# Curriculum

Quality early care and education programs in Rhode Island are on a continuous improvement path that is informed by Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing regulations; Department of Education Basic Education Program (BEP) regulations; BrightStars Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Standards; and Department of Education Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standards for Approval. The graphics below illustrate the state's quality continuum for center-based programs, family child care programs, and school-based programs. Larger versions of the graphics can be found in *Appendix A*.

This Tip Sheet describes how programs progress on that continuum in the area of *curriculum*.

| Center-based Programs | Family Child Care Programs | School-based Programs |
|---|---|---|



In Rhode Island, *early childhood curriculum* is defined as having two levels: *program-level curriculum* and *classroom-level curriculum*.

*Program-level curriculum* consists of an evidence-based written plan, or curriculum framework, that outlines the program's priorities for teaching and learning. Program-level curriculum describes the expectations of teachers as they develop classroom-level curriculum to support each child's developmental level, learning style, and interests. Program-level curriculum is aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) or the Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations for kindergarten. Teaching staff then use the curriculum framework to guide the development of *classroom-level curriculum*, which is a plan for providing children access to experiences in large groups, in small groups, and individually that support their learning and development across all the domains of learning. High-quality early learning programs use both program-level and classroom-level curricula to ensure that all children will enter school prepared to be successful.

Educational leaders in high-quality early learning programs design and implement a comprehensive curriculum framework that addresses four components: content, process, teaching and facilitating, and context.

- *Content* refers to what the curriculum will address—the domains of learning and the learning goals.

- *Process* addresses the ways children learn and how those ways inform the delivery of the curriculum.

- *Teaching and facilitating* focus on the teacher's role in implementing the curriculum.

- *Context* outlines the design of the environment and the materials needed to implement the curriculum.

Teachers use their program's curriculum framework as their guide to designing and implementing a classroom-level curriculum that reflects these same four components.

**Rhode Island's Quality Continuum as It Relates to Curriculum**

This table describes the increasing level of expectations in the area of curriculum as programs advance on the quality continuum. Evidence of improving program quality begins with foundational DCYF licensing regulations/BEP requirements, moves progressively up through the BrightStars rating system, and culminates with the highest standards for curriculum articulated in the RIDE[1] CECE Program Standards for Approval.

| Regulations or Standards | Level | Progression of Curriculum Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum | Quality Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| BEP Regulations | | RIDE BEP Regulations (2009), Chapter 13 | In Development |
| DCYF Regulations | Program | **Content, Process, Teaching and Facilitating, and Context** Regulation VII. A | DCYF reviews written description of program curriculum using a curriculum rubric. |
| | Classroom | **Content, Process, Teaching and Facilitating, and Context** Regulations VII. B–F | DCYF observes classrooms using an observation checklist. |
| BrightStars Standards | Program | **Content** <ul><li>3-, 4-, 5-star rating: Curriculum aligned with the RIELDS</li><li>5-star rating: Curriculum Framework</li></ul> | 3-, 4-, 5-star: BrightStars ensures the program has submitted a two-week lesson plan or curriculum framework for each age group. These plans must show a relationship between activities and a RIELDS domain. All of the RIELDS domains must be represented in the two-week plan.<br><br>5-star: BrightStars confirms that the program has a RIDE-approved curriculum framework. |

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[1] Rhode Island Department of Education

| Regulations or Standards | Level | Progression of Curriculum Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum | Quality Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Process**<br>RIELDS Administrator Training | |
| | | **Teaching and Facilitating**<br>5-star rating: CLASS[2] | BrightStars will only complete a CLASS for programs that meet 5-star level criteria in all other areas.<br><br>BrightStars will accept a CLASS from a program if it has been done by a certified assessor within the last year. |
| | | **Context**<br>3-, 4-, 5-star rating: ERS[3] | BrightStars completes an ERS assessment.<br><br>3-star programs must have an average ERS score of 3.0 or greater, with no observed classroom less than 2.5.<br><br>4-star programs must have an average ERS score of 4.0 or greater, with no observed classroom less than 3.0.<br><br>5-star programs must have an average ERS score of 5.0 or greater, with no observed classroom less than 3.0. |
| | Classroom | **Content**<br>3-, 4-, 5-star rating: Curriculum aligned with RIELDS | BrightStars reviews two weeks of lesson plans or curriculum framework for each age group dated within the last 30 days; both must demonstrate they are aligned to specific learning goals or all domains of the RIELDS. |
| | | **Process**<br>RIELDS Classroom Training | BrightStars confirms 75 percent of the teachers have earned a RIELS/RIELDS certificate. |

[2] Classroom Assessment Scoring System
[3] Environment Rating Scale

| Regulations or Standards | Level | Progression of Curriculum Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum | Quality Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Teaching and Facilitating**<br>5-star rating: CLASS | BrightStars completes a CLASS assessment in one-third of preschool classrooms. |
| | | **Context**<br>3-, 4-, 5-star rating: ECERS[4] | BrightStars administers the ECERS/ITERS[5] in one-third of classrooms for each age group.<br><br>3-star programs must have an average ERS score of 3.0 or greater, with no observed classroom less than 2.5.<br><br>4-star programs must have an average ERS score of 4.0 or greater, with no observed classroom less than 3.0.<br><br>5-star programs must have an average ERS score of 5.0 or greater, with no observed classroom less than 3.0. |
| RIDE CECE Program Standards for Approval | Program | **Content, Process, Teaching and Facilitating, and Context**<br>Standards 6.1–6.7 | • Program must have a RIDE-approved curriculum framework scored using a standards-based rubric.<br>• RIDE conducts administrator and education coordinator interviews and scores interview responses using a rubric. |

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[4] Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
[5] Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale

| Regulations or Standards | Level | Progression of Curriculum Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum | Quality Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Classroom | **Content, Process, Teaching and Facilitating, and Context**<br>Standards 6.8–6.23 | • RIDE conducts ECERS observations in every applicant classroom. ECERS scores of less than 4.5 will not be approved; scores between 4.5 and 4.99 may be approved if submitted with a plan for improvement; scores 5 and above meet the criteria for approval.<br>• RIDE completes CLASS observations in every applicant classroom. Scores are not used as part of the approval process.<br>• RIDE conducts teacher and education coordinator interviews and scores the interview responses using a rubric.<br>• RIDE reviews classroom documentation using a Classroom Observation Checklist. |

**Resources to Extend Your Learning**

- Center for Early Learning Professionals InfoLine: www.center-elp.org

- The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RELDS) professional development courses: *Developing a Standards-Based Curriculum*, *Implementing a Standards-Based Classroom*, *Implementing a Standards-Based Program:* www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Workforce.aspx#23021-rields-professional-development

- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning: csefel.vanderbilt.edu/

- Eastern Connecticut State University Center for Early Childhood Education: www.easternct.edu/cece/investigating_videos.html

- Resources for Early Learning, WGBH Educational Foundation: resourcesforearlylearning.org/

- Head Start National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning: eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching

- Science-related Curriculum: *The Young Scientist Series (Exploring Water, Structures, and Nature)* and *Worms, Shadows, and Whirlpools*

- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University: developingchild.harvard.edu

- The Project Approach website: projectapproach.org

- *The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children's Learning*, by Ann S. Epstein (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2007)

- *Young Child and Mathematics,* by Juanita Copley (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009)

- *High Five Mathematize: An Early Head Start and Head Start Math Resource Guide*, from the National Head Start Family Literacy Center: eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/curricula/high-five.html
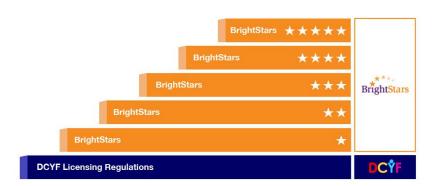
## APPENDIX A

### Center-based Program Quality Continuum



### School-based Program Quality Continuum



### Family Child Care Program Quality Continuum

# APPENDIX B

**RIDE Basic Education Plan (BEP) Regulations, June 2009**

**Chapter 13: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

**G-13.1. A GUARANTEED AND VIABLE CURRICULUM**

**G-13-1.1. Framework for a Comprehensive Curriculum. –** The Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education charges each LEA to ensure that its students are provided with a comprehensive program of study that is guaranteed and viable in each content area from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 (PK-12) so that its students are prepared for post-secondary education or productive employment. Each curriculum shall be developed to meet or exceed state content standards that have been adopted by the Board of Regents. In the absence of state-adopted standards in a content area, each LEA shall align its curriculum to national content standards specific to that content area. Each LEA shall formally adopt a set of curriculum documents that specify the content standards, instructional practices, materials, program, texts and assessments, and grading practices that are based on the community's rigorous achievement descriptions for its students and that account for the expectation that students must be globally aware and internationally competitive.

1. These curriculum documents shall explicitly communicate how students will be supported so that they can achieve high standards through multiple pathways and attain success in the 21st century global economy. Programs of study that are in one of the sixteen (16) critical-industry career cluster areas shall reflect the relevant academic content standards as well as the applicable national or industry skill standards. These supports shall account for multiple delivery models and settings while maintaining the common foundation of content standards and rigorous expectations for achievement. All curriculum documents shall include a Response to Intervention model as an integral component of supports and curriculum design.

2. All curriculum documents shall be aligned vertically and horizontally so that they provide direction in planning instructional strategies. Each LEA shall ensure that students across the district have access to the written curriculum in order to ensure continuity and comparability across schools or teachers within and across grade levels. Each LEA shall also ensure that all students are provided with a cohesive program of study that leads to graduation proficiency across all grade levels within the district.

3. All curriculum documents shall be made public and be easily accessible to the community.

**G-13-1.2. Curriculum Management and Supports. --** (a) Each LEA shall establish a comprehensive set of district-wide policies that will guide the development, alignment, and implementation of curriculum,

instruction, and assessment systems to ensure that all students become proficient life-long learners. These policies shall be made public and be easily accessible to the community.

(b) Each LEA shall develop and implement a written comprehensive curriculum-management plan that establishes the guidelines and procedures for the design, implementation, monitoring, and revision of the district-wide curriculum. The comprehensive management plan shall have the following components:

1. A defined method for designing curriculum, based on state and national standards, that includes access and opportunity for all students;
2. A curriculum-mapping process for measuring the gaps between the intended and delivered curriculum across all classrooms;
3. An approach to coordinating and articulating curriculum requirements across levels, within grades, between grades, across content areas, and with postsecondary education; and,
4. A defined method for supporting and monitoring the implementation of the delivered curriculum, instruction, and assessment systems.

(c) Each LEA shall ensure that the curriculum, instruction, and assessment systems are maintained and continuously improved by:

1. Identifying the roles and responsibilities of district personnel to support curriculum development, implementation, monitoring, and revision;
2. Providing ongoing supervision that evaluates and supports the implementation of the written curriculum;
3. Coordinating all available resources (fiscal, personnel, and time) to support curriculum development, implementation, revision, and evaluation;
4. Having sufficient personnel, resources, and time to design and implement an aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment system;
5. Engaging professional staff in the development of curriculum design and in the selection of instructional materials;
6. Providing sufficient professional development to all staff to ensure curriculum implementation with fidelity;
7. Disseminating current PK-12 written curriculum and related documents to professional staff and the community; and,
8. Communicating publicly the results of curriculum, instruction, and assessment design and activities to the community.

(d) Curriculum management and supports enable the LEA to address the following functions: *Guide the Implementation of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment* and *Recruit, Support and Retain Highly Effective Staff.*

**G-13-1.3. Comprehensive Program of Study. --** (a) Each LEA shall provide a comprehensive program of study in English language arts, mathematics, social studies, the sciences, visual arts & design and the performing arts, engineering and technology, comprehensive health, and world languages throughout the PK -12 system. This program of study shall integrate literacy (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), applied learning, and the use of information and communication technology across all content areas. Reading integration shall include vocabulary development, instruction in initial understanding, analysis and interpretation of content-area text, reading strategies as they relate to each content area, and the assurance that there is a breadth of text covered in each content area. The integration of writing and oral communication shall include the reading-writing connection, particularly in informational writing as well as the development of oral-communication strategies.

(b) Each comprehensive program of study shall reflect curriculum, and differentiated instruction, and assessment practices that provide a coherent and articulated development of students' skills and abilities in each content area that emphasize the following:

1. Grades PK-4 shall focus on building student fluency and conceptual understanding in literacy and numeracy through the integration of content area;
2. Grades 5-8 shall focus on integrating content-based coursework while attending to content-based literacy and numeracy development; and
3. Grades 9-12 shall offer courses within and across content areas that are in predictable sequences to ensure that all students have access to all content necessary to become proficient. Further, each LEA shall integrate career-and-technical education programs of study as part of its high-school course offerings. Career and technical education programs of study shall be tied to one or more pathways identified for critical-industry career clusters. These programs of study shall specify coursework and experiences needed to move students through high school to completion and success in postsecondary education and careers, using combinations of traditional and career-and-technical education courses, as well as project-based and work-based experiences and/or dual enrollment.

(c) In addition, each LEA shall develop specific curricula and programming that address the learning needs of (a) English language learners by attending to student profiles (e.g., education history and achievement and age of entry to the United States); (b) students with disabilities by addressing goals of the Individual Educational Program or 504 Plan; (c) students at risk for not completing their education; and (d) students in need of advanced academic opportunities.

# APPENDIX C

**DCYF Child Care Program Regulations for Licensure, November 2013**

**SECTION THREE – LICENSING STANDARDS VII. A-F**

**VII. CURRICULUM**

A. Curriculum

    1. The curriculum clearly demonstrates an understanding of the needs of children and provides for their growth through enriching and stimulating experiences suited to their age levels and stages of development.

    2. The curriculum includes:

        a. developmentally appropriate activities, including daily physical activity;

        b. daily schedule;

        c. classroom environment (and materials);

        d. physical activity;

        e. nurturing relationships; and

        f. family partnerships.

B. Planning

    1. There is a written method of documented planning in each classroom that details classroom plans on a weekly basis and is informed by the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (http://www.earlylearningri.org/).

    2. Planning is the responsibility of the education coordinator.

    3. At least once a month, the education coordinator meets with each teacher to consult on program planning and to assist in the planning for individual children.

    4. Classroom teachers share this information with staff and plan for individual children's needs and growth. Planning includes child-directed activities.

    5. Documentation of planning is kept onsite for at least the previous three months.

C. The program provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities, guided by the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards. Activities emphasize concrete experiential learning through play to:

    1. Promote learning through spontaneous and directed play activities.

    2. Enhance each child's unique potential for learning across all developmental domains.

    3. Foster each child's physical health, development and coordination.

    4. Support each child's social and emotional development, including trusting relationships with adults.

    5. Support each child's language development, communication and emergent literacy skills.

    6. Support cognition, executive function and approaches to learning.

D. Daily Schedule (Process)

1. The infant/toddler program demonstrates an understanding of the needs and development of young children and provides experiences and environments that go beyond basic care and supervision.
2. The program provides experiences that foster the development of trusting relationships between staff and child(ren).
3. Programs serving infants make every effort to schedule consistent staff in order to foster and maintain warm, reciprocal relationships between staff and infants.
4. The program provides an environment that promotes respect for individual feeding, sleeping and diapering patterns.
5. The physical needs of the children receive prompt attention.
6. Daily routines of feeding and diapering provide opportunities for learning (e.g. mirrors, mobiles, toys and language input).
7. The program provides activities that promote on a daily basis:
   a. language acquisition by statements of happenings, songs, stories, poems and finger-plays;
   b. cognitive/sensory learning by stimulation of the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch;
   c. gross motor skills;
   d. fine motor skills; and
   e. tummy time.
8. Teachers post and follow a regular daily schedule. The schedule provides a balance of activities and experiences, which incorporate a combination of activities and are child-initiated and staff-initiated, each day including:
   a. indoor and outdoor;
   b. quiet and active;
   c. large group, small group and individual; and
   d. large muscle and small muscle.
9. Staff promote children's active play and participate with children when physically able to do so for at least an hour each day. The indoor and outdoor environments are utilized for all children to engage in physical activity each day.
10. Programs provide regular periods of quiet activity or resting/sleeping appropriate to the needs of the children.
11. Infants and toddlers are in cribs only for rest or sleep.
12. Preschool children are on cots only for rest or sleep.
13. There are no restraining devices of any type used in a crib or elsewhere unless prescribed by a physician or other appropriately licensed/certified professional.
14. The program designates a space separate from the napping area for children who will not sleep to have quiet, supervised play.
15. There is a sleep plan appropriate to the needs of each child. There is no forced sleep or wakefulness.

16. All programs follow a regular daily schedule. However, planned or routine activities are changed to meet the interests and needs of the children or to cope with weather changes or other situations that effect routines.

E. Classroom Environment and Materials (Context)

1. All equipment and materials used in the program are:
   a. safe and durable;
   b. appropriate for the age level of the children and stage of development;
   c. sufficient in quantity for the number of children enrolled;
   d. accessible to the children;
   e. promote exploration; and
   f. represent a variety of racial, cultural, linguistic, gender, ability and age attributes.

2. Materials which require staff supervision are stored out of children's reach.

3. The indoor and outdoor environments are organized so as to provide the children with ample opportunity for freedom of movement and exploration in safe, clean, open and uncluttered areas.
   a. Non-mobile infants are positioned to permit a wide range of visual stimuli.
   b. Positioning is varied throughout the day.
   c. Ambulatory infants and toddlers are permitted to freely explore a planned environment which provides opportunities to utilize their emerging skills to crawl, climb, pull to a stand and walk.

4. Materials are provided which stimulate infant development. A selection of play things are provided including but not limited to:
   a. blocks;
   b. busy boards;
   c. balls;
   d. cuddly toys;
   e. pull toys;
   f. sorting toys;
   g. kitchen toys;
   h. musical and auditory stimulation toys;
   i. nesting and stacking toys;
   j. rattles and squeeze toys;
   k. mirrors;
   l. books;
   m. mobiles and cradle gyms;
   n. climbing equipment; and
   o. riding toys.

5. The indoor and outdoor environments are organized and equipped with clearly defined learning areas which include, at a minimum, areas devoted to:

a. construction;

b. dramatic play;

c. discovery,

d. sensory play;

e. books;

f. large motor activity;

g. manipulatives; and

h. creative expression, including music.

F. Nurturing Relationships (Teaching and Facilitating)

1. Staff:

    a. serve as a positive role model for the children in care;

    b. use positive methods in guiding children back on task, encourage appropriate behavior and set clear limits;

    c. use rules that children can understand;

    d. match expectations with the children's developing abilities and capabilities;

    e. praise the children's accomplishments as well as their attempts at tasks;

    f. use positive, firm limit setting;

    g. assist children by redirecting them from inappropriate actions to activities that are more favorable;

    h. create a positive environment through their own behaviors such as frequent social conversations with children, joint laughter and affection, eye contact, tone of voice and smiles; and

    i. develop individual relationships with children by providing care that is responsive, attentive, consistent, comforting, supportive and culturally sensitive.

2. When a child presents challenging behavior, staff:

    a. observe the child;

    b. identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to the challenging behavior;

    c. use this information to assist the child;

    d. work together with families on behalf of their child; and

    e. support families in accessing services and outside resources, when necessary.

# APPENDIX D

**BrightStars – Child Care Center and Preschool Quality Framework, November 2013**

**Domain 5:** Early Learning & Development

**Standard 7: Curriculum**

The program **uses a curriculum or curriculum framework,** aligned to the RI Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS), for all age groups served, including infants and toddlers. Teaching staff have **emotional connections** with children and respond appropriately to individual early learning and development needs. Classroom schedules and routines **maximize time spent in early learning and development** activities. The program provides many **opportunities for children to learn and practice skills** in all domains of the RI Early Learning and Development Standards.

| Level One | Level Two | Level Three | Level Four | Level Five |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Licensing Compliance** Community-based Programs | **Licensing Compliance** Community-based Programs | **Written Curriculum** Curriculum aligned with the RIELDS | **Written Curriculum** Curriculum aligned with the RIELDS | **Written Curriculum** Curriculum and **curriculum framework** aligned with the RIELDS |
| —— OR —— | —— OR —— | —— OR —— | —— OR —— | —— OR —— |
| **BEP Compliance** Public Schools | **BEP Compliance** Public Schools | Compliance with Head Start Performance Standards | Compliance with Head Start Performance Standards | Compliance with Head Start Performance Standards |
| | **+** | —— OR —— | —— OR —— | —— OR —— |
| | Learning Environment[1] | NAEYC Accreditation | NAEYC Accreditation | NAEYC Accreditation |
| | | **+** | **+** | **+** |
| | | Learning Environment[1] | Learning Environment[1] | Learning Environment[1] |
| | | **+** | **+** | **+** |
| | | RIELDS Training[2] | RIELDS Training[2] | RIELDS Training[2] |
| | | | **+** | **+** |
| | | | Teaching and Interaction[3] | Teaching and Interaction CLASS observation (in one-third of preschool classrooms) |

[1] This criteria is measured in Standard 1: Learning Environment
[2] This criteria is measured in Standards 4 and 5: Teacher Qualifications and Program Leadership
[3] At Level Four, this criteria is under development and may be implemented at a later date.

**BrightStars – Family Child Care Quality Framework, November 2013**

**Domain 5:** Early Learning & Development

## Standard 5: Curriculum

The program **uses a curriculum or curriculum framework,** aligned to the RI Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS), for all age groups served, including infants and toddlers. Educators have **emotional connections** with children and respond appropriately to individual early learning and development needs. Classroom schedules and routines **maximize time spent in early learning and development** activities. The program provides many **opportunities for children to learn and practice skills** in all domains of the RI Early Learning and Development Standards.

| Level One | Level Two | Level Three | Level Four | Level Five |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Licensing Compliance | Licensing Compliance ➕ Learning Environment[1] | **Written Curriculum** Curriculum aligned with the RIELDS ➕ Learning Environment[1] | **Written Curriculum** Curriculum aligned with the RIELDS ➕ Learning Environment[1] ➕ RIELDS Training[2] | **Written Curriculum** Curriculum and **curriculum framework** aligned with the RIELDS ➕ Learning Environment[1] ➕ RIELDS Training[2] |

[1] This criteria is measured in Standard 1: Learning Environment
[2] This criteria is measured in Standard 3: Educator Qualifications

**BrightStars – School-Age Child Care (K–5) Quality Framework, April 2011**

**Domain 2:** Teaching and Learning

**Standard 2:** Curriculum, Child Assessment, and Process of Learning

The program uses a program plan, curriculum, or curriculum framework. The program provides many **opportunities for children to learn and practice skills** across a broad range of developmental areas including social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The program **systematically and routinely gathers information** about each child in order to meet the individual needs of children and provide differentiated learning experiences.

| Level One | Level Two | Level Three | Level Four | Level Five | Measurement | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School-age program licensing requires a plan book on site which details program planning for at least a month in advance | **Curriculum** Comprehensive self-assessment (see Standard 8) | **Curriculum** Comprehensive self-assessment (see Standard 8) | **Curriculum** The program plan or curriculum includes weekly opportunities for each of the following:<br><br>• active physical activity<br><br>• creative expression<br><br>• academic support<br><br>**✚**<br><br>**Child Assessment** The program gathers information about each child through at least **one** of the following: observations, checklists, interest inventories, family/child surveys or interviews, school performance information, or other assessment tools | **Curriculum** The program plan or curriculum includes **two** or more different opportunities weekly for each of the following:<br><br>• active physical activity<br><br>• creative expression<br><br>• academic support<br><br>**✚**<br><br>**Child Assessment** The program gathers information about each child through at least **two** of the following: observations, checklists, interest inventories, family/child surveys or interviews, school performance information, or other assessment tools | • Program plan/curriculum review<br><br>• Documentation of child assessment | • COA After School Recognition resources |

## APPENDIX E

**RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standards for Approval of Preschool and Kindergarten Programs, 2013**

**Standards 6.1 – 6.7 / Program-Level Curriculum** – The Curriculum Framework
*Including recommended enhancements for programs serving infants and toddlers*

6.1 The program shall have a **written curriculum framework** aligned to the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards that recognizes the individual needs for all children. This framework is a description of how the program will implement core components of a quality curriculum:

- Context
- Content
- Teaching and Facilitation
- Process

*In addition, programs that serve infants and toddlers should address expectations for age-appropriate classroom practices where appropriate. For example, programs should address:*

- *the importance of primary caregiving and continuity of care*

- *family partnerships that stress the importance of sensitive, trusting, and respectful, sharing-the-caring relationships with parents*

6.2 The curriculum framework shall describe how the **materials and equipment** are intentionally chosen to support children's learning, interests, and skills levels while:

- reflecting the lives of the children and families;
- reflecting the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language and abilities;
- encouraging exploration, experimentation, and discovery;
- organized to support independent use;
- rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels;
- rich in variety; and
- accommodate children's developmental delays and disabilities.

6.3 The curriculum framework shall guide teachers in the development of a developmentally appropriate **daily schedule** that is predictable, yet flexible and responsive to the needs of the children.

*In addition, programs serving infants and toddlers should address expectations for responsive care routines rather than predetermined schedules (for example, napping when tired and eating when hungry).*

6.4    The curriculum framework shall guide teachers in incorporating content, concepts and activities that foster and integrate the **Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations** to support all children's learning.

6.5    The curriculum framework shall articulate that **intentional teaching practices**, such as learning through play, the mechanisms through which children attain developmentally appropriate goals in all developmental domains.

*In addition, programs that serve infants and toddlers should address expectations that teachers use rich language as an additional key practice*

6.6    The curriculum framework shall reflect the program's understanding of **how children learn and develop,** to guide teachers in meeting the individual needs of children.

*In addition, programs that serve infants and toddlers should address the role of trusting relationships in fostering learning opportunities.*

6.7    The framework shall act as a guide for teachers in **designing and implementing a variety evidence based strategies and multi-level learning opportunities** based on the assessment of the child's developmental levels, learning styles and interests.

*In addition, programs that serve infants and toddlers should address consideration of a child's temperament.*

**Standards 6.8 – 6.23 / Classroom-Level Curriculum**

Educational leaders creating a curriculum framework should consider how the framework will support teachers as they develop classroom curriculum that meets RIDE CECE Standards 6.8 – 6.23 (adjusted when necessary to meet the developmental needs of infants and toddlers).

**CONTEXT – Materials, Learning Environments, Routines & Schedules**
RIDE CECE Standards 6.8 – 6.11

6.8    Teachers shall design a **learning environment** that is well organized, accessible to all children and equipped with clearly defined learning areas which include, at a minimum, areas devoted to: construction, dramatic play, discovery, books, manipulatives and creative expression.

6.9    Teachers shall **organize space and select materials** to stimulate exploration, experimentation, discovery and conceptual learning in all developmental areas. These materials shall be:
- chosen intentionally to support children's learning goals;
- well-maintained;
- organized and labeled;
- easily accessible to children;
- representative of the interests, needs and cultures of children;
- age-appropriate;
- of sufficient quantity for the numbers of children being served.

6.10   Teaching staff shall post, maintain, and follow a regular **daily schedule** which allows flexibility to meet interests and individual needs of the children. The schedule prioritizes play and incorporates:
- a combination of teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities;
- learning opportunities, experiences, and projects that extend over the course of several days;
- large group, small group and individual activities;
- indoor and outdoor activities; and
- an age appropriate balance between active and quiet activities.

6.11   The **outdoor environment** shall be used to promote children's development and active physical play through intentional curriculum planning.

**CONTENT – What Children Know, Understand and Are Able To Do**
RIDE CECE Standards 6.12 – 6.13

6.12   Teachers shall **intentionally plan and imbed learning opportunities/activities** aligned with the domains of the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade level Expectations to support all children's learning throughout the day.

6.13   Teachers shall maintain a **method of documented planning** that demonstrates that curriculum is developed based on the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade level Expectations. Plans should be written at least on a weekly basis with adjustments as needed based on emerging needs, skills and interests of children in the class.

**TEACHING & FACILITATING – Teacher's Role, Relationships & Intentional Teaching**
RIDE CECE Standards 6.14 – 6.21

6.14   Teaching staff shall create a **positive learning environment** by using a wide range of teaching strategies. Teaching strategies shall be:

- based on information gained through ongoing observation and documentation of children's behavior and learning;
- supportive of children's growth and development in the areas addressed in all domains; and
- supportive of the development of individual relationships through interactions that are respectful of and sensitive and responsive to differing abilities, temperaments, activity levels, culture and cognitive and social developmental levels.

6.15   Teaching staff shall **implement curriculum** in a manner that:

- reflects responsiveness to goals that families have for their children;
- is informed by child assessment and observation data; and
- supports the development and maintenance of children's home language whenever possible while promoting English language acquisition; while
- ensuring that all children have access to universal curriculum, are active participants in classroom activities, and provided accommodations, as needed, to facilitate such participation.

6.16   Teaching staff shall **promote children's learning** by responding to their observed and documented need for and interest in practicing emerging skills.  Teaching staff shall:

- provide targeted and individualized instruction;

- utilize multi-level learning opportunities and a variety of instructional strategies to support children's development;
- use children's interest in and curiosity about the world to engage them with new content and developmental skills; and
- provide children opportunities to effect what happens in the classroom through participation in decision making about issues concerning classroom behavior, plans, and activities.

6.17  Teaching staff shall **promote positive interactions** with children by:

- managing behavior, teaching and implementing classroom rules and expectations, and helping individual children learn socially appropriate behavior by providing positive guidance that is consistent with the child's level of development;
- talking frequently with children and listening to children with attention and respect through responding to children's questions and requests, using multiples strategies to communicate and build relationships with every children, and engage in meaningful and extended conversation with each child;
- creating a positive environment through their own behaviors, including frequent social conversations with children, joint laughter and affection, eye contact, tone of voice and smiles;
- developing individual relationships with children by providing care that is responsive, attentive, consistent, comforting, supportive, and culturally sensitive; and
- providing children with opportunities to effect what happens in the classroom through participation in decision making about issues concerning classroom behavior, plans, and activities.

6.18  When a **child presents with challenging behavior, teaching staff shall**:
   a. meet with parents/guardians to share observations, listen to parental/guardian insights, and discuss intentions of how best support the child's appropriate behavior.
   b. Observe the child, then identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior.
   c. Focus on teaching the child social communication and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support and other intervention strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior rather than focusing only on eliminating the challenging behavior.
   d. Respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that:
      i. Provides for the safety of the child and others in the classroom
      ii. Is calm and respectful to the child
      iii. Provides the child with information about acceptable behavior

6.19  For all children, staff **shall not use food or outdoor play as a reward or as a behavior consequence**.

Exceptions may only be made if specifically stated in a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

6.20  **For children requiring special education services**, teaching staff shall collaborate with special education professionals and families to support children with disabilities and developmental delays to succeed in inclusive environments and ensure each partner has access to necessary information and supports for appropriate services.

6.21  When technology is used in a program, **technology shall be used for the purpose of extending learning** within the classroom to integrate and enrich the curriculum. Staff shall be actively engaged in this process with children.

**PROCESS – How Children Learn**
CECE Standards 6.22 – 6.23

6.22  Teachers shall **implement curriculum through play experiences** that provide multiple opportunities for all children to attain developmentally appropriate goals in each developmental domain.

6.23     Teachers shall **design learning opportunities that integrate multiple goals.**