

# Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum Review Guidelines with Request Process

## Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Florida gives parents, schools, and providers the right to choose which appropriate, scientific-based, and researched early learning curricula approach they use to meet state early education performance standards. This document is designed to offer assistance in making that choice.

The Early Learning Coalition of Broward County has identified the following curriculum components as important factors in determining whether or not an early education curriculum is developmentally appropriate. Any curriculum approved by the Coalition incorporates these components.

## Definition

### *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum*

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum, for the purposes of a review and /or approval, is defined as a set of written materials that:

- Is replicable
- May address the use of materials, scheduling, arranging the environment, and interaction between children and adults separately or in combination
- Includes more than activity suggestions and more than theory and pedagogy
- Is aligned with the Florida Early Learning Standards Birth – Five
- Is aligned with scientifically-based research

## Guidelines

- 1. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate. It has realistic and attainable expectations in line with the most recent research on early learning and child development.**
- 2. The curriculum has a Character Development component.**
- 3. The curriculum...**
  - A. Promotes interactive learning among staff and children.
  - B. Helps children achieve social, emotional, linguistic, physical and cognitive goals.
  - C. Permits flexibility for children and teachers.
  - D. Encourages active learning through play and frequently allows children to make meaningful choices.
  - E. Fosters children’s exploration and inquiry, rather than focusing on “right” answers or “right” ways to complete a task.
  - F. Facilitates concept learning and skills development in an integrated and natural way. (Integrated thematic instruction)

- G. Shows evidence from research of being based on sound child development principles of how children grow and learn.
  - H. Shows respect for cultural and linguistic diversity and allows and appreciates individual differences.
- 4. The curriculum meets all of the State of Florida School Readiness Performance Standards, including the following Domains:**
- A. Physical Health
  - B. Approaches to Learning
  - C. Social and Emotional Development
  - D. Language Development and Communication
  - E. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge
  - F. Motor Development
  - G. Emergent Literacy
- 5. The program has age appropriate activities and materials that promote the following experiences:**
- A. Construction (wood blocks, waffle blocks, bristle blocks, Lincoln Logs, etc.)
  - B. Dramatic Play
  - C. Manipulatives
  - D. Creative Expression (Art)
  - E. Language (Talking, listening, reading and writing)
  - F. Discovery/Sensory
  - G. Fluid Play
  - H. Music and Movement
  - I. Outdoors/Gross Motor
  - J. Computers (optional)
- 6. Assessment evidence (from multiple sources) is used to understand and improve learning by improving curriculum implementation and teaching practices.**
- 7. Parent Involvement:**
- A. Parents are recognized as the child's first teacher.
  - B. Parents are given letters about thematic units of study and each of the interest areas available in the program detailing the benefit to the child.
  - C. Parents are welcomed visitors to the program or classroom and opportunities are available for parent participation.
  - D. Conferences are scheduled to discuss the parent's expectations for their children and answer any questions they may have about the curriculum.
  - E. Parents are knowledgeable about goals and assessment.

## Definitions and Approved Curricula

### Ages Birth to 5

(not to be confused with Florida DOE VPK approved curriculum)

#### Standards:

Florida has adopted performance standards for all children birth to 5 years old. The PERFORMANCE STANDARDS can be accessed on line.

Birth to Three Year Olds

[http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/downloads/pdf/birth\\_to\\_3book.pdf](http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/downloads/pdf/birth_to_3book.pdf)

Three, Four and Five Year Olds

[http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/downloads/zip/3-5\\_perf\\_stands.zip](http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/downloads/zip/3-5_perf_stands.zip)

Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Standards

<http://www.firn.edu/doe/earlylearning/perform.htm>

#### Approved Curricula

A framework is **a philosophical structure** which can be used to facilitate the alliance of practices with performance standards. The coalition recognizes adherence to an educational framework as an indicator of high-quality early education programming. The **research-based developmentally appropriate** curriculum frameworks currently recognized by this coalition are:

Creative Curriculum®;

Beyond Centers and Circle Time Series;

High/Scope®;

La Petite Academy – Journey

Montessori\*

#### Approved curriculum (ELC reviewed Pre-K only)

High Reach® Passports for Pre-K

Houghton Mifflin Pre-K

InvestiGator Club®,

Let's Begin with the Letter People® for Pre-K

\* The name *Montessori* is not legally protected, and can be used by anyone, for any purpose; it is vital that anyone searching for authentic Montessori practices be aware of this. Check [www.montessori.edu](http://www.montessori.edu) for more information.

#### Materials and resources Curriculum:

Within an appropriate framework, there are materials and resources that can enhance and augment developmentally appropriate practices. The materials and resources currently recognized by this coalition are *approved as curriculum*:

Building Language for Literacy®, DLM Early Childhood Express®, Doors to Discovery®, Funshine Express™, Opening the World of Learning™, WEE Learn®



## **Curriculum Review Request Process**

If assistance is required in determining if a curriculum meets State recommended curriculum criteria to add that curricula to this list, the Coalition invites providers of school readiness services, and VPK and curriculum publishers to enter into the curriculum review process.

### **Process to Apply for a Curriculum Review:**

If you feel a curriculum can effectively demonstrate that it meets the curriculum criteria, as described in the Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum **Guidelines**, please submit a response addressing specifically how each guideline (1-7e) is supported by your curriculum. Submit it to:

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County  
6301 NW 5<sup>th</sup> Way, Suite 3400  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

The Coalition's Curriculum Review Team will convene annually to review curriculum review requests. They will notify the requesting party, in writing, of the status of their application and any additional steps required to complete the process.

### **Curriculum Review Team Members:**

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County System Partners Committee members which may include representatives from Broward County Child Care Licensing, Broward Community College, Broward County Public Schools, Family Central, Inc., Children's Services Council of Broward, community early care and education providers, Nova Southeastern University and the Agency for Workforce Innovation.