



Curriculum Approval & Exception Request Process

School Readiness Provider Agreement Requirement

As per Section 4.3.1 of the Early Learning Coalition of Osceola County (Coalition) Plan 2006-2009 submitted to the State Office of Early Learning, and Florida Statute 411.01, the coalition is required to ensure that school readiness programs provide the elements necessary to prepare children ready for school, by providing a curriculum that addresses acceptable best practices based on the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards. The Coalition is required to have a process in place for identifying, monitoring, and providing support to providers on developmentally appropriate curricula, as well as, a process in place for providers to submit a developmentally appropriate curriculum for evaluation. As per Section VII.3. of the School Readiness Provider Agreement, providers agree to utilize a Coalition approved developmentally appropriate (DAP) curriculum or agree to complete a **Curriculum Exception Request Application** for further consideration for approval of a DAP curriculum that is not currently recognized by the Coalition. Non-compliance with this requirement may result in the provider's ineligibility to receive mini grants, scholarship/stipend funding, and other quality support services offered by the Coalition and/or 4C.

DAP CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CURRENTLY RECOGNIZED BY THE COALITION:

- Beyond Centers and Circle Time Pre-K Theme Curriculum Series (3 to 5 years)** (www.kaplanco.com)
- Beyond Centers and Circle Time (2 to 5 years)** (www.kaplanco.com)
- Beyond Cribs and Rattles (birth to 3 years)** (www.kaplanco.com)
- Creative Curriculum 4th Edition (birth to 5 years)** (www.teachingstrategies.com)
- DLM Early Childhood Program (3 to 5 years)** (www.wrightgroup.com)
- Doors to Discovery (2 to 5 years)** (www.wrightgroup.com)
- FunShine Express – Fireflies (2 to 5 years)** (www.funshineexpress.com)
- FunShine Express – Sprouts (2 to 5 years)** (www.funshineexpress.com)
- High Reach Learning Curriculum (2 to 5 years)** (www.highreach.com)
- High/Scope (2 to 5 years)** (www.highscope.org)
- Let's Begin with Letter People (3 to 5 years)** (www.abramsandcompany.com)
- Montessori Curriculum (birth to school-age)** (www.montessoriresources.com)
- Scholastic - Building Language for Literacy (3 to 5 years)**
(www.teacher.scholastic.com/products/buildinglanguageforliteracy/)
- Scholastic - Early Childhood Program (2 to 5 years)** (www.teacher.scholastic.com/products/secp/)
- WEE Learn (birth to school-age)** (www.lifeway.com)

PROCESS TO APPLY FOR AN APPROVED CURRICULUM EXCEPTION:

The Coalition realizes that there is other early childhood curriculum that may be a valuable resource to teachers as they plan for the learning of young children. The Coalition's Curriculum Task Force is available to consider expanding the list of Coalition approved curriculum to include other quality curriculum that meets the required criteria. Providers may obtain a **Curriculum Exception Request Application** and submit it to the Coalition along with a copy of their daily schedule, their last four weeks of lesson plans for each age group served, and any other materials they would like to be considered. The Coalition's Curriculum Task Force will review **Curriculum Exception Request Application** and notify the requesting party in writing, within 60 days of receiving the request, the status of their application and any additional steps that may be required to complete the process.

To request a **Curriculum Exception Request Application**, call (407) 933-5353 or visit www.elcosceola.org. Mail completed **Curriculum Exception Request Applications** and associated documentation to:

Curriculum Review Team
Early Learning Coalition of Osceola County
1631 East Vine Street, Suite E
Kissimmee, Florida 34744



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CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS:

School readiness programs shall provide the elements necessary to prepare children for school by providing a curriculum that addresses acceptable practices based on the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards, including, but not limited to, learning activities designed to enhance physical health; approaches to learning; social and emotional development; language and communication; cognitive development and general knowledge; motor development; and character development.

CURRICULUM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Curriculum choices should be age appropriate and research-based, especially concerning early literacy.
- Include a strong literacy component, as appropriate to the age group taught, to include oral language, print awareness, phonemic and phonological awareness, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Provide a nurturing, safe environment with developmentally appropriate materials and equipment
- Include age appropriate materials and equipment that support the selected curriculum.
- The curriculum should be supported and enriched through parent/teacher communication regarding children's strengths, learning styles, and individual needs.
- Include individualized learning experiences linked to on-going assessments of each child's needs.
- Include learning activities designed to build on children's interests and skills to create meaningful experiences.
- Ensure that children are active and engaged.
- Provide a balance of teacher-initiated and child-initiated experiences.
- Provide activities to foster brain development of infants and toddlers, including an environment rich in language and music, filled with a large variety of objects to stimulate visual, tactile, auditory, and linguistic senses in children.
- Culturally sensitive to the child population, including children that may speak another language.
- Parents are recognized as the child's first teacher, and are offered support in assisting with the education of their own child.

CLASSROOM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN AGE BIRTH THROUGH TWO:

- The program environment must be rich in language and music. Children must be exposed to a variety of language experiences, including teacher/child interaction, child/child interaction, books and stories, and songs and finger plays.
- The classroom should be filled with objects of various colors, textures, and sizes to stimulate visual, tactile, auditory, and linguistic senses in children. Activities must be provided to foster brain development.
- Written lesson plans include activities that allow children a wide variety of experiences. The classroom schedule is flexible to meet the individual needs of the child, such as sleeping and feeding times of infants. Teachers include activities to meet the specific learning needs of the children as evidenced by their assessment scores and relevant reports and information.
- A system should be in place to organize information and reports received regarding the children's assessment scores.
- Individual files should be maintained in some fashion, so that all teachers in a classroom can review each child's educational needs. Teachers should understand the correlation between the milestones of development and the child's readiness for later school success.



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CLASSROOM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN AGE THREE THROUGH FIVE:

- The program has interest areas including blocks of various types, dramatic play, art, library with a wide variety of appropriate books, science/discovery, sand and water, music and movement, cooking, outdoors, etc.
- Written lesson plans include activities that allow children to explore all of the above areas on a regular basis. Teachers include activities to meet the specific learning needs of the children as evidenced by their assessment scores and relevant reports and information.
- A variety of curriculum resources should be used to assist in planning. Teachers should have easy access to resource materials, and an understanding of the skills needed by children for them to be ready for school.
- A system should be in place to organize information and reports received regarding the children's assessment scores.
- Individual files should be maintained in some fashion, so that all teachers in a classroom can review each child's educational needs. Teachers should have an understanding of the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards, so that activities can be planned that will assist each child in moving forward in his/her development.

INDICATORS OF AN EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM:

- Children are active and engaged.
- Goals are clear and shared by all.
- Curriculum is evidence-based.
- Valued content is learned through investigation, play, and focused, intentional teaching.
- Curriculum builds on prior learning and experiences.
- Curriculum is comprehensive.
- Professional standards validate the curriculum's subject-matter content.
- The curriculum is likely to benefit children.

An effective curriculum is just one part of an effective system of early childhood education, which includes early learning standards, assessment, and program evaluation. In order to produce positive outcomes for children, all parts of the system must be in place and linked together in a dynamic, meaningful way for continuous program improvement and positive outcomes for children. Teacher education is also critical to the success of school readiness programs. Teachers who receive curriculum training and support are better able clearly articulate their goals for children, and offer the children a curriculum that will deliver the expected outcomes.