



## **Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) Resources & Terminology**

ACSI's core terminology often revolves around its "Flourishing" initiatives, which aim to measure and cultivate holistic success in Christian education.

### **Flourishing Schools Research**

This is the central hub for ACSI's research on what makes a Christian school flourish. It provides access to the instruments, reports, and data for the key initiatives listed below.

[ACSI Flourishing Schools Research](#)

### **Flourishing Faith Index (FFI)**

This is a research-based instrument used to measure the spiritual formation and faith of students in Christian schools. It's part of the broader Flourishing Schools Research.

The FFI assesses students in areas like "Faith Beliefs & Affections," "Faith Practices," and "Spiritual Dispositions."

The FFI is detailed on the main [Flourishing Schools Research page](#).

### **Flourishing School Culture Instrument (FSCI)**

This tool is designed to measure the health and vitality of a school's culture from the perspective of its staff and leadership.

The FSCI helps school leaders understand their community's perceptions of leadership, professional life, and the school's environment to build a thriving culture.

Information on the FSCI is available on the [Flourishing Schools Research page](#).

### **Flourishing Families Plan**

This concept is integrated into the Flourishing Schools model, recognizing that family engagement is crucial for student success. Resources are designed to help schools partner effectively with parents.

[ACSI Flourishing Families](#)

### **The Faith Teaches Campaign**

This is an ACSI initiative dedicated to promoting and protecting the value and rights of faith-based education for all. It serves as a resource hub for advocacy, legal updates, and stories highlighting the impact of Christian schooling.

[Faith Teaches](#)



## ACSI Early Education Standards & Guidelines

ACSI provides a set of standards for early education programs as part of its accreditation process, focusing on biblically-based, developmentally appropriate practices.

[ACSI Early Education Resources](#)

### Competency

Within ACSI, **competency** refers to the specific, measurable skills, knowledge, and behaviors that educators and leaders need to be effective in a Christian school setting. Early educator professional development is often competency-based.

See the framework in action at [Early Educator Core Competencies](#)

### Biblical Worldview

ACSI defines **biblical worldview** as the practice of intentionally integrating biblical principles and truths into every aspect of learning and school life. It's not just a Bible class, but a comprehensive lens through which all subjects and activities are viewed. The goal is to help students develop a cohesive and scripturally-grounded understanding of the world. ACSI offers numerous resources, articles, and professional development opportunities to help educators effectively integrate this approach.

[ACSI Biblical Worldview Resources](#)

### Spiritual Formation

For ACSI, **spiritual formation** is the holistic process through which individuals are conformed to the image of Christ. It's a key outcome of Christian education, encompassing a student's relationship with God, their character development, and their engagement in spiritual disciplines. This concept is a cornerstone of the Flourishing Schools Research, measured in part by the Flourishing Faith Index (FFI). The webpage offers resources for leaders and teachers to cultivate an environment that nurtures spiritual growth intentionally.

[ACSI Spiritual Formation](#)

### National Health and Safety Performance Standards

ACSI aligns its health and safety standards with the national model, *Caring for Our Children* (CFOC). This is the go-to resource for best practices in early childhood and school environments.

[Caring for Our Children \(CFOC\) Basics](#)



## **Glossary of Common Professional Development Terms for Early Childhood Trainers/Speakers**

### **Adult Learning Principles**

Core concepts that guide how adults acquire knowledge and skills, emphasizing relevance, practical application, and self-direction. Trainers use these principles to design effective learning experiences.

### **Assessment**

The process of gathering information to measure a learner's understanding, skill level, or performance often through observation, quizzes, or reflective activities.

### **Biblical Worldview Integration**

The intentional connection of training content to biblical truths, encouraging educators to see all aspects of teaching and learning through the lens of Scripture.

*All truth is God's truth; instruction should align with Scripture and promote Christlike character.*

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### **Child Development Domains**

Key areas of growth in young children: physical, cognitive, social-emotional, language, and spiritual.

*All domains are interconnected under God's design for human flourishing.*

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### **Coaching**

A personalized approach in which the trainer supports educators through observation, feedback, and reflection to improve specific skills and practices.

### **Competency Areas**

The knowledge, skills, and dispositions early childhood professionals are expected to demonstrate, often outlined in state registry systems.

### **Continuing Education Unit (CEU)**

A unit of credit equal to a specific number of hours of participation in a professional development activity, used for tracking ongoing training.

### **Facilitation**

The process of guiding participants through learning activities, discussions, and problem-solving rather than only delivering lecture-style content.

### **Formative Assessment**

Ongoing checks for understanding during a learning experience, used to guide instruction and provide feedback before final evaluation.



### **Instructional Strategies**

The methods and techniques trainers use to deliver content and support learning (e.g., modeling, small group activities, case studies).

### **Learning Objectives**

Clear, measurable statements that define what participants will know or be able to do as a result of the training.

### **Learning Styles / Modalities**

The preferred ways individuals process information such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning.

### **Licensure Requirements**

Standards set by state agencies that educators must meet to work in licensed early childhood settings, often including mandatory training hours.

### **Observation**

The systematic process of watching and documenting behavior, interactions, and learning to inform teaching and assessment.

### **Outcomes**

The changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or practices that result from a professional development activity.

### **Pedagogy**

The art and science of teaching, including the methods and principles used to deliver effective instruction.

*Pedagogy considers spiritual formation and modeling Christlike character.*

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### **Performance-Based Assessment**

An evaluation method in which participants demonstrate their learning by performing tasks or applying skills in realistic contexts.

### **Professional Development (PD)**

Ongoing education that improves the knowledge, skills, and effectiveness of early childhood professionals.

### **Reflective Practice**

The process of regularly thinking about one's teaching methods and decisions, with the goal of improving future practice.

### **Registry-Approved Training**

Professional development that meets the criteria set by a state's early childhood training registry for tracking and credit purposes.



### **SMART Goals**

Goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, used to create actionable plans for professional growth.

### **Summative Assessment**

A final evaluation at the end of a learning experience to determine if learning objectives have been met.

### **Trainer Competencies**

Standards that outline the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for effective professional development facilitation.

### **Train-the-Trainer**

A model in which trainers are trained to deliver content to other educators, ensuring consistent, high-quality instruction.

### **Workplace-Based Learning**

Professional development activities conducted within the educator's work setting, such as mentoring, team meetings, or job-embedded coaching.

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**U.S. Department of Education (NCES):** A comprehensive glossary of terms used in educational research and data reporting from the National Center for Education Statistics.

[USDOE NCES Glossary](#)

**Florida Department of Education:** A glossary of terms, acronyms, and definitions specific to the Florida educational system. The Florida Approval Program Gold Seal auditors use these terms.

[Florida DOE Glossary \(PDF\)](#)

**PA Keys Glossary:** A glossary of terms related to early childhood education, provided by the Pennsylvania Keys to Quality

[NAEYC / PD Terms Glossary \(PDF\)](#)