparing them for what lies ahead.



ENVIRONMENTS

As the trolley passes through neighborhoods, homes, and schools, it mirrors the environments where early learning takes place. Students move between college classrooms, early childhood programs, and community spaces, bringing learning to life in real-world settings.



CORE VALUES

Every journey is shaped by the values of the surrounding community. Our program is rooted in equity, inclusion, belonging, and advocacy. Like a skyline that signals where you are and what the city stands for, these values create a sense of home. They invite all students to feel seen, supported, and empowered to make a meaningful impact.

NAEYC STANDARDS: STOPS ALONG THE ROUTE

Each stop along the trolley route represents one of the six NAEYC Professional Standards, which guide high-quality teacher preparation and serve as checkpoints for student growth. Rather than being introduced once and left behind, these standards are revisited throughout the program in courses, fieldwork, and reflection, allowing students to deepen their understanding and strengthen their connection to the profession over time.

- 1 Child Development and Learning in Context
- 2 Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections
- 3 Observation, Documentation, and Assessment
- 4 Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices
- 5 Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content
- 6 Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

