

Building a Foundation for School Success

Planning for High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs



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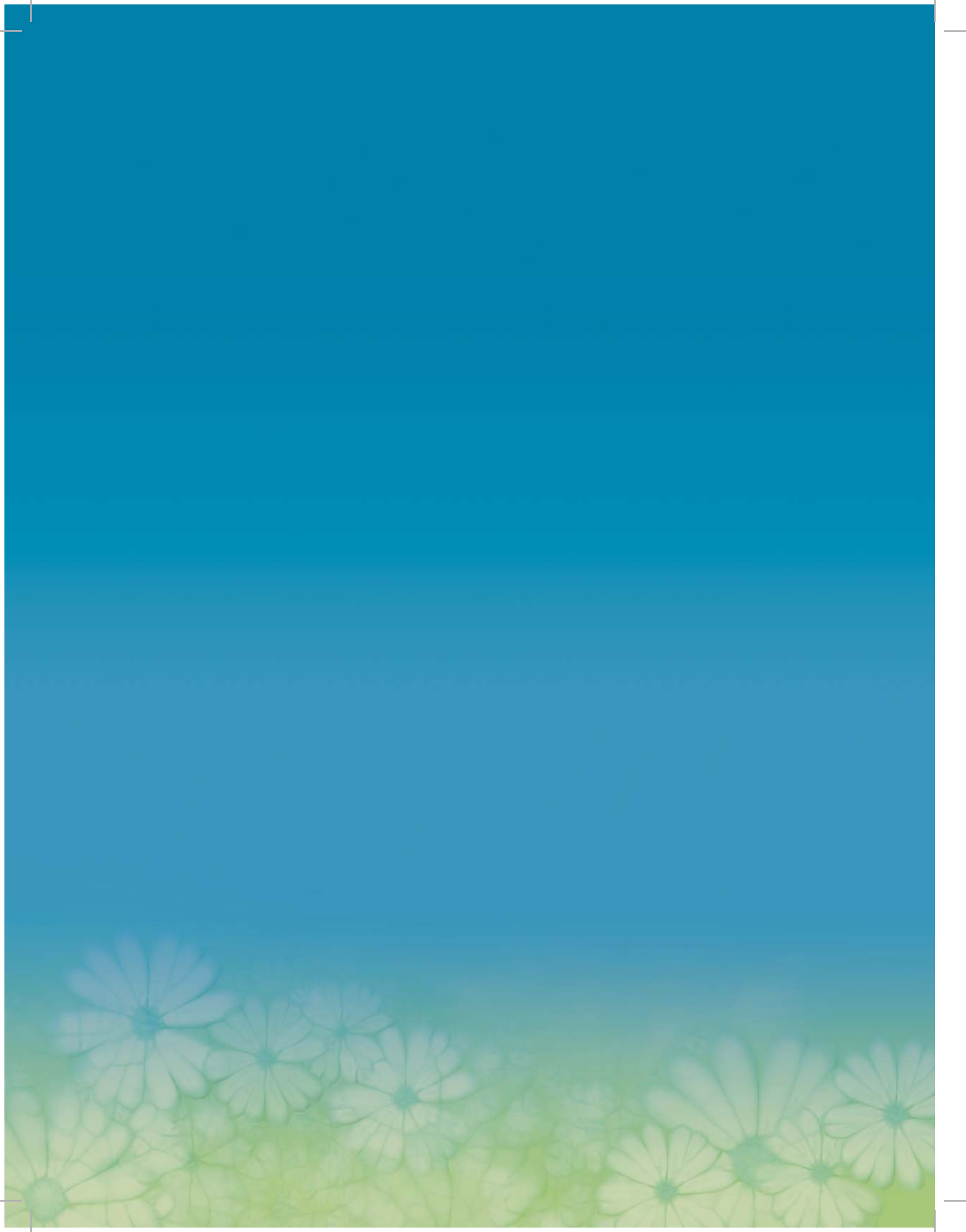


Table of Contents

Foreword.....	5
Introduction	6
SECTION I – Essential Elements of a High Quality Prekindergarten Program....	7
Facilities.....	7
Staff.....	8
Program Leadership	8
Group Size	8
Curriculum and Instruction	8
Assessment.....	9
Family Engagement.....	9
SECTION II – Children as Learners.....	10
Principles of Child Development.....	10
Developmental Milestones for Three and Four Year Old Children.....	13
Characteristics of Prekindergarten Learners.....	15
Play is Active Learning	18
Outdoor Play	18
SECTION III – The Learner-Centered Environment.....	19
Setting Up Classroom Learning Centers.....	19
Block Center	20
Dramatic Play	21
Literacy.....	22
Creative Arts	23
Math & Manipulatives.....	24
Sensory	25
Science & Discovery	26
Writing Center	27
SECTION IV – Key Domains of Children’s Development	28
Domain 1: Approaches to Learning	28
Domain 2: Physical Development and Health	28
Domain 3: Social and Emotional Development	28
Domain 4: Communication, Language, and Literacy.....	28
Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World	28
Additional Resources	28

Table of Contents *(continued)*

SECTION V – Curriculum and Instruction	29
Instruction in Prekindergarten Classrooms	30
Roles of Teachers.....	30
Curriculum Requirements.....	31
Preschool Children with Disabilities	31
Emergent Bilinguals.....	32
Integrating Instruction Across Domains	33
Trip to the Bakery	33
Routines and Transitions.....	37
Considerations for Planning	38
SECTION VI – Dimensions of Assessment.....	39
Types of Assessment	39
SECTION VII – Professional Development.....	41
Professional Development Resources	41
APPENDIX 1 – Additional Resources Supporting Best Practices in Prekindergarten	44
APPENDIX 2 – New York State Education Department Office of Early Learning Health & Safety Checklist for Prekindergarten Program	47
APPENDIX 3 – Suggested Classroom Equipment & Materials	49
APPENDIX 4 – Emergent Bilinguals: Requirements & Resources.....	52
APPENDIX 5 – Annotated Bibliography of Additional Early Learning Resources.....	54

Foreword

Early childhood education is increasingly being supported as a means to provide all children an equitable opportunity to succeed in their educational careers and in life. In the first few years of life, 700 neural connections form every second in the brain¹. Children begin to form relationships and their identities very early in life. Therefore, we must help build a strong educational foundation where children form their identity as learners. In order to do this, school systems, teachers, and community members must build strong foundational relationships and promote high expectations for children and their families. Young children who are engaged in school are more likely to succeed academically and are more likely to complete their formal education as they grow older.

In 2006 the New York State Board of Regents adopted a policy statement entitled Early Education for Student Achievement in a Global Community. The core beliefs of this policy are summarized by the following excerpt:

Early childhood education for all children ages birth through grade three is an integrated system designed to ensure that each child receives a healthy start and attains the skills and concepts to have a successful academic experience in developmentally-appropriate programs. Components of the system include standards based programs that start early, instruction by highly qualified persons and an environment that coordinates comprehensive services and provides information and support to families.

Planning for High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs reflects the commitment of the New York State Education Department to continue to work toward increasing the availability of high-quality prekindergarten programs. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to those responsible for planning and implementing prekindergarten programs for three- and four-year old children. It provides a framework for teachers and others who work with young children to create environments and develop curricula, instruction, and assessment strategies that support children as learners. It is based on the recognition that teachers need many and varied opportunities to nurture and refine their craft in order to respond effectively to the diverse needs of the children with whom they will interact during their teaching careers.



¹Center on the Developing Child (2007). The Science of Early Childhood Development (In Brief). Retrieved from www.developingchild.harvard.edu.

Introduction

Planning for High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs is designed to inform and support the work of teachers, administrators, and program developers who are responsible for assuring that prekindergarten programs provide children with the foundational skills needed to master the challenges of Kindergarten and beyond. It outlines the characteristics and expectations of a high-quality prekindergarten program and reinforces the idea that children's success in achieving the State's learning standards begins during the early years. This guidance may serve as a hands-on resource for teachers, as a self-assessment guide for administrators, and as a planning tool for staff developers.

This guidance serves as a companion document to other curricula and assessment materials developed by the Department and State partners. These include the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core, the Core Body of Knowledge, the New York State Early Learning Guidelines, and the Developmentally Appropriate Practice Briefs. Appendix 1 provides a description of and links to each of these additional resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Planning for High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs is based on the same guiding principles that were used in the development of the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core.

1. All children are capable of learning, achieving and making developmental progress. Learning standards are intended for all children regardless of economic, linguistic, and cultural differences or physical, learning, and emotional challenges.
2. Children develop at different rates and each child is unique in his/her own development, growth, and acquisition of skills. Appropriate and reasonable supports and accommodation must be provided to enable all children to succeed.
3. Children are active learners. A primary approach to learning is through purposeful play. Intentional planning promotes rich learning experiences that invite participation, involve multiple contexts, and engage the senses that help children explore their environment.
4. Early learning and development are multi-dimensional. Children's learning is integrated and occurs simultaneously across all domains, which are interrelated and interactive with one another.
5. Children learn in the context of interactions and relationships with family members, caregivers, teachers, and other children in their immediate environment and in their community.
6. The family is a significant contributor to children's lifelong learning and development. Actively engaging parents in the early education of their children is essential to children's success in the elementary classroom and later learning.
7. Learning standards may be used as tools to empower parents, teachers, and caregivers to better support and enhance young children's learning and development.
8. Learning standards acknowledge, respect, and embrace children's rich backgrounds, their heritage, cultures, and linguistic differences.
9. The content of learning standards is guided by research and effective practice to strengthen instruction and educational experiences across all settings.

Essential Elements of a High-Quality Prekindergarten Program

Attending a high-quality prekindergarten program can have a positive effect on a child's future as a learner. Standards of quality emanate from beliefs about the nature of the young child as they grow, develop, and learn (see Section II Children as Learners). The goals and expectations for children who participate in standards-based, high-quality programs are derived from these beliefs. Additional standards of quality may be articulated by a program's funding source, accreditation requirements, or regulatory authority, including provisions governing programs for children who have special needs or Emergent Bilinguals who speak a language other than English. The Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) provides information and tools to design, manage, and assess linguistically and culturally responsive prekindergarten programs at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>. Successful programs are those that establish a process for ongoing program evaluation and self-study to document and guide movement toward achievement of the goals and objectives of the program.

Prekindergarten programs for three- and four-year old children need to incorporate the below-listed universally recognized standards in their design.

Facilities

Indoor and outdoor spaces must be designed to protect the safety, health, and well-being of children and adults. The first measure of quality for any facility is that it meets basic health and safety criteria. The specific health and safety criteria that apply to a program may vary based on locality, program sponsorship, and applicable licensing/registration requirements. Appendix 2 provides a basic Health and Safety Checklist that may be used by teachers, administrators, and program planners to assess existing and potential sites. This checklist is not all inclusive, and its use does not replace any local, State, or federal requirements that may apply to a program.

Classroom and outdoor spaces allow appropriate organization, movement, and interaction between the children and the adults. Ideally, bathrooms with child-sized utilities are available in or adjacent to the classroom to accommodate toileting, hand washing, and tooth brushing. It is desirable to have a sink available in each classroom to support children's frequent need to use water; such as for hand washing after using "messy" materials or after sneezing, coughing, or nose-blowing.

Classrooms and play grounds are age-appropriate and respond to how children develop and learn. Both indoor and outdoor spaces need to adhere to regulatory agency space requirements. The equipment and materials that support learning are easily adapted to the diverse interests, needs, and abilities of the children and follow a developmental trajectory. Individuals with special needs have easy access to the indoor and outdoor spaces and the materials that they include.

Classrooms are arranged into distinct learning centers including dramatic play, blocks, creative arts (includes art and music), literacy (includes book and writing), math and manipulatives, sensory (sand and water), and science and discovery. Furniture in the learning centers is child-sized and appropriate for the age group. For example, when children are sitting at the table the children's feet should rest on the floor and their elbows rest comfortably on the tables. Shelves in learning



Essential Elements of a High-Quality Prekindergarten Program

centers allow children to easily access the materials and are height appropriate, allowing teachers to visually supervise all areas of the classroom (see Section III The Learner Centered Environment).

Staff

In quality prekindergarten classrooms, teachers, paraprofessionals (teacher assistants and teacher aides), and other staff have an in-depth knowledge of child development and how young children learn. Research documents the positive correlation between the experience and training of staff and the quality of a program. Staff persons have access to ongoing professional development opportunities to increase their understanding of child development and learning, developmentally appropriate instructional practices, and the New York State prekindergarten learning standards.

Teachers in public school prekindergarten programs must possess certification for teaching in the early childhood grades (Birth-Grade 2). It is most beneficial for

staff members to be proficient in the home languages of their students and families.

Additionally, teachers in community-based organizations must meet the qualifications of the licensing, regulating, and/or funding agency. For State-funded prekindergarten programs, teachers in community-based organizations must have a three-to-five year plan for obtaining Early Childhood certification (Birth-Grade 2), and there must be a supervisor who is certified on-site during the hours of prekindergarten operation.

Program administrators have administrative training as well as experience working with prekindergarten children. Provisions are made for all staff to receive ongoing support and supervision through a dynamic process of professional development and performance evaluation.

Program Leadership

In high-quality prekindergarten programs, leaders demonstrate a commitment to developmentally appropriate instructional practices and are a source of ongoing support to the classroom staff. Leaders ensure that teachers have the materials and knowledge necessary to provide an enriching experience. Leaders observe classrooms to provide feedback, plan professional development opportunities based on those observations, and design policies that support high-quality prekindergarten experiences. See Appendix 1 for more information on program leadership.

Group Size

The ratio of children to adults may vary slightly depending upon the funding source and/or regulatory oversight. The maximum group size for State-funded prekindergarten programs is 20 students. Classes of 18 or fewer students must be staffed by a teacher and one paraprofessional (teaching assistant or teacher's aide). Classes of 19 or 20 students must be staffed by a teacher and two paraprofessionals.

Curriculum and Instruction

Decisions about research-based curricula and instruction for prekindergarten programs are informed by an understanding of general developmental patterns; knowledge of children's individual characteristics;



Essential Elements of a High-Quality Prekindergarten Program

awareness of the cultural, linguistic, and social contexts that shape the child's experience; learning standards, which outline expectations for what children should know and be able to do; and the scope and sequence of each content area.

Curriculum content may evolve from the learning standards, observations of children's interests, questions that children ask, or shared experiences within the natural environment. Additionally, teachers inform content based on formative and summative observation data they have compiled. Learning experiences for children include a variety of concrete activities presented in meaningful contexts. These experiences are integrated across content and developmental areas and augmented with a variety of diverse, linguistically and culturally responsive activities and materials that may be adapted to meet the unique needs of individual children (see Section V Curriculum and Instruction).

Assessment

Assessment occurs within the context of children's everyday experience as they interact with the people and materials in the

learning environment. Beginning with the information and observations shared by family members as the child moves from home to the school, such as home language, assessment continues as teachers devise a plan for keeping track of children's progress. Assessments and the subsequent plan are to be linguistically and culturally responsive. Tracking children's progress includes ongoing communication with the family and with other professionals who work with the child (see Section VI Dimensions of Assessment).

Family Engagement

Family members play a critical role in supporting the growth and development of their children. In high quality prekindergarten programs, families are viewed as partners in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program. Opportunities are available for parents and guardians to participate actively in the education of their children; in decision making related to the program; and in other activities that address their roles as parents, workers, and citizens.

Where space permits, it is desirable that an area be designated for parent meetings, training sessions, and informal gatherings. Schools create environments conducive to the active involvement of families by planning ways to establish rapport, by responding to opportunities to connect families with needed services, and by providing a variety of options for families to become partners with schools. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), requires communication with families in their indicated preferred language. For linguistically and culturally responsive family and community engagement strategies, see <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp>.



Children as Learners

The purpose of this section, Children as Learners, is to provide those who plan, implement, and administer prekindergarten programs with information to help them understand the uniqueness of three- and four-year olds. This section includes the characteristics of young learners, principles of child development, a description of play as active learning, and some typical behaviors of young learners and their teachers.

Principles of Child Development

Development is a combination of maturation and learning. Substantial research and reflection on good practice suggests that development in young children:

- occurs simultaneously in all areas of the child's development—social, emotional, linguistic, intellectual, and physical
- is interdependent—each area of development affects the others;
- occurs in sequential stages;
- progresses from simple to complex;
- occurs at different rates for different children; and
- is critically impacted by a child's environment and experience.

It is crucial that teachers of three- and four-year olds understand these aspects of development and their implications for teaching and learning. Teachers need to know

what to do and how and when to do it. It is equally important that teachers be able to articulate why they have made a particular decision or employed a specific strategy. The initial step in this process is for teachers to have firsthand knowledge of the normative and predictable aspects of child development, as well as behavioral characteristics that are observable during the early years. This knowledge guides teachers as they undertake the second step in the process; to get to know each child as an individual through ongoing interaction and assessment techniques, such as those described in **Section VI Dimensions of Assessment**.

In classrooms, teachers' knowledge of how children develop and learn is used to inform practice. Teachers' decisions about how best to support growth and learning during the early years are guided by principles of child development derived from the predictable sequence of human development. The chart below reflects key principles of child development and what is known about the strengths, interests, and linguistic and cultural backgrounds of children. Included with each principle are implications for teaching that help ensure that prekindergarten programs are providing meaningful learning experiences for young children.



Section II

Children as Learners

Child Development Principles	Implications for Teaching
The physical, social and emotional, cognitive, and language domains of child development are interrelated. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan learning experiences that help students make connections across domains (e.g., language development has an effect on social interaction; physical ability affects cognitive development). ■ For Emergent Bilinguals, ensure that all learning experiences support each child's home language in addition to English.
Development occurs in a relatively orderly sequence, with later abilities, skills, and knowledge building on those already acquired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organize the learning environment in accordance with knowledge of child development. ■ Provide materials that children can use alone (puzzles, books), alongside others (sand or water play, painting at an easel), or as part of a group (dramatic play, blocks). ■ Provide materials with varying degree of difficulty, such as simple and complex puzzles, and manipulatives that are both easy and difficult to assemble. ■ For Emergent Bilinguals, ensure that the home language is incorporated into the learning environment.
There are variations in the sequence of development from child to child; individual children may develop more rapidly in one area than in another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Individualize the curriculum to reflect each child's varied strengths, needs, interests, temperaments, learning styles, cultures, English language abilities, and home language abilities for Emergent Bilinguals. ■ Allow children to work at their own pace and provide multiple points of entry into projects and activities.
Optimal periods exist for certain types of development and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide opportunities for children to work with materials that challenge them at their current level of development, and, for Emergent Bilinguals, in both their home language and the English language.
Development proceeds in predictable directions toward greater complexity, organization, and internalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Classrooms should be equipped with materials at varying skill levels that are rotated to allow for greater complexity of development. ■ Plan activities to allow children to practice simpler skills prior to introducing activities that require more complex skills. For example: allow children to run, jump, hop, and skip prior to introducing activities that require more coordination, such as walking on a balance beam or riding a two- or three-wheel bike. ■ For Emergent Bilinguals, materials and activities should reflect an understanding of first and second language acquisition while providing rich opportunities for both home language and English language development.

Continued next page...

Children as Learners

Continued from page 11

Child Development Principles	Implications for Teaching
Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social, cultural, and linguistic contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create a classroom environment that welcomes, respects, and celebrates diversity among students, including language diversity. ■ Plan curriculum opportunities that take into account the increasing diversity of language and cultural contexts of young children and their families. ■ For Emergent Bilinguals, in addition to English, encourage the development of each child's home language.
Children are active learners, drawing on direct physical and social experience, as well as culturally transmitted knowledge, to construct their own understanding of the world around them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan curriculum opportunities for children that provide firsthand opportunities for social interaction; physical manipulation of materials; observation of objects, including natural phenomena; questioning; reflecting; drawing conclusions; and the use of multiple languages.
Development and learning result from the interaction between biological maturation and the environment, which includes both the physical and social worlds in which children live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Structure flexible learning experiences that respond to ongoing changes in the environment and children's growing ability to work cooperatively within the group. ■ For Emergent Bilinguals, plan appropriately, considering the stage of each student's home language and English acquisition processes
Development advances when children have opportunities to practice newly acquired skills, as well as when they experience a challenge just beyond the level of their present mastery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide the supportive environment that children need to transfer existing knowledge to new situations (including the use of home languages), practice new skills, and try out more complex experiences. ■ Change the environment to reflect the current topic of study or them. ■ Plan activities that challenge children just beyond their skill mastery level, including each Emergent Bilingual's home & English language levels
Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and learning and different ways of representing what they know.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify children's strengths, interests, learning styles, and home languages. ■ Plan a variety of experiences to help them use their preferred modes of learning and language, and represent what they know and are able to do as they paint, draw, build structures, engage in role play, or respond to music. ■ Extend learning experiences beyond the classroom to the outdoor play area.

Section II

Children as Learners

Developmental Milestones for Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Developmental milestones are a set of skills that most children accomplish by a certain age. While these milestones typically occur within a certain age range, the development of each child, including the home language and English language development of an

Emergent Bilingual child, is unique. By looking at different developmental milestones, teachers are able to understand how children typically develop and plan more appropriately for individual children. The following chart highlights key developmental milestones within each domain of children's development.

Domain Area	Three Year Old	Four Year Old
Social/Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Copies actions of adults and friends ■ Shows affection for friends ■ Understands "mine," "his," and "hers" ■ Shows wide range of emotions ■ May be upset by changes in routine ■ Starts taking turns when playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plays "mom" and "dad" ■ Cooperates with other children ■ Is more creative with make believe play ■ Enjoys doing new things ■ Talks about what she likes and what she is interested in ■ Would rather play with other children than alone
Communication/ Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talks well enough for strangers to understand him most of the time ■ Asks many questions ■ Can name most things familiar to him ■ Carries on a conversation, using 2 to 3 sentences ■ Follows instructions with 2 or 3 steps ■ Answers simple questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tells stories ■ Knows some basic rules of grammar, such as using pronouns like "he" and "she" ■ Knows first and last name and can tell you ■ Sings songs or says a poem from memory (Like "Wheels on the Bus" or "Itsy Bitsy Spider") ■ Participates in stories about a variety of topics
Cognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Builds towers of 6 or more blocks ■ Understands what "two" means ■ Copies a circle with a crayon or pencil ■ Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts ■ Turns pages of a book one at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plays board and/or card games ■ Understands the idea of counting ■ Draws a person with some body parts ■ Starts to copy some shapes and letters ■ Tells you what is going to happen next in a story or book ■ Understands the idea of "same" and "different"

Continued next page...

Section II

Children as Learners

Continued from page 13

Domain Area	Three Year Old	Four Year Old
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Climbs well ■ Runs easily ■ Walks up and down stairs one foot on each step ■ Has basic ability to kick and throw a ball ■ Stacks, sorts, and strings items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hops and stands on one foot up to 2 seconds ■ Catches a bounced ball most of the time ■ Pours, cuts with supervision, and mashes own food ■ Eats with utensils ■ Pedals consistently when riding a tricycle
Approaches to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pretends and uses imagination during play ■ Wants to do favorite activities over and over again ■ Can remain engaged in an activity for at least 5 minutes ■ Chooses one activity over another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attempts multiple ways to solve a problem ■ Demonstrates willingness to try new experiences ■ Seeks assistance when something seems unclear ■ Maintains lengthened focus on a task for up to 10 minutes.



Section II

Children as Learners

Characteristics of Prekindergarten Learners

Please note that the classroom practices suggested for three-year-old children are also age appropriate in classrooms of four-year-old children.

Characteristics of Prekindergarten Learners	Classroom Practices for Three Year Olds	Classroom Practices for Four Year Olds
Prekindergarten learners are concrete thinkers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> opportunities to develop background knowledge opportunities to learn about objects and how they work through hands-on exploration activities talk about what comes next in the daily schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> opportunities to figure things out for themselves and solve problems add to whole group circle time age-appropriate calendar activities, such as predicting the day of the week, counting the days of the month, predicting what number comes next and how to write the number as children are developmentally ready for those concepts/skills
Prekindergarten learners use "make-believe" as part of their everyday living.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide open-ended materials (e.g., large boxes, square/rectangular pieces of fabric) provide both male and female gender-related clothing items in dramatic play change classroom learning areas to coincide with the classroom theme/topic of study provide a variety of props that reflect children's daily lives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> add puppets or flannel board pieces to extend stories use books to extend play provide opportunities for children to re-create life experiences in the dramatic play area (for example, after a trip to the firehouse, let them use recyclable materials to create a fire truck that is based on their observations made during the field trip)
Prekindergarten learners are curious and interested in their surroundings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a visually appealing learning environment provide well-stocked learning centers that are labeled with both pictures and words create a child-centered learning environment, making sure that all materials that are accessible to children are child appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide displays that are interactive/purposeful (e.g., a word wall that focuses on new words for the theme/topic study that are taken down and placed in the writing center at the conclusion of the study)
Prekindergarten learners begin to have an increasing attention span.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set realistic expectations for whole group activities (for example, circle time is interactive and no longer than 10 minutes) provide small group experiences that are engaging and hands on and that end when there is a lack of interest shown by the children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide opportunities for projects to extend over several days to sustain four-year-old children's increasing interest in their work as children become more engaged, extend interactive whole group learning experiences

Continued next page...

Section II

Children as Learners

Continued from page 15

Prekindergarten learners begin to carry out tasks to completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ allow children opportunities to select the play area in which they are interested, the materials that they want to use, and ample time to use the materials ■ allow children, through the use of a center management system, to change centers, if allowable, when they are no longer interested in the center that they are currently in ■ build extra time into the daily schedule to allow children to successfully put away materials ■ allow age appropriate wait time when children are completing tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide learning experiences that span several days ■ allow children's ideas to guide instruction (for example, when completing a study when the topic/theme is community helpers, have the children decide what community helpers they want to study, then develop a plan of how to study those that they picked) ■ provide small group activities that are based on skill level and allow the activities to span more than one day
Prekindergarten learners can work independently, at times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide 1/3 of the daily schedule for choice time ■ develop a center management system to allow children to choose centers that they are interested in ■ set up learning experiences during which children can work alone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide daily quiet activities that are targeted at a particular skill of an individual child (for example, during a relaxation period, the children may assemble name puzzles) ■ when children first arrive in the morning, provide an individual activity (e.g., a sequencing activity)
Prekindergarten learners demonstrate originality, creativity, and imagination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide opportunities to use age-appropriate art materials independently to create original works of art ■ provide open-ended questions to children to expand creativity and imagination ■ during choice time, move throughout the room, join in with children's play in learning centers, and follow their lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide book-making materials to allow children to create their own stories ■ provide additional age-appropriate props in all of the learning centers, in order to expand creativity ■ provide a question-of-the-day and allow children to use their imaginations to answer the question
Prekindergarten learners accept new challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide new materials that are just above their current developmental level in order to present a challenge to the student ■ provide age-appropriate jobs ■ recognize the temperaments of individual children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide interactive computer software that allows children to practice skills that they are mastering ■ add more materials to classroom learning areas to encourage children to incorporate new materials into their play schemas (for example, additional unit blocks to enable children to make larger structures)
Prekindergarten learners develop self-control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide opportunities for children to participate in small and whole group activities ■ set up well-defined learning centers with expectations of how many children each center can accommodate ■ provide activities during which children have to use self-control, for example, taking turns using equipment on the playgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide social stories during whole group experiences, during which children have to discuss the characters' use of self-control ■ provide opportunities for the children to make decisions (for example, what game should we play on the playground today?) ■ encourage children to plan what materials they will use and how they will use them when going to a learning center during choice time

Section II

Children as Learners

Prekindergarten learners develop pre-reading skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide access to age-appropriate books, including board books and books on other media platforms ■ model book-handling skills ■ repeat read-aloud sessions ■ engage in conversations after read-aloud sessions to support children's thoughts about the story ■ rotate books to coincide with the theme/topic of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ make opportunities to retell or dramatize stories ■ ask clarifying open-ended questions during read-aloud sessions to allow children to expand their answers ■ use books to investigate the theme/topic of study
Prekindergarten learners begin to develop control of their bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide planned and spontaneous daily music and movement experiences ■ provide open-ended gross motor experiences daily, indoors and/or outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide activities during which children have to use their bodies at different speeds (for example, running in place versus running on the playground) ■ provide obstacles courses that challenge children to move in many different ways
Prekindergarten children become more confident in the use of written and spoken language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide opportunities to hear new vocabulary words used in context ■ provide time for children to engage in conversations in order to expand vocabulary ■ provide developmentally appropriate exposure to letters and letter sounds; for example, through the use of individual and peer names ■ allow time to draw or "write" freely, recognizing that scribbling and mark making are an initial stage in the writing process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide opportunities to use language in a variety of ways (for example, to explain and seek information) ■ plan opportunities for letter and word learning to take place during shared reading and writing activities ■ create opportunities for children to see letters in many different contexts ■ provide experiences that assist children in connecting word sounds with word names and symbols

Section II

Children as Learners

Play is Active Learning

Play is a critical part of the growth and development of children ages birth through eight years. Children are learning when they explore, discover, investigate, role play, and use tools and materials in creative ways. Play is closely linked to cognitive, social, emotional, language, and physical development. It is the chief vehicle that children use to express themselves verbally and nonverbally, to draw on past experiences, and to use their perceptual-motor abilities. Through play, children can test ideas, develop self-regulation skills, be creative, and learn about the world. Young children's play may be characterized in many different ways. In the chart below², play is described from a social interaction point of view. This framework reflects young

children's ability to engage in more than one kind of play activity as they move freely from one activity to the next. At any given time, a group of children may be observed engaging in any of the behaviors described below. It is important to recognize that children in any group will be at various stages in play and social development. Some children will show characteristics of different stages, depending on the context of their play and their cultural background. A child may be observed building an elaborate block apartment building with one or more peers and playing out the arrival of firefighters and the rescue of victims. The same child may later watch from the sidelines as others climb on the jungle gym. It is expected that children will move toward more frequent engagement in cooperative or socio-dramatic play.

Play Behavior	Description
Onlooker behavior	Playing by watching or conversing with other children engaged in play activities.
Solitary, independent play	Playing by oneself.
Parallel play	Playing, even in the middle of a group, while remaining engrossed in one's own activity. Children playing parallel to each other sometimes use each other's toys, but always maintain their independence.
Associative play	Sharing materials and talking to each other, but not coordinating play objectives or interests.
Cooperative play	Organizing themselves into roles with specific goals in mind (e.g., assigning the roles of doctor, nurse, and patient when playing hospital).

Outdoor Play

Although outdoor play may traditionally be thought of as play during which less learning takes place, research continues to reveal that intentional, well-designed outdoor play can greatly contribute to children's learning and development, including language development³. For example, cognitively, children are exposed to new concepts and vocabulary outside. Socially and emotionally, children are more likely to use their imaginations and build self-confidence as they actively play and interact with nature. More explicitly, the physical benefits of children playing outside are that they get exercise

and are able to move freely while learning and interacting with the environment⁴. Some suggested activities include⁵:

- Having a picnic
- Going on a nature walk to collect various items; invite multilingual family members along to help name items in the children's various home languages
- Using magnifying glasses to examine aspects of nature
- Counting and collecting different types of leaves and rocks
- Using items that are not normally used outdoors, like paint brushes and easels

² Adapted from: Back-to-Basics: Play in Early Childhood by Jill Englebright Fox, Ph.D.

³ http://outdoorclassroomproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Child-Initiated_Experiences_in_the_Nature_Explore_Classroom.pdf

^{4 & 5} <http://www.teachpreschool.org/2009/10/preschoolers-should-go-outside-everyday/>

The Learner-Centered Environment

The classroom is a place where children are actively engaged in creating meaning. The room itself and the spaces or learning centers in the room should invite children to explore, converse, inquire, build, and create individually and as part of the classroom community. Teachers design classrooms so that they serve as extensions of their responsibility to shape and foster learning.

Even before they enter school, children have learned that different environments require different behaviors. For example, a four-year-old child knows that a ride in the car requires climbing into a car seat and buckling up. A visit to grandparents may mean behaving differently from the way that the child behaves at home. Teachers build upon such prior learning when they arrange their classrooms and equip learning centers. They must design the environment so that the arrangement of centers in the room and the array of available materials and supplies help children to understand the kinds of behaviors and interactions expected in each area.

A quality classroom is arranged so that children are able to:

- Establish trust and cooperate with others
- Feel safe and secure enough to take learning and language risks
- Develop independence through making choices and being responsible for cleaning up

- Focus on what they are doing and stay engaged in their work
- Acquire skills and concepts as they select and use materials

Part of the instructional task of teachers is that of manager and decision maker. Among the most important decisions made by the teaching team are those pertaining to the design of the environment. In the role of designer of the environment, the teaching team:

- Sends specific, concrete messages to children about what is expected and valued
- Influences learning by the inclusion of specific materials and equipment
- Supports and extends curriculum and instruction
- Builds a sense of community
- Validates, honors, and nurtures the children's diverse cultures and languages
- Creates an aesthetically pleasing climate
- Attends to the health and safety of the children in the group

Classrooms should allow children to feel that:

- This is a safe and comfortable place.
- I belong here and I am valued.
- I can make friends and share.
- I know what I'm expected to do.
- I can do interesting work here.
- I can find what I need and put things back where they belong.
- I can make choices.
- I am challenged to try new things.
- I can use and share all of my languages.

Setting Up Classroom Learning Centers

As prekindergarten teachers design learning centers, it is important that they:

- Are mindful of the varying strengths, skills and abilities, languages, and developmental levels of individual students
- Are intentional and purposeful in the selection of materials and activities that they provide
- Plan concrete, hands-on activities for student-directed learning in each learning center



Section III

The Learner-Centered Environment

- Eliminate worksheet and rote activities
- Plan for meaningful interactions and opportunities for extended conversations with students in all languages
- Allow sufficient time for students to self-select learning center activities, become engaged, and to explore and experiment with the materials and activities that they choose (approximately one-third of the daily schedule)
- Provide space for displays of children's work

The following photos are examples of learning center arrangement and are paired by tips to help teachers as they design their classrooms. Teachers should tailor center set-up to the materials and equipment available in individual classrooms while making the learning center developmentally appropriate for the children in their classroom. If there are various languages spoken in the classroom, families can help label the center areas in the languages spoken at home. For many languages, there can be a rotation throughout the year.

Block Center

Teachers ensure that the blocks and building center offers:

- Adequate space, perhaps with a carpet or rug, located away from foot traffic, with enough space for building substantial structures
- Shelving to hold sets of several different types of blocks and building materials (e.g., wooden blocks, connecting blocks, foam unit blocks, multiple shapes of blocks), labeled to facilitate clean up when done
- Props, materials, and accessories that extend block and building play (e.g., figurines, vehicles,
- Selections of books and texts about building and landscapes, rotated to link to specific themes and/or learning goals
- Art and craft materials and supplies for children to plan and create additional structures and accessories



The Learner-Centered Environment

Dramatic Play

Teachers ensure that the dramatic play center offers:

- Space for up to four children in a noisy area of the room
- Variety of props for dramatic expression that reflect diversity in gender, culture, and occupations
- Play equipment and furniture that can be moved and converted (e.g., table and chairs, shelving, kitchen, safety mirror, benches, storage bins etc.)
- Play props and materials that promote dramatic play and role playing (e.g., office equipment, workshop items, puppets, pretend food, dress-up clothes, dolls and figurines, cash register, pretend money, stuffed animals etc.)
- Authentic props and materials (e.g., calculators, writing materials, clipboards, arts/craft materials for making signs and props, coupons, newspapers, etc.)
- Props to extend book experiences, such as flannel boards and pieces, puppets, and other story character figurines to recreate stories or represent experiences
- Multiple text types, including narrative, informational, and other kinds of texts; books with diverse characters and topics; and books at varying levels



Section III

The Learner-Centered Environment

Literacy

Teachers ensure that the literacy center offers:

- A quiet, comfortable, cozy area of the classroom
- Books and texts (about 20) that are on display, forward facing and rotated often according to current interests, topic, and/or theme
- Additional books in labeled bins, at child's eye level, organized by theme or genre
- Multiple text types, including narrative, informational, and other kinds of texts; books with diverse characters, topics and languages; and books at varying levels
- Props to extend book experiences, such as flannel boards and pieces, puppets, and other story character figurines
- Books in multiple formats (e.g., listening on CD, digital books, interactive books, bilingual books)
- Writing materials, such as pencils, markers, crayons, and pens, and materials to write on, such as paper and book making materials; alphabet and numeral strips and stamps
- Word wall depicting topic/theme-based words; common words and rare words with illustrations or depictions, and translations
- Computers/devices with developmentally appropriate games and activities linked to learning goals; scheduled to ensure equity



Section III

The Learner-Centered Environment

Creative Arts

Teachers ensure that the creative arts center offers:

- Dedicated space near a clean-up area
- Multiple work surfaces for individuals and groups (e.g., tables, easels, floor areas)
- Illustrated books and sample art work, at child's eye level, organized by theme or genre, inclusive of multiple art forms, and reflective of the students' home cultures and languages
- Displays of children's art work and storage for ongoing projects
- Variety of drawing, painting, and natural materials for exploring color, form, and texture (e.g., brushes, straws, paint, crayons, different sizes of paper)
- Three-dimensional and tactile objects for sensory exploration and experimentation (e.g., beads, string, modeling clay, rocks, pine cones)
- Props to extend book experiences, such as flannel boards and pieces, puppets, and other story character figurines to recreate stories or represent experiences
- Audio station for listening to different styles of music, including those from students' home cultures and in students' home languages
- Musical props and instruments for exploring dance, music, and sound
- Materials for creating instruments (e.g., boxes, rubber bands, strings)



The Learner-Centered Environment

Math & Manipulatives

Teachers ensure that the math and manipulatives center offers:

- Work spaces for children to work with materials, including tables and floor areas
- Shelving to hold sets of several different types of objects, sorting bins, graph paper, materials for making patterns
- Manipulatives, such as pegs, sorting materials, Cuisenaire rods, nesting and linking cubes, shape patterns, counting beads, measuring tools, scales etc.
- Posted math visual aids, such as number lines (including flat number lines), number lists and representations, calendars, simple graphs, height measurement stick, etc.
- Games and activities: games that rely on counting, puzzles, pattern games, games with dice or number spinners, matching games, math computer games and apps
- Selections of books and texts that feature counting, themes with shape patterns, comparisons



The Learner-Centered Environment

Sensory

Teachers ensure that the sensory center offers:

- Dedicated space near a clean-up area
- Table or area specifically designed for sand, water, or other sensory play
- Smocks to protect clothing from getting wet while at the water table
- Interesting materials that are rotated to provide a variety of sensory and language experiences, such as hay, dirt/mud, sticks, pretend or real grass, oobleck (cornstarch and water), bubbles, or finger paint
- Props to extend play and talk while at the sand table, such as small figurines, cars and trucks, scoops, buckets, paper with scissors for cutting
- Props to extend play and talk while at the water table, such as small water droppers or basters, sink and float materials, colors to add to the water
- Mop, broom, and dust pan for cleaning up spills



The Learner-Centered Environment

Science & Discovery

Teachers ensure that the science and discovery center offers:

- A location near sunlight for growing plants
- Work spaces and tables for individuals and groups to conduct experiments and make observations (e.g., wall space, tables, floor areas)
- Displays and collections of natural objects (e.g., rocks, leaves, sand, dirt, roots) and depictions of science-related topics (e.g., posters, models, graphics, digital displays, videos)
- Variety of tools and materials for using senses, observing, and experimenting (e.g., natural materials, magnifiers, art supplies for recording, measuring devices, trays, droppers etc.)
- Selections of books and texts about science; rotated to link to specific themes and/or learning goals (e.g., earth and space, living things, physical properties)
- Selections of games and puzzles that are related to science areas, such as healthy bodies, animals, weather, living things, space, movement, etc.
- Paper and writing materials to draw or record observations



Section III

The Learner-Centered Environment

Writing Center

Teachers ensure that the writing center offers:

- A table and chairs to accommodate at least two children
- Variety of writing implements that include markers, crayons, colored pencils, elementary pencils, and regular pencils
- Variety of sizes of lined and unlined paper
- Upper-case and lower-case alphabet stamps and ink pads
- Word wall depicting topic/theme-based words; common words and rare words with illustrations or depictions, and translations reflected by children in the classroom
- A variety of ABC books that allow children to expand vocabulary while identifying upper- and lower-case letters
- Environmental print, such as fronts of cereal boxes or snack boxes, that are gathered together in a book for students to use
- Word strips with a picture and a word that coincide with the current or previous themes, bound together for children to use as a sample
- Materials for making simple books, including a stapler or paper fasteners
- Clipboards with paper and pencils attached or white boards with dry erase markers and an eraser so children can take the clipboards to write around the room
- Letter tiles or magnetic letters for sorting letters



Key Domains of Children's Development

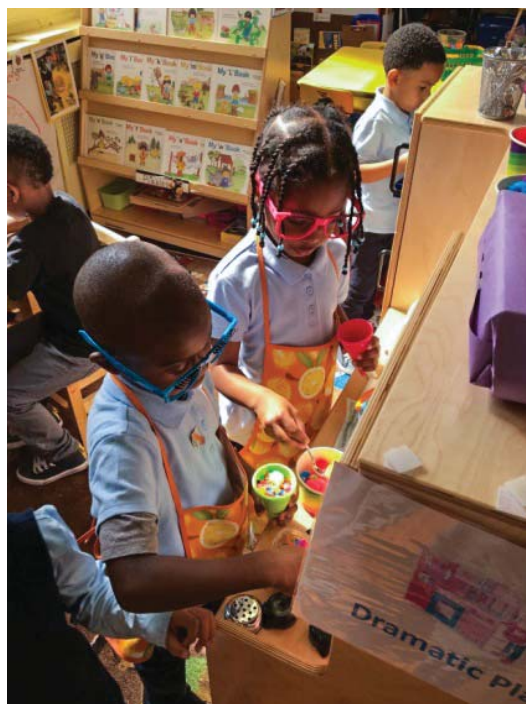
Programs for prekindergarten children in New York State provide an opportunity for the development of skills, abilities, and attitudes that are foundational to children's future school success. Both the New York State Early Learning Guidelines (for children ages birth through five year) and the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (for children aged four years) organize the development of young children into five distinct but interrelated domains. Below is a brief description of each domain:

Domain 1: Approaches to Learning

- How children become involved in learning and acquiring knowledge. Standard areas include: Engagement; Creativity and Imagination; Curiosity and Initiative; and Persistence.

Domain 2: Physical Development and Health

- Children's physical health and ability to engage in daily activities. Standard areas include: Physical Development; Physical Fitness; Health and Well Being; and Health and Safety.



Domain 3: Social and Emotional Development

- The emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in the home, school, and larger community. Standard areas include: Self Concept and Self Awareness; Self-Regulation; Relationships with Others; Accountability; and Adaptability.

Domain 4: Communication, Language, and Literacy

- How children understand, create and communicate meaning. This domain is divided into two parts; Part A – Approaches to Communication and Part B – English Language Arts and Literacy.

Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World

- What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know. This domain includes Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; The Arts; and Technology.

The research and supporting materials for each domain set the context for understanding its connection to how young children learn and develop. The benchmarks and benchmark indicators in each domain represent the standards for what prekindergarten students should know and be able to do in order to be successful learners. Indicators are observable and demonstrate what can be accomplished through the play and active engagement of four year olds within a rich and well-designed environment.

Additional Resources

The New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core - Available at: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/nyslsprek.pdf.

The New York State Early Learning Guidelines – Available at: <http://ccf.ny.gov/files/7813/8177/1285/ELG.pdf>.

Curriculum and Instruction

Instruction in Prekindergarten Classrooms

The overall goal of prekindergarten instruction is to build a foundation for children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. The primary focus of instruction is to provide learning experiences in meaningful contexts and to provide many and varied opportunities for children to: extend their knowledge of facts, concepts, words, and ideas; develop self-help, social, emotional, language, cognitive, and motor skills; explore their feelings about themselves, their peers, and the adults in their immediate environment; and develop positive outlooks on learning, such as curiosity, cooperation, and caring.

Since the adoption of prekindergarten learning standards, educators across New York State are challenged to identify curriculum and instructional strategies that will strengthen children's ability to achieve the standards. In a high-quality prekindergarten program, these strategies are based on knowledge of how children develop and learn, as well as what they already know and what they need to know and be able to do. Planning acknowledges that learning is playful, interactive, interdisciplinary, and connected. It also recognizes and provides for a balance between individual and group needs, between active and quiet times, and between teacher-directed and child-selected activities. Teachers influence what children learn by preparing the

learning environment and providing an array of materials and equipment that students may use to explore, investigate, solve problems, and find answers to their questions.

Roles of Teachers

Instruction includes the deliberate ways that teachers influence what, where, when, how, and with whom children learn. Teachers assume many roles as they design learning environments, arrange materials in a variety of learning centers, and plan daily routines and transitions. As teachers gain awareness of how young children learn, grow, develop, and change, and as they recognize the interdependence between the myriad roles that they assume on a daily basis, they learn how to use each role to inform and enhance their work with children. They also learn to balance these roles in response to the changing needs and interests of the children.

To assist teachers in incorporating linguistically and culturally responsive strategies into all of their roles, see <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/ecd>.

As facilitators and managers:

Teachers plan and orchestrate the availability of a variety of learning experiences. They include a rich array of materials and props in clearly defined learning centers to capture and sustain children's interest. They provide the blocks of time and flexibility in scheduling that children need to explore the learning environment and make choices among the wealth of materials and activities provided in the classroom and outside. They adjust the daily schedule to accommodate a specific theme or project and designate space to display collections or samples of children's work. Teachers are always alert to situations or occurrences that require them to make on-the-spot decisions in regard to redirecting behavior, responding to children's questions, and incorporating materials that challenge children's natural creativity. Teachers arrange the learning environment to influence what and how children learn. They also help children use oral language to negotiate their place in small groups and in the broader classroom community.



Curriculum and Instruction

As they survey children's interactions in the classroom, teachers plan ways to extend children's knowledge and enrich their experiences by:

- adding or rearranging materials to respond to children's expressed needs and interests or their perception of children's needs, capabilities, and interests
- adapting the equipment and materials to accommodate children's special needs
- providing additional experiences that challenge children's understanding of how things work or what things mean
- modeling appropriate oral communication, in English and in the students' home languages
- demonstrating how to use equipment and materials in new and different ways
- working with children one-on-one or in small groups to help them develop skills or understand concepts

As observers:

Teachers are attuned to the flow of the classroom and the engagement of children in small and large groups, as well as individual children. The teacher focuses on behaviors that indicate how children are building on or extending their knowledge of the world. The teacher captures these behaviors in a systematic way by recording anecdotal notes and collecting samples of children's work to review with the children, other adults who work with the children, and the children's families. Teachers also observe and record a variety of behaviors, such as: what activities children select and how often; how children use materials; how children express what they understand; and with whom children interact and how often. The observations and work samples provide ongoing documentation of what children know and are able to do. This documentation informs curriculum development, instruction, and assessment, and helps teachers make decisions regarding how to continually adapt the learning environment to meet the diverse and changing needs of children.

As models and demonstrators:

Teachers are actively engaged in suggesting to children different ways to extend

knowledge, develop skills, and use language as they participate in various learning experiences. Teachers may introduce, to small or large groups, new materials, such as an eggbeater, a new batch of green play dough, or large photographs of animals found in different environments. After a field trip to the zoo, the teacher may have a group meeting to allow the children to talk about what they observed on the trip. As the teacher records their experiences on a chart, the four-year-old children may be asked to point to words that begin with a specific letter or sound. "Let's look for words that begin with the letter L. Yes, lion and leopard both begin with the letter L."

Teachers frequently use precise language to describe what children are doing ("I see that the bridge you are making is wide enough for two cars.") or to help children think about different ways to use words to express feelings ("Did you tell Joshua how it made you feel when he pushed you?"). Teachers also model expected behavior as a way to redirect children's actions. For example, after observing a child hitting a doll, the teacher might gently pick up the doll and place it in a rocking chair, saying "I am very angry that you broke my glasses because they help me see to read. I need you to sit quietly for a little while." When conflicts occur within the group, it may be necessary for an adult to intervene. Teachers may describe what they saw or heard and suggest ways to correct the conflict. "I don't think that James meant to drop the paintbrush on your shoe. Can you help me remind him to put his brush in the paint jar before he moves away from the easel?"

As reflective listeners:

Teachers interact with children on a daily basis and may become active participants or "play partners" as children work in the different learning centers of the classroom. As children pretend to make soup in the dramatic play area, use blocks to reconstruct a building that they saw on a neighborhood walk, or attempt to reproduce the illustrations on the cover of their favorite book, teachers listen receptively and use precise language to describe what children are saying and doing. Teachers use their interactions with children as opportunities to record observations

Curriculum and Instruction

and reflect on ways to modify the learning environment to respond to children's needs and interests.

As nurturers:

Teachers recognize and support children's strengths and interests through positive reinforcement and praise. As they get to know the unique characteristics and abilities of each child, teachers find ways to safeguard the individual child within the group by: allowing children to experience learning at their own pace; encouraging children to explore and make meaning of the different facets of the learning environment; providing opportunities for children to express their ideas and share their experiences with their peers; maintaining a learning environment in which children can thrive because they feel safe, they can express their feelings, and they are respected as important members of the group; encouraging children to participate in cooperative learning experiences when they are ready to become part of the classroom community; and taking advantage of "teachable moments" to extend learning and build bridges to new understandings and to ideas already introduced.



Curriculum Requirements

School districts that operate State-funded prekindergarten programs are expected to select and implement written curricula or curricula frameworks that are evidenced-based (meaning that research has been conducted regarding the relationship between the curriculum and children's learning), as well as developmentally appropriate (meaning that it addresses the key domains of children's development). The written curricula or curricula frameworks selected by a school district must:

- For four-year old students, align with the with the *New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core*;
- For three-year olds students, align with the New York State Early Learning Guidelines; and
- Ensure continuity with the district's Kindergarten-Grade 3 curriculum.

Preschool Children with Disabilities

When implementing prekindergarten curricula, teachers and administrators should be mindful of the needs of individual students. The program should implement appropriate modifications and provide additional supports to enable preschool children with disabilities more effective inclusion in the full range of the program's activities. Preschool children with disabilities need specially designed instruction and related services that are designed to address their disabilities and ensure their participation in age-appropriate activities with their typically developing peers. Each preschool child with a disability has an individualized educational program (IEP), which documents his/her individual goals, supports, and services as determined by his/her needs, strengths, and abilities. These individual supports, accommodations, and services are designed to assist the child in meeting the goals in his/her IEP, as well as in achieving the learning standards. With the appropriate services and supports, children with disabilities can participate in prekindergarten experiences with their nondisabled peers and be held to the same high standards and expectations as those without disabilities.

Curriculum and Instruction

For language-diverse children, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that early interventions evaluations follow current laws and regulations, and are culturally and linguistically appropriate. For more information, see Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Early Intervention Evaluations by Dr. Catherine Crowley, Coordinator of Bilingual/Multicultural Program Focus and Director of the Bilingual Extension Institute at Columbia University's Teachers College at <http://www.leadersproject.org/ceu-courses/culturally-and-linguistically-appropriate-early-intervention-evaluations/>.

Emergent Bilinguals

Multilingualism enhances an individual's, academic, professional, and civic experience, and thus, one's contribution to society. When children are fortunate enough to be raised in multilingual households, honoring and developing their diverse language abilities not only benefits the children themselves, but their families, peers, teachers, administrators, and school and home communities. That being said, language carries powerful meaning. Although unintentional, a negative connotation of the term, "English Language Learners" is that it focuses on a "problem" that multilingual children may not have – a possible deficit of English language skills – rather than acknowledging the gift that they do have – the asset of their diverse language abilities.

In grades K-12, NYSED has been moving toward using the term Multilingual Learner (MLL). It is important to note that Emergent Bilinguals in prekindergarten may or may not be designated as ELLs/MLLs in kindergarten. For all students going through the kindergarten enrollment process, whether or not they have attended prekindergarten, there is a specific ELL/MLL identification and placement process per CR Part 154-2 and 154-3 regulations, available at <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/schools/ell-identification-placementhome-language-questionnaire>.

Going forward, NYSED's use of "Emergent Bilingual" much more accurately describes prekindergarten students who understand a language other than English. Currently, NYSED is developing tools, such as a protocol

to be implemented in prekindergarten programs so that educators can apply information gathered about each student's home language and linguistic experience to the provision of appropriate instructional supports.

Early childhood education plays an essential role in preparing young Emergent Bilinguals for later success in school. It provides children with the opportunity to develop basic foundational skills in language and literacy in both their home language and in English before they enter kindergarten ready to learn. It is, therefore, essential to actively support home language development in children by providing them with appropriate educational settings, such as Transitional Bilingual Education or Dual Language programs coupled with English as a New Language support. Research demonstrates that children who are provided rich first language experiences acquire a second language, such as English, more quickly and proficiently than those who are not given opportunities to develop their first language.

Like other skills, children develop along a continuum with many factors contributing to the acquisition process of both their home language and of English. The diverse background knowledge that each child brings to the task of learning English has to be acknowledged, respected, and embraced as part of each child's educational experience. Language plays a central role of in the achievement of benchmarks as laid out for each domain outlined in the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. Teachers and administrators are to use students' home languages and cultures as the foundation for developing academic language proficiency. Per Commissioners' Regulations Part 151, which establish the legal requirements for implementing State-funded prekindergarten programs in New York State, programs are to implement appropriate structures and supports to ensure that Emergent Bilingual children are provided equal access to the program and opportunities to achieve the same program goals and standards as all children.

*See Appendix 4 Emergent Bilinguals: Requirements & Resources.

Curriculum and Instruction

Integrating Instruction Across Domains

Learning experiences provide opportunities for children to develop oral language, math awareness, social competencies, and science concepts that are the foundation for growth and learning at the primary level. Teachers may develop these experiences around a specific topic, theme, or a question posed by one of the children. No matter what sparks the idea for a learning experience, teachers need to remember that concepts related to the learning experience may be integrated across content areas. For example, as children are learning to categorize objects according to shape, size, color, or texture, they are also learning words that describe each of the objects and categories, as well as how to work cooperatively with their peers to complete a task.

The planning webs shown on the following pages are drawn from classrooms. Each has a particular focus—oral language, math, social studies, science. Each illustrates how a topic or idea may be integrated into different classroom learning centers to provide multiple entry points for children. Such complex, integrated planning may be captured by a graphic organizer that depicts the interrelationships between learning centers and/or curriculum areas, as opposed to a more linear approach to planning.

Trip to the Bakery

The TRIP TO THE BAKERY is an example of planning to extend an experience after a field trip. After the trip to the bakery, the teacher reflects on children's conversations

and choice of activities. The web serves as a method of organizing ideas about how to further extend children's experiences, including an emphasis on language and literacy.

The Trip to the Bakery learning experience provides a reflection on the kinds of activities that children may engage in as a result of visiting a neighborhood bakery. The trip was planned as an extension of a classroom experience that included several cooking activities. Cooking provided children with an opportunity to read picture recipes during group time and follow the recipes with the assistance of an adult who worked with small groups to prepare oatmeal for breakfast, vegetable soup for lunch, or bread for snack. The children were introduced to words such as boil, stir, mix, and beat. They used tools such as wooden spoons, vegetable peelers, whisks, and eggbeaters. They also counted out the number of cookies or muffins for children at each table. The dramatic play area was equipped with props (playdough, rolling pin, cookie cutters, muffin tins, plastic mixing bowls) to help children role play.

The Trip to the Bakery is an example of the reciprocity between language and experience. The focus of the teacher's planning is the use of math-related words for shapes, amounts, weights, and sequences. Language introduced during the trip is reinforced during the group meeting (a pound of sugar, a dozen donuts). The teacher's careful attention to equipping the classroom areas encourages children to use math words to describe their activities in the context of their play.

The following pages present three learning experiences, all using the same principles described for 'Trip to the Bakery' above.

Additional Resource: Integrated Instruction: An Overview – This resource paper discusses the integration of all domains of children's learning and examples of how this may look in the learning centers in an early childhood classroom. Available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/earlylearning/documents/OELResourceIntegratedInstruction.pdf>.

The Bakery



Dramatic Play:

- Transform dramatic play into a bakery by adding a bakery sign, an open/closed sign, and a menu board with picture cues
- Add bakery hats, aprons, oven mitts, cash register, and "money"
- "Add Place Your Order" sheets that correspond with picture cues on the menu board
- Add props: egg beaters, rolling pins, cookie pans, measuring cups and spoons, plastic eggs, empty cake boxes, spatulas, tongs, order pads, pencils, etc.

Sensory:

- Discovery table- use moldable sand and add cupcake pans, baking cups. Decorative jewels, shreds of colored paper, colored buttons, and other decorations for cupcakes
- Soapy water and sponges in sensory table to allow students to "wash" all the bakery dishes and pans

Math/Manipulatives:

- Theme-related puzzles
- Matching games
- Muffin tin sorting
- Graph of favorite flavor of cookie, cake, or bagel
- Cookie jar number matching game
- Dough for rolling and cutting with scissors and cookie cutters

Creative Arts:

- Make chef hats
- Paint with pastry brushes- paints in muffin tins
- Make "cookies" with salt dough and decorate with jewels. Use in dramatic play area "bakery"
- Use cookie cutters with paint

Music/Movement:

- Hot Bagel (played like hot potato)- gross motor, social skills
- Egg on spoon game- gross motor, balance, coordination
- Who stole the cookies from the cookie jar?-game,- recall, social skills
- Five Little Peas song - counting, adding, subtracting
- Pat-a-Cake song/finger play

Language/Literacy:

- Ask questions and record responses: Have you ever visited a bakery? What ingredients might a baker use?
- Bunny Cakes: R. Wells
- The Doorbell Rang: P. Hutchins
- What Happens at a Bakery: K. Pohl
- Mr. Cookie Baker: M. Wellington
- Pancakes for Breakfast: T. DePaola
- If You Give a Mouse a Cookie: L.J. Numeroff
- The Gingerbread Man (various versions)

Blocks:

- Add community workers to block area (baker, delivery person, mail carrier, etc.)
- Add appropriate vehicles and props
- Display non-fiction books of community buildings and architecture

Science:

- Bake muffins, bread, or pretzels with students
- Talk about recipe for salt dough used in creative arts project
- Smell Guessing Game- have containers with different scents (vanilla, chocolate, spice, coffee, fruit)
- Taste test- sweet versus salty
- Taste different breads and chart results of favorite
- Discuss how different grains grow
- Experiment with how yeast works

Technology:

- Visit to a large-scale bakery with working machines to observe technology at work
- Show videos of machines at work in large-scale bakeries
- Computer games featuring community workers
- Community workers apps for tablets



POND HABITATS



Dramatic Play:

- Fishing on a plastic mat
- Have students paint a box to be a canoe or fishing boat with oars, tackle box, life jacket, etc.
- Pond picnic and birdwatching with props

Sensory:

- Nest building with clay, twigs, leaves, fibers
- Create a pond in a sensory table with sand and water, rocks, plastic aquarium plants, plastic ducks, fish, turtles, insects, etc.

Math/Manipulatives:

- Butterfly/matching game
- Pond animal pattern mats
- Turtle bingo, using turtles for markers
- Flannel board with pond animals and plants. Arrange from smallest to largest and then reverse the order.

Creative Arts:

- Mural of pond life - children paint background and add pond life as they learn about different parts of the ecosystem
- Easel painting with twigs/brushes made with pond grass
- Sand art
- Display Monet's water lily paintings to inspire children for easel painting

Music/Movement:

- "The Green Grass Grows All Around" song
- "Duck, Duck, Goose" game - gross motor
- "Move like a _____" movement using pond animals
- "Five Speckled Frogs" – counting

Language/Literacy:

- In the Tall, Tall Grass-Denise Fleming
- Jump Frog, Jump!-Robert Kalan
- In the Pond-Anna Milbourne & Mat Russell
- What's In the Pond? – Anne Hunter
- From Tadpole to Frog- Wendy Pfeffer
- Pond Circle- Betsy Franco
- Butternut Hollow Pond- Brian J. Heinz

Blocks:

- Add plastic bugs, fish, turtles, plants, stuffed beavers, ducks, and raccoons
- Add blue fabric for children to use as a pond

Science:

- Display terrarium of real pond water with a shop light to view small plant and animal life. Supply magnifying glasses.
- Study the frog life cycle in a classroom terrarium
- Learn about some different species that have webbed feet and why (ducks, frogs, turtles, otters, beavers)
- How do lily pads float? (sink/float experiments)

Technology:

- Internet videos of ponds and pond life
- Photo document a walk to the pond to show on a Smart Board
- With a tablet, photo document the hatching and growth of tadpoles
- Make a display board with photos of frog life cycle



FARM ANIMALS



Dramatic Play:

- Create a farm stand
- Have children paint large boxes and assemble them into a tractor
- Provide a "planting" prop box with gardening gloves, aprons, watering cans, flower pots, artificial flowers and vegetables, etc.
- Create a pretend chicken coup with stuffed chickens, paper bag nests, egg cartons, and plastic eggs for collecting and counting

Sensory:

- Use hay in the sensory table
- Alternate tools, tractors, farm animals, silos, wheels, spoons, tubes
- Scrubbing vegetables in sensory table with soapy water, scrub brushes, plastic vegetables, etc.
- Finger paint with "mud"

Math/Manipulatives:

- Graph favorite farm animal
- Guess the number of seeds in a container
- Counting baskets of eggs/match to a number
- Matching mom and baby card game
- Sheep counting math game (roll die, pick # of cotton balls with clothes pin and put in a basket)

Creative Arts:

- Create toilet paper roll farm animals
- Supply milk cartons for students to make and decorate tractors with paint, buttons, wood bits, etc.
- Easel painting with bundled straw
- Corn-on-the-cob (roll pretend corn through paint)
- Create tractor prints: "driving" tractor through paint and across paper

Music/Movement:

- "Old McDonald" – identify animal sounds in a song
- "The Farmer in the Dell" – game gross motor
- "Five Little Ducks" – finger play
- "Duck, Duck, Goose" – game gross motor
- "On the Farm" – finger play, counting

Technology:

- Software games that are farm-themed
- Photo document farm trips to show on the smart board
- On tablets, document the hatching and development of chicks

Blocks:

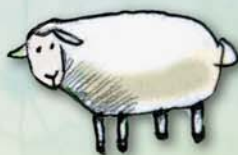
- Add farm animals, barn, tractors to block area
- Have children paint boxes to represent the different buildings that you might find on a farm (silo, barns, farmhouses, etc.)

Science:

- Hatch chicken eggs
- Plant seeds
- Visit a working farm
- Discover ways in which animals are useful to people
- Visit a sheep shearing farm during shearing and learn about products that come from sheep

Language/Literacy:

- The Big Red Barn- Margaret Wise Brown
- Barnyard Banter- Denise Fleming
- The Cow Who Clucked – Denise Fleming
- The Little Red Hen (can be acted out) – various authors
- From Egg to Chicken – Gerald Legg
- The Rusty Trusty Tractor – Joy Cowley
- Barnyard Dance – Sandra Boyton
- Name and tell about different farm animals
- Dictate the sounds that different farm animals make
- Story retell



Curriculum and Instruction

Routines and Transitions

Routines are purposeful procedures that ensure a predictable order to the day, as well as the effective use of time, space and materials. Research has shown that schedules and routines influence children's emotional, cognitive, and social development. Routines provide children with a sense of control and help them feel more comfortable in the classroom. When children understand what is expected of them, there is a reduction in behavior problems, such as tantrums and acts of aggression⁶.

Activity schedules that allow children to choose between balanced and planned activities and individualized activities result in increased child engagement. It is also important to consider the duration of the play period – a single play period longer than 30 minutes can lead to higher levels of social and cognitive play.

Transitions are also critical when planning daily schedules. Historically, transitions have been over-utilized in prekindergarten settings. It has been found in certain settings that almost half of children's time was not geared toward social and/or academic development. In fact, it was spent transitioning from one activity to another or engaging in a personal care routine⁷. Thus, making good use of transitional time is essential. In planning for transitions, teachers need to consider the kinds of behaviors that children must develop in order to respond to change and work toward increasing independence. For some young children, transitioning from one activity to another can result in confusion, frustration, and challenging behaviors. In addition to praising children after transitions, strategies that support smooth transitions include:

Strategy	Example
Verbal cues and reminders before transitions	"We have five minutes until snack time"
Positive feedback after transitions	"Great job cleaning up your station and moving to the carpet"
Non-verbal cues	Showing pictures of the next activity
Let children move individually from one area to another	When children are finished hanging up their backpacks, they can go choose a book
Plan a gradual increase or decrease in level of activity	Gym/outdoor play, followed by a snack
Balance active and quiet play	Large group activity, followed by story time
Teach peers to help those who have a difficult time during transition	Children can move in pairs from one activity to the next
Help children self-monitor	Children can reflect on how quietly they moved from one activity to another

Transitions take up a large portion of the day, so it is important that children do not spend too much time waiting to move to or begin

the next activity. Instead, thoughtful learning experiences can take place while children are between activities throughout the day.

⁶Routines and Transitions Section Adapted from: <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwwb3.pdf>

⁷Early, D., Iruka, I., Ritchie, S., Barbarin, O., Winn, D., Crawford, G., Frome, P., Clifford, R., Burchinal, M. Howes, C., Bryant, D., Pianta, R. (June 2010). How Do Pre-kindergarteners Spend their Time? Gender, Ethnicity, and Income as Predictors of Experiences in Pre-kindergarten Classrooms. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 25 (2).

Curriculum and Instruction

Considerations for Planning

Consideration	Yes	No
Each day includes a large block of time for children to work individually and/or in self-selected groups in learning centers: Approximately one-third of the daily schedule is designated for children to engage in self-initiated activities.	Y	N
Work in learning centers is complemented by time in adult directed large group meetings and small group activities.	Y	N
There is planned time for adults to interact with individual children.	Y	N
There is a good balance of active play and quiet time.	Y	N
There is time to consolidate skills in various learning centers, complemented by the introduction of new materials, language, and or concepts by an adult.	Y	N
The classroom is divided into clearly defined, well-equipped learning centers including, but not limited to: dramatic play; blocks and construction; library, language arts, technology/media; science and nature; mathematics and manipulative materials; writing; creative arts; sand and water play and music.	Y	N
Time for outdoor activities and learning experiences are scheduled.	Y	N
Thoughtful transitions are planned throughout the day.	Y	N
The district uses <i>written</i> curricula or curricula frameworks that are evidenced-based (meaning research has been conducted regarding the relationship between the curriculum and children's learning), as well as developmentally appropriate (addresses the key domains of child development), and aligns with the age-appropriate learning standards.	Y	N
The district implements appropriate modifications and provides additional supports to enable children with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) more effective inclusion in the full range of the program's activities.	Y	N
The district implements appropriate modifications and provides additional supports to ensure that Emergent Bilinguals, or children who speak languages other than English at home, are provided equal access to the program and opportunities to achieve the same program goals and standards as other participating children.	Y	N
There is enough time set aside for teachers to plan lessons effectively	Y	N
Opportunities are provided for families to engage in their child's learning both inside and outside of the classroom.	Y	N

Dimensions of Assessment

Assessment is the process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting what children know and are able to do. It reflects the many ways that children learn and the diversity of their experience, language, and cultural backgrounds. It also provides important information about how children engage in learning and when they learn. In addition to observing, recording, and collecting information on how children behave and perform in various settings on a regular basis, teachers may also use the results of developmental checklists completed at regular intervals and other valid and reliable assessment tools. Ongoing assessment includes the input of specialists in areas such as speech, psychology, bilingual education, English as a New Language, and occupational and physical therapy. In addition to English, assessment needs to be conducted, as required, in the language best understood by the child. The results of assessment are used to plan and modify curricula, instructional strategies, daily classroom routines, and the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Assessment also helps teachers reflect on and modify their own practice, and share children's progress with families.

Teachers and teacher assistants use a variety of methods to keep track of children's progress toward the goals and objectives of the program. They consistently observe and document children's interactions with the people and materials in the environment. Teachers also collect samples of children's

work over specified periods of time. When teachers have maintained careful records on children, they can use this information to support requests for additional health and community services. A teacher may request an evaluation by a specialist to assess a child's language, vision, or hearing. A teacher might also refer a child for a more formal evaluation because of general, undefined concerns about a child's development in one or more areas.

New York State's Core Body of Knowledge lists several core competencies regarding observation and assessment for use by professionals working with young children:

- Use observation and assessment tools to support children's development and learning
- Practice responsible assessment
- Build positive, productive assessment partnerships with families and colleagues
- Practice responsible reporting of assessment results
- Use observation and assessment to plan and modify environments, curricula, and teaching
- Practice responsible formal evaluation and reporting procedures

Details on these core competencies can be found in the Core Body of Knowledge, available at <http://www.earlychildhood.org/pdfs/CoreBody.pdf>.

Types of Assessment

It is important to distinguish between the different types of assessments that are used in prekindergarten programs. For information about screening and assessing linguistically and culturally diverse children, see <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/health-disabilities>.

Screening

In New York State, each school district must conduct a screening for all new entrants. For the purposes of Part 117 of the Commissioner's Regulations, screening is the use of a brief procedure designed to provide information that allows the district to distinguish from the general population those children who fit into one or more of these three categories: possibly gifted, suspected of having a disability, and possibly Pre-K Emergent Bilinguals or K-12 English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs).



Dimensions of Assessment

This screening is performed only once during a school year, and should not be confused with universal screening within a Response to Intervention (RtI) model that may be conducted three times per year. The goal of screening is to identify potential issues and to put additional supports and services into place for a child, if needed. This is not a diagnostic test.

Developmental Baseline

Developmental baseline assessments are usually formally conducted at the beginning of the school year. It is a comprehensive pre-assessment that provides a thorough evaluation of the skill level, abilities, and/or knowledge that a child possesses before beginning formal instruction. Information collected from this assessment can be used to make instructional decisions, and can serve as

a comparative measure to determine student growth throughout the year.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring takes place throughout the school-year, and is used to evaluate the current learning of a child as it compares to their learning goals. Using a child's authentic work is an effective way to capture this information. Based on what is observed and collected, instruction can be modified .

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is a measure of learning at a particular point in time, used to determine instructional success . It is typically conducted at the end of the school-year, and can be compared to the developmental baseline assessment conducted at the beginning of the year.

Screening	Language & Literacy Skills Progress Monitoring	Cognitive Skills Progress Monitoring	Social-Emotional Skills Progress Monitoring
Ages and Stages (ASQ)	Brigance Inventory of Early Development	Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)	Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)
Ages and Stages Social-Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE)	Creative Curriculum/Teaching Strategies GOLD Developmental Continuum	Brigance Inventory of Early Development	Brigance Inventory of Early Development
American Guidance Service/Pearson Early Screening Profiles	HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)	Creative Curriculum/Teaching Strategies GOLD Developmental Continuum	Creative Curriculum/Teaching Strategies GOLD Developmental Continuum
Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)	mCLASS: CIRCLE	HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)	Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)
Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)	mCLASS: CIRCLE	HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)
Brigance Early Childhood Screens	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)	mCLASS: CIRCLE
Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL)	STAR Early Literacy	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	Work Sampling System (WSS)
Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R)	Work Sampling System (WSS)	STAR Math	
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)		Work Sampling System (WSS)	
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)			

The State Education Department does not approve or recommend particular assessment tools. However, it is required that the instrument(s) used for assessment be valid and reliable; and that assessment information be used to inform classroom instruction and professional development. A program should consider its curricula, alignment with the applicable standards, and students' needs when selecting a tool.

⁸<http://www.hatchearlylearning.com/what-is-progress-monitoring/>

⁹National Research Council. (2008). Early childhood assessment: Why, what and how. Snow, C.E., & Van Hemel, S.B. (Eds.). Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

Professional Development

The quality of any program for young children is largely determined by the experience and training of staff. All staff should have knowledge of child development and early education, as well as supervised experience working with young children. Teachers need to have opportunities to extend their own learning in order to continue to develop teaching practices that support children's growth and learning. These may include: opportunities for reflection, inquiry, and individual study; work within the program or building on specific, agreed-upon issues, such as how to provide continuity for students as they transition from one level to the next; and large group sessions designed to provide information and inspiration. Staff development may also include opportunities for staff to work together. Scheduling should accommodate shared planning times for classroom staff, between regular and support teachers, and joint staff development sessions for collaboratively funded programs.

Staff development for prekindergarten staff, like all successful professional development, is ongoing and designed to help staff extend knowledge while providing opportunities for fine-tuning practice and reflection. Strategies are consistent with overall program, building,

and district goals, and are supported by administrators at all levels.

Professional development should:

- Be connected to the goals and needs of the prekindergarten and kindergarten programs
- Include approaches that are grounded in research (based on what we know about adult learners)
- Provide for the application of practice in real-life situations
- Emphasize a strength-based approach (starting with what teachers already know)
- Provide information on how to integrate the five domains of early learning
- Be linguistically and culturally responsive. For more information, see <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/professional-development.html>.
- Be provided by trainers with the qualifications, experience, and knowledge to provide informative, practical research-based training on the topic areas

There are a variety of factors to consider when evaluating professional development. Professional development should be evaluated over time. Evaluation needs to be more than a participant survey completed at the end of a training session. While such surveys are a good measure of participant satisfaction, they provide little information about the benefits and applications to practice. When evaluating professional development, a key question to consider is how you know whether or not the professional development provided is having the desired effect.

Professional Development Resources

There are a few ways to access professional development in New York State outside of district planning time and staff development.

1. Your local **Child Care Resource and Referral Agency** (CCRR) is a good place to find the New York State training requirements, as well as what trainings may be available in your county. Learn more at <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/referralagencies.asp>.



Professional Development

2. The **Professional Development Program (PDP)** houses many OCFS-funded training opportunities including: The Early Childhood Education and Training Program (ECETP), ECETP Videoconference Trainings, the Medication and Administration (MAT) Program, the Health and Safety Program, and various Early Childhood e-learning courses. Learn more at http://www.pdp.albany.edu/Expertise/early_childhood_education.cfm.
3. The **ASPIRE Registry** is New York State's registry and statewide training calendar for early childhood professionals developed by New York Works for Children. Teachers, providers, directors, trainers, and anyone who works with children can use ASPIRE to keep track of important information about their career, including education, employment history, and other professional development. Additionally, it provides access to training records and qualifications of providers - making it a valuable tool for OCFS licensing staff. Learn more at <https://www.nyworksforchildren.org/Aspire/Aspire.aspx>.
4. **BOCES** can also offer trainings related to early childhood. Please visit your local BOCES website to see if they are offering any resources for Early Childhood Education.
5. **Local Associations** including:
 - **New York State Association for the Education of Young Children** <http://nysaeyc.org/>
 - **Family Child Care Association of New York State, Inc.** <http://www.fccanys.org/>
6. The **New York State Office of Early Learning (OEL)** - OEL provides administrative oversight, training, and technical assistance to State and federally funded prekindergarten programs. OEL distributes an Early Learning Newsletter to programs across the State that shares best practices, resources, OEL program updates, and other news pertaining to Pre-K -Grade 3 education. The newsletter and other resources can be accessed at www.p12.nysed.gov/earlylearning/.
7. **Regional Bilingual Education - Resource Networks** - The New York State Education Department (NYSED) Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) <http://www.nysed.gov/program-offices/office-bilingual-education-and-world-languages-obewl> operates Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERNs) throughout the State. As a technical assistance support center network, the RBERNs work in partnership with OBEWL staff to provide technical assistance and professional development to districts/schools in order to improve instructional practices and educational outcomes of students who are Pre-K Emergent Bilinguals and K-12 English Language Learners (ELLs) /Multilingual Learners (MLL).
 - NYS Language RBE-RN (Statewide) <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/rbern/>
 - Capital District RBE-RN at Questar III BOCES <http://rbern.questar.org/>
 - Hudson Valley RBE-RN at SW BOCES <http://www.hudsonvalleyrbern.org/>
 - Long Island RBE-RN at Eastern Suffolk CES <http://www.esboces.org/Page/505>
 - Mid-State RBE-RN at OCM BOCES <http://rbern.ocmboces.org>
 - Mid-West RBE-RN at Monroe 2 - Orleans BOCES www.monroe2boces.org/rbern
 - New York City RBE-RN at Fordham University http://www.fordham.edu/info/21065/nysnyc_regional_bilingual_education_resource_network
 - West Region RBE-RN at Erie I BOCES www.e1b.org
8. **Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDs)** provide information and referral services for children with disabilities who are ages birth through five. Services include professional development and technical assistance to providers, agencies, school districts and families. For more information, visit <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/ecdc/home.html>

Professional Development

9. **Special Education Regional Offices -**

Regional Associates are employees of the State Education Department who are assigned to specific school districts and special education programs. The Regional Associate oversees preschool and school-age special education services, and serves as a resource to parents, school district personnel, and private providers, including:

- Conduct Quality Assurance Reviews of public and private special education programs. The purpose of the review is to determine compliance with federal and State special education laws and regulations. Areas of strength and weakness in regard to effective evaluation and instructional practices are identified as part of the review process. The goal of the review is to make programs more effective and to

positively affect student results.

- Provide technical assistance to parents, school district personnel, and special education programs.
- Provide general information regarding services for students with disabilities to parents, school district personnel, private providers, and other stakeholders.
- Oversee certain grant applications for the expenditure of federal IDEA funds.
- Investigate complaints alleging a public or private special education program's noncompliance with federal or State law or regulation pertaining to the education of students with disabilities.
 - To locate the regional office in your area, visit <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/quality/regassoc.htm>.

Additional Resources Supporting Best Practices In Prekindergarten

Developmentally Appropriate Practice Briefs <http://www.nysecac.org/>



Available for viewing or downloading are seven briefs that provide research-based practical guidance to support effective early childhood practices that help young learners gain the foundational skills necessary to reach the Common Core Learning Standards. The New York State Education Department's Office of Early Learning, the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children, and the New York State Head Start Collaboration Office partnered to highlight key features of high-quality early childhood teaching for children from Prekindergarten

through 3rd grade: the period of time when children acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards learning that will affect their long-term success in school and beyond. These guidance briefs support administrators and teachers in making decisions that will lead to higher-quality early childhood classrooms with positive outcomes for children. These briefs include material from interviews with school principals and teachers. We encourage you to share them with your school board, Parent Teacher Organizations, and others in the early childhood field.



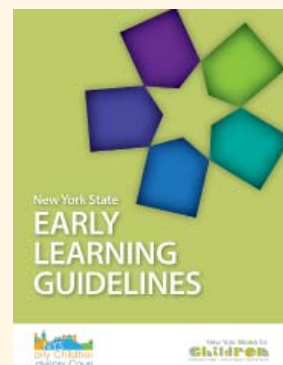
The Core Body of Knowledge: New York State's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Educators outlines recommended practices for professionals working with young children. The Core Body of Knowledge is organized into seven core competency areas. It provides examples of related behaviors and skills early childhood educators need to possess for building meaningful relationships with children and families, for creating nurturing, stimulating environments and for developing oneself as a professional.

<http://www.earlychildhood.org/pdfs/CoreBody.pdf>

New York State Early Learning Guidelines: A Resource for You

<http://ccf.ny.gov/files/7813/8177/1285/ELG.pdf>

The New York State Early Learning Guidelines are designed to be used as a daily reference and resource, to support the professional development of those responsible for the education of children from birth through age five years. These guidelines are a resource to which early childhood educators can refer for information about how children develop and learn, as well as for strategies for fostering children's development. The guidelines are designed to complement and coordinate with the New York State prekindergarten learning standards.



Appendix 1

Additional Resources Supporting Best Practices In Prekindergarten



The New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/nyslsprek.pdf

The NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core provides a framework of learning expectations that are linked to the K-12 learning standards. The NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core is organized into five developmental domains: approaches to learning; physical development and health; social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and cognition and knowledge of the

world. The standards are organized into benchmark and benchmark indicators in each domain, which represent what prekindergarten students should know and be able to do to become successful learners. It should be noted that the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core was developed specifically for prekindergarten programs serving four-year olds. Prekindergarten programs serving three-year olds should be aligned with the New York State Early Learning Guidelines (see description on previous page).

Best Practice in Early Childhood Education Webinar:

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/1drphp?RCID=078c5b7ac22c1e3982c41f8cde3e6e42>



In collaboration with Head Start and the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children, the New York State Education Department's Office of Early Learning has developed a webinar to provide guidance to school leaders on promoting best practice in early childhood education. In this 35 minute webinar, listeners hear from two veteran principals about how to lead and support high-quality learning experiences for young students.



QUALITYstarsNY is New York State's Quality Improvement and Rating System (QRIS); a voluntary system that is available to all regulated programs serving young children in a variety of settings.

QUALITYstarsNY serves early childhood center-based programs, family-home providers, and public schools serving children ages six weeks to five years in targeted communities who apply and are selected to participate. These programs have access to a wide range of resources, support, and services to help them systematically and intentionally improve upon the quality of services that they provide to young children and their families. <http://qualitystarsny.org/>



The NYSAEYC is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The NAEYC is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children. NAEYC's mission is to serve and act on behalf of the needs,

rights, and well-being of all young children, with the primary focus on the provision of educational and developmental services, and resources. The NYSEAYC mission is for "all children in New York State to have access to high quality early care and education programs with sufficient resources to meet children's physical, educational, and social/emotional needs in environments that support diversity." The organization offers professional development resources to early childhood teachers, and provides current information for the field of early childhood. <http://nysaeyc.org/>

Appendix 1

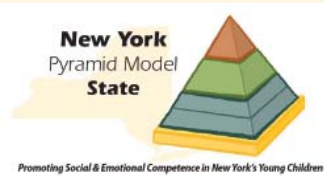
Additional Resources Supporting Best Practices In Prekindergarten



New York State Prekindergarten-3 Administrators' Association (NYSP3AA)

The purposes of the NYSP3AA include, but are not limited to:

- Promoting quality Prekindergarten through Grade 3 education while advocating for children and families;
- Providing advocacy to the Board of Regents regarding Prekindergarten through Grade 3 needs;
- Establishing a network of support through association membership and regional meetings, as well as providing informal mentoring to new administrators; and
- Meeting with SED Office of Early Learning staff and disseminating information on early education and alignment with NYS learning standards.



The **Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children** promotes the social and emotional development and school readiness of young children from birth to age five. With its emphasis on strong relationships, support for social competence, and preventing and addressing challenging behaviors in infants, toddlers, and young children, the Pyramid Model is congruent with other New York State early childhood

efforts in setting the foundation for development and lifelong learning. The New York State Pyramid Model Partnership:

- Increases the number of early childhood trainers and coaches providing professional development to the early childhood workforce to meet the social and emotional development needs of young children;
- Supports partnerships between practitioners and parents;
- Supports the implementation and sustainability of the Pyramid Model in early childhood settings; and
- Evaluates the effectiveness of implementing the Pyramid Model in New York State.

Appendix 2

New York State Education Department Office Of Early Learning Health & Safety Checklist For Prekindergarten Program

Name of District:

Date:

Name of Community Based Organization:

Address:

Name of Person Completing Form

Title

Records and Permits:

The following records and permits should be on file in the community based organization.

Item	Comments
A. <input type="checkbox"/> Sketch of indoor instructional space with dimensions, showing interest/activity areas	
B. <input type="checkbox"/> Sketch of outdoor space with dimensions showing placement of equipment, types of ground cover, fencing, etc.	
C. <input type="checkbox"/> Outside New York City – NYS Office of Children and Family Services permit or letter of exemption (required if children are in attendance 3 hours or more a day) (If licensed, omit E, F and G) Permit #: _____ Expiration Date: _____	
D. <input type="checkbox"/> New York City Schools only – New York City Day Care Permit required (omit E, F and G) Permit #: _____ Expiration Date: _____	
E. <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Inspection Report within the last 12 months Date: _____	
F. <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Occupancy Date: _____	
G. <input type="checkbox"/> Health Inspection Report Date: _____ (required if meals are prepared on site)	
H. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Development Plan (postsecondary and in-service training including health and safety training)	
I. <input type="checkbox"/> Current (annual) physical and dental examination record for each child.	
J. <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of immunization status of each child as required by Public Health Law.	
K. <input type="checkbox"/> Child Nutrition Funding Source: CACFP _____ Vended through School _____ Other _____	

Appendix 2

New York State Education Department Office Of Early Learning Health & Safety Checklist For Prekindergarten Program

Indoor Facility Checklist:

Item	Yes	No	Comments
Classrooms and facilities used by children are well-maintained and clean.			
The classroom space allows for safe movement and activity for the number of children enrolled.			
The bathroom is immediately accessible and barrier free.			
Adequate supplies are available in the bathroom for handwashing to include individual paper towels, a pump dispenser for soap and warm running water.			
There are no hazards apparent in the classroom, such as dangling electrical/phone cords, space heaters, tripping hazards, worn equipment or peeling paint.			
All classroom learning areas can be adequately supervised by staff.			
Hazardous materials such as cleaning supplies are stored in a locked cabinet or out of the reach of children.			
There is appropriate staffing in each classroom; minimally 1 teacher and 1 paraprofessional for classes up to 18 students or 1 teacher and 2 paraprofessionals for classes of 19 or 20 students.			

Indoor Facility Checklist:

Item	Yes	No	Comments
Outdoor play area provides adequate space for children to play safely.			
Outdoor play area provides age- appropriate equipment for different abilities.			
Materials and play equipment used by the children must be sturdy, free from rough edges and sharp corners.			
There must be a cushioned surface under all outside play equipment that present a fall hazard. Surfacing may not include concrete, asphalt, grass or other hard compacted dirt.			
Equipment must be in good repair and be placed in a safe location.			

Item in Need of Action	Action Plan for Compliance	Target Date	Date Completed

Suggested Classroom Equipment & Materials

(Not an exhaustive list)

Ensure that classroom materials reflect the variety of students' languages and cultures.

For more information, see Appendix 4 Emergent Bilinguals

Art Center	
tempera and finger-paints	glue and paste
crayons and markers	collage materials
table	tissue paper
vinyl smocks	newsprint
chalkboard easel and chalk	yarn and string
non-spill plastic paint pots	feathers
easel	craft sticks
paintbrushes	recycled art materials
child-sized safety scissors	various writing instruments
rolling pin	various sizes of paper
clay and hammers	wood glue and wood scraps
Block Center	
block shelf	signs
variety of unit blocks	props such as trees and benches
accessories, such as diverse and multicultural people, animals, cars, trucks, boats, and street	cellophane, material, or other fabric to make rivers and lakes
block patterns for labeling	bucket of vehicles
architectural block set	tool set
tunnel and arch set	graph paper
hollow blocks	plain paper and clip board
work vehicles	pencils
railway and traffic sign set	colored pencils or crayons
Science Center	
storage area	plants
table scale or balance	naturally found items or collections
prism	items to be weighed or sorted
color wheels	paper
easy-view magnifier	writing instruments
giant magnet	displays of natural objects or science related topics
plastic magnet wands	variety of tools and materials for using senses observing or experimenting
theme study items	games and puzzles related to science area
weather props	science books

Continued...

Suggested Classroom Equipment & Materials

Sensory Center	
sand and water table with cover	sand builder set
props for experiments	plastic scoops and funnels
boat set	sand sieve and containers
sand molds in geometric shapes	vinyl smocks
water play set	water droppers or basters
double sand and water wheel	other materials to change table theme
Language/Listening Center	
forward-facing library shelf	pencils, rulers, and tape
sequencing shapes and pattern cards	tactile letters
flannel board with easel stand	letter and number stamp set
felt primary shapes	big books
flannel board story kits	self-concept books
chalkboards	listening center with books on CD
chart paper	
Manipulative/Math Center	
sorting mats or trays	posted developmentally appropriate math
table	Knobbed puzzles
connecting blocks	early concept puzzles
magnetic activity center	occupations, community, family, and children of the world puzzles – diverse and multicultural
strings and pattern cards	colors and shapes bingo
lacing sets	primary shape sorter
puzzle rack	geo boards and peg boards
sorting kit and tray	assorted counters
attribute blocks	visual aids, such as number lines, calendars, simple graphs, shape and counting posters
pattern stacker	games or activities that rely on counting, dice, or spinners
interlocking cubes with storage tray	books or texts that feature counting, shapes, or patterns

Appendix 3

Suggested Classroom Equipment & Materials

Dramatic-Play Center	
dolls, doll clothes, and furniture	puppets and puppet stand
dress-up clothes and props	table and chairs set
child-sized furniture	kitchen set
kitchen utensils, pots, and pans	housecleaning set and stand
food sets (representing different cultures)	variety of phones
fruits and vegetables with basket	career hats (plastic only)
plexi-mirror	
Computer/Technology Center	
computer/technology table	quiet spaces
computer with monitor and printer	furniture, carpet squares, small rugs, or a table and chair to define the space
tablets	books organized and a variety of themes
simple software with concept games for: matching, sorting, sequencing, counting, color and number recognition, drawing, and logical-thinking processes	audio books
	cozy chairs
Music, Movement, And Dance Props	
box of scarves	rhythm sticks
assorted music	musical instrument sets
colored exercise bands	



Emergent Bilinguals: Requirements & Resources

The legal requirements for educating New York State's language-diverse students in prekindergarten are both similar to and distinct from those for educating language-diverse students in grades K-12:

Prekindergarten Emergent Bilinguals

- New York State prekindergarten programs serving students of diverse language backgrounds, or Emergent Bilinguals must be in compliance with Title I and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), and meet federal requirements, as established by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), US Department of Education (ED), and US Department of Justice (DOJ).
 - Although there are a number of overlapping requirements, NYSED's CR Part 154 requirements are strictly reserved for grades K-12. (See below.)
- Federal requirements, policy statements, and guidance documents:
 - Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) released on September 23, 2016 by ED. Section F is explicit in Title III compliance requiring the inclusion of Emergent Bilinguals as young as three years old in districts' prekindergarten program planning, funding for instruction and professional development for their teachers: Programs are encouraged to use Title III funds to develop and implement effective programs, beginning with prekindergarten.
 - <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiiiiguidenglishlearners92016.pdf>
 - Dear Colleague Letter and guidance document jointly released on January 7, 2015 from the Civil Rights Division of the DOJ and the ED's Office for Civil Rights
 - <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>
 - English Learner Tool Kit released by ED's Office of English Language Acquisition was originally published in 2015 as a companion to support the Dear Colleague Letter, and has been continually updated to reflect ESSA requirements. Each chapter of the tool kit covers topics related to educating English Learner students, including, but not limited to, identification, placement, staffing, curriculum, learning environment, English Learners with Disabilities, and family engagement.
 - <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html>
 - Dual Language Learner Toolkit released by ED & HHS' Head Start: An Office of the Administration for Children and Families and the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC). This toolkit provides resources that can be used to support young children who are learning both their home languages and English. It is divided into three sections: administrators and managers; teachers, caregivers, and family services staff; and families.
 - <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/toolkit>
 - Policy Statement on Supporting the Development of Children Who are Dual Language Learners in Early Childhood Programs jointly released by HHS and ED. Under the premise that supporting the learning and development of young Emergent Bilinguals requires program-wide considerations, this policy statement and set of recommendations assist early childhood programs in systemically incorporating supports that promote the development and learning of children who are Emergent Bilinguals.
 - https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/dll_policy_statement_final.pdf
 - Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness - Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center – Head Start – An Office of the Administration for Children and Families
 - <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>

Emergent Bilinguals: Requirements & Resources

Grades K-12 English Language Learners (ELLs) / Multilingual Learners (MLLs)

- Subparts 154-2 and 154-3 of the New York State Education Department's Commissioner's Regulations (CR Part 154) meet and exceed federal requirements holding all school districts accountable for identifying and serving English Language Learners (ELLs) / Multilingual Learners (MLLs) in Kindergarten through twelfth grade.
 - For children who attend and do not attend prekindergarten programs, the CR Part 154 ELL/MLL identification and placement process begins during Kindergarten enrollment – typically as of January of the prekindergarten school year. To ensure CR Part 154 compliance during Kindergarten enrollment, see:
 - <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/regulations/english-language-learnermultilingual-learner-regulations-compliance>

Resources and More Information

- New York State Education Department
 - Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL)
 - Contact OBEWL in Albany and Brooklyn:
 - ~ <http://www.nysed.gov/program-offices/office-bilingual-education-and-world-languages-obewl>
 - OBEWL's Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN)
 - RBERNs are located throughout NYC and NYS:
 - ~ <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/schools/regional-supportrbarns>
 - OBEWL's Emergent Bilingual / ELL / MLL Parent Hotline
 - Families of Pre-K Emergent Bilinguals and K-12 ELLs/MLLs can be assisted, in various languages, about services for their children by contacting 1-800-469-8224 or
 - ~ <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ellparent hotline>
- Young Dual Language Learners: A Guide for PreK-3 Leaders
 - Karen M. Nemeth, an expert in Early Childhood Education and Emergent Bilinguals, provides clear and concise responses to questions that help teachers and administrators navigate the landscape of educating language-diverse children in linguistically and culturally responsive ways.
 - <https://www.caslonpublishing.com/titles/14/young-dual-language-learners/>
- Early Education for Dual Language Learners: Promoting School Readiness and Early School Success
 - Linda M. Espinosa, an expert in Early Childhood Education and Emergent Bilinguals, evaluates the research and presents features of early childhood education programs that most effectively support Emergent Bilingual children.
 - <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/early-education-dual-language-learners-promoting-school-readiness-and-early-school-success>
- Right from the Start: A Protocol for Identifying and Planning Instruction for Emergent Bilinguals in Universal Prekindergarten
 - Zoila (Tazi) Morell, Ph.D., an expert in Early Childhood Education and Emergent Bilinguals, presents a schoolwide protocol to identify and provide a linguistic history and profile of language-diverse children at the prekindergarten level.
 - http://www.nysut.org/~media/files/nysut/resources/2016/educators-voice/edvoice_ix_06_tazimorell.pdf?la=en

Annotated Bibliography of Additional Early Learning Resources

Environments/Classroom Setup:

Bullard, Julie. *Creating Environments for Learning: Birth to Age Eight*. 2nd ed. Pearson, 2013.

Bullard's book enhances the reader's level of understanding of learning environments, and features the most up-to-date information on research, curriculum standards, and play-based learning, with prime examples and 140 color photos that enhance the quality and practicality of the book. Covering birth through age eight, it provides a balance of theory and application to help novices and practicing early childhood professionals understand why and how to set up, arrange, and make changes to early childhood learning environments.

Carter, Margie, and Deb Curtis. *Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments*. 2nd ed. Redleaf Press, 2014.

You likely have dreams for your early childhood environment that are greater than rating scales, regulations, and room arrangements. *Designs for Living and Learning* has been a favorite resource among educators and caregivers for more than a decade, and this new edition is packed with even more ideas that can be used as you create captivating environments that nurture children, families, and staff while supporting children's learning.

Deviney, Jessica, Sandra Duncan, Sara Harris, Mary A. Rody, and Lois Rosenberry. *Inspiring Spaces for Young Children*. N.p.: Gryphon House, 2010.

The classroom environment is an essential component for maximizing learning experiences for young children. *Inspiring Spaces for Young Children* invites teachers to enhance children's educational environments in a beautiful way by emphasizing aesthetic environmental qualities that are often overlooked in early childhood classrooms, such as nature, color, furnishings, textures, displays, lighting, and focal points.



Annotated Bibliography of Additional Early Learning Resources

Developmentally Appropriate and Culturally Responsive Teaching:

Burns, M. S., Richard T. Johnson, and Mona M. Assaf. *Preschool Education in Today's World: Teaching Children with Diverse Backgrounds and Abilities*. Brookes Publishing, 2011.

Future early childhood educators need to know how to teach all young learners effectively — including children with diverse cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds and children with special needs. This core textbook equips early childhood educators with the knowledge that they'll need to succeed in the classroom and ensure the best outcomes for young children.

Copple, Carol, Sue Bredekamp, and Kathy Charner. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Focus on Preschoolers*. N.p.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2013.

Teachers of preschoolers can use this resource to learn about developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) so they can apply DAP in their work with preschoolers. Filled with information, practical ideas, and inspiration, this is a book that every preschool teacher will want!

Copple, Carol, and Sue Bredekamp. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8*. 3rd ed. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2010.

Since the first edition in 1987, NAEYC's book *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs* has been an essential resource for the early childcare field. Fully revised and expanded, the 2009 version comes with a supplementary CD containing readings on key topics, plus video examples showing developmentally appropriate practice in action. Based on what the research says about development, learning, and effective practices, as well as what experience tells us about teaching intentionally, DAP articulates the principles that should guide our decision making. Chapters describe children from birth through age 8 in detail, with extensive examples of appropriate practice for infant/toddler, preschool, kindergarten, and primary levels.

Donbro, Amy L., Judy Jablon, and Charlotte Stetson. *Powerful Interactions: How to Connect With Children to Extend Their Learning*. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2011.

In early childhood settings, children and teachers interact all day long. The benefits to everyone—teachers and children—will be huge if just some of those “everyday” interactions can become intentional and purposeful Powerful Interactions!

This reflective guide contains everything you need to understand what Powerful Interactions are, how to make them happen, and why they are so important in increasing children's learning and your effectiveness as a teacher.

Epstein, Ann S. *The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children's Learning*. Revised Edition ed. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2015.

Intentional teachers act with specific goals in mind for all domains of children's development. This resource provides specific ideas and strategies for interacting with children in key subject areas during both child-guided and adult-guided experiences. Includes new and expanded chapters on science, social studies, approaches to learning, and the creative arts.

Annotated Bibliography of Additional Early Learning Resources

Espinosa, Linda. *Getting It Right for Young Children from Diverse Backgrounds: Applying Research to Improve Practice with a Focus on Dual Language Learners*. 2nd ed. Pearson, 2014.

What young children from diverse backgrounds and those faced with the challenges of poverty need to succeed in school today is the focus of this authoritative book. Grounded in research, yet masterfully linked to practice, it gives early childhood practitioners the tools, resources, and guidance that they need to ensure quality education for young children from all backgrounds and all walks of life.

Hanscom, Angela J. *Balanced and Barefoot: How Unrestricted Outdoor Play Makes for Strong, Confident, and Capable Children*. N.p.: New Harbinger Publications, 2016.

Today's kids have adopted sedentary lifestyles filled with television, video games, and computer screens. But more and more, studies show that children need "rough and tumble" outdoor play in order to develop their sensory, motor, and executive functions.

With this book, you'll discover little things that you can do anytime, anywhere to help your kids achieve the movement they need to be happy and healthy in mind, body, and spirit.

Howes, Carollee. *Teaching 4- to 8-Year Olds: Literacy, Math, Multiculturalism and Classroom Community*. Brookes Publishing, 2002.

In this exciting book, education professionals will tune in to how 4- to 8-year-olds think and learn — and get sound, research-based information and developmentally appropriate teaching practices in four crucial areas: literacy, mathematics, multiculturalism, and classroom community. Readers get brief, to-the-point advice on issues like teaching English-language learners, assessing skills, enhancing school readiness, and giving all children a voice in the classroom.

Wood, Chip. *Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14*. 3rd ed. Center for Responsive Schools, Inc, 2007.

This comprehensive, user-friendly reference offers clear descriptions of children's development from age 4 to age 14. For each age, this book includes a description of developmental traits and suggestions for curricular areas.

Curriculum Planning and Learning Activities:

Curtis, Deb, and Maggie Carter. *Learning Together with Young Children: A Curriculum Framework for Reflective Teachers*. Redleaf Press, 2007.

Each chapter in this curriculum framework includes a conceptual overview, followed by classroom stories and vibrant photos to illustrate the concepts. You will learn to create materials and a classroom culture that reflects your values; teach through observation, reflection, inquiry and action; and encourage children to represent their learning in multiple ways, including songs, stories, and drama. Age Focus: 0-5.

Kostelnik, Marjorie J., Anne K. Soderman, Alice P. Whiren, and Michelle O. Rupiper. *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education*. 6th ed. N.p.: Pearson, 2014.

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education brings together the best information currently available for developing an integrated approach to curriculum and instruction in the early years. It addresses all aspects of classroom life, including the roles of children and adults; the physical and social environments; and teaching, learning, and assessing within multiple domains for children ages three to eight.

Annotated Bibliography of Additional Early Learning Resources

Mraz, Kristine, Alison Porcelli, and Cheryl Tyler. *Purposeful Play: A Teacher's Guide to Igniting Deep and Joyful Learning Across the Day*. 2016: Heinemann, n.d.

Play is serious business. Whether it's reenacting a favorite book (comprehension and close reading), negotiating the rules for a game (speaking and listening), or collaborating over building blocks (college and career readiness and STEM). In *Purposeful Play*, the authors share ways to optimize and balance different types of play to deepen regular classroom learning, teach into play to foster social-emotional skills and a growth mindset, and to bring the effect of play into all of your lessons across the day.

Observation and Assessment:

Dichtelmiller, Margo L. *The Power of Assessment: Transforming Teaching and Learning*. Teaching Strategies, LLC, 2011.

The Power of Assessment explores the critical role of the assessment cycle in the early childhood classroom. Dispelling the myth of assessment as a daunting or anxiety-inducing task, the author positions assessment as a powerful teaching tool leading to more effective teaching and better outcomes for young children.

Jablon, Judy R., Amy L. Dombro, and Margo L. Dichtelmiller. *The Power of Observation from Birth Through Eight*. 2nd ed. Teaching Strategies, LLC, 2007.

The Power of Observation helps educators recognize the connection between observation and responsive teaching, making the observation process an integral part of their work with young children.

National Research Council. (2008). *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How*. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

The assessment of young children's development and learning has recently taken on new importance. This book affirms that assessments can make crucial contributions to the improvement of children's well-being, but only if they are well designed, implemented effectively, developed in the context of systematic planning, and are interpreted and used appropriately.

Preventing and Responding to Challenging Behavior

Kaiser, Barbara, and Judy S. Rasminsky. *Challenging Behavior in Young Children: Understanding, Preventing and Responding Effectively*. 3rd ed. Pearson, 2011.

Highlighting the importance of relationships, the revised edition provides new background information and additional research-based strategies to enable pre-service and practicing teachers and childcare staff to understand, prevent, and respond effectively to challenging behavior. The text stresses that every child has some kind of special need, especially children with challenging behavior, and prevention is the best intervention. The authors have also added material on inclusion, autism, culture, and dual-language learning, as children with disabilities, children from diverse families, and Emergent Bilinguals, or children who speak languages other than English join the classroom mix in greater numbers.

Annotated Bibliography of Additional Early Learning Resources

Stormont, Melissa, Timothy J. Lewis, Rebecca Beckner, and Nanci W. Johnson. Implementing Positive Behavior Support Systems in Early Childhood and Elementary Settings. Corwin, 2007.

This easy-to-read resource presents the Programwide/Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Support (PW/SW-PBS) system, a preventive, research-based approach that helps educators teach classroom behavior skills the same way that they teach academic skills. The authors outline the PW/SW-PBS model, describe the core practices, and provide case examples to aid implementation.

Leadership Articles & Resources (located at <https://www.newamerica.org/>)

- Why Elementary School Principals Matter, the introductory brief in the series, establishes the importance of principals as early education leaders.
- A False Dichotomy: Elementary Principals on Academics and Play focuses on principals' understanding of developmentally appropriate practice in the early grades.
- Tradeoffs: Elementary Principals on Hiring and Staffing in the Early Grades examines how principals approach the staffing of PreK-3rd grade teachers.
- Connecting Pre-K and the Early Grades: Principals on Transitions highlights the role principals can play in bridging pre-K and the early grades of elementary school.
- Leading for the Early Years: Principals' Reflections on the Need for Better Preparation examines the lack of principal preparation in early education.
- Bringing It All Together: Elementary Principals are Key to Strong PreK-3rd Grade Classrooms, recommends the following four actions for states and school districts to better support elementary school principals:
 - States should incorporate early childhood education into principal preparation
 - States and school districts should provide ongoing professional learning opportunities related to early education
 - States and school districts should invest in opportunities to bring elementary school principals and center directors together
 - States should take





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