

Early Learning Coalition

of Pinellas County, Inc.

Policy: ELCPC-61.1.3	Title: Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Character Education	
	Review Date: September 2011	Next Review Date: September 2012

References: School Readiness Provider Agreement, Chapter 411, F.S., Child Care Development Fund (federal)

Purpose: To provide interpretive guidelines for applicable School Readiness services and standards as outlined in of Chapter 411, F.S., Chapter 1002, F.S. and the Child Care Development Fund (federal) specific to developmentally appropriate curriculum and character education programs.

Background:

Each provider uses a developmentally appropriate curriculum to support the cognitive, physical, character and social- emotional development of the whole child. (Section 411.01(5)(c)2.a.,F.A.).

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Curriculum is an organized framework that defines the content that children are to learn, the processes through which children reach the identified educational goals, what teachers do to help children reach these goals and the environment in which teaching and learning occur. A well-designed curriculum, combined with teachers’ knowledge of children, guides instruction so teachers can provide experiences that promote children’s growth and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive. The curriculum places as much emphasis on the process of learning as on the content and capitalizes on children’s natural curiosity to promote their growth as language users, thinkers, and problem solvers. It provides a wide variety of planned experiences that enable children to learn through interaction, exploration, manipulation, and self-discovery.

Early Childhood Professionals are encouraged to use *The Florida Birth to Three Learning and Development Standards* and the *Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Standards* as they plan activities and interact with young children. Providing rich experiences, supportive learning environments and positive relationships with children

in the years before they start kindergarten will give them the foundations for later school success.

Character Development Program

Section 411.01 (5)(c)2.b., F.S.

There is no single script for effective character education, but there are some important basic principles. The following ten principles serve as best practices that providers can use to plan effective character education program:

Principle 1 – Promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character

Principle 2 – Defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling and behavior.

Principle 3 - Uses a comprehensive, intentional, proactive, and effective approach to character development.

Principle 4 - Creates a caring school community.

Principle 5 - Provides students with opportunities for moral action.

Principle 6 - Includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.

Principle 7 - Strives to foster students self motivation.

Principle 8 - Engages the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares responsibility for character education and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students.

Principle 9 - Engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.

Principle 10 – Evaluates the character of the school, the school staff’s functioning as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character.

This Coalition policy and procedure is inclusive to all caregiver settings: child care center, licensed family child care home or informal provider receiving School Readiness (SR) funding.

Policy:

I. Developmentally Appropriate Curricula Compliance Options

1. Providers may choose to use a curriculum on the approved list and complete the self-assessment study to verify that implementation of the curriculum is developmentally appropriate. Providers are not required to submit the self-assessment, but must maintain a copy at their site.

OR

2. If the Provider’s curriculum is not on this list, a Self-Assessment Study must be submitted for each age group served (Infant, Toddler, Two’s and/or Preschool).
- *Florida Birth to Three Learning and Developmental Standards*
 - *Florida School Readiness Performance Standards for Three-, Four-, and Five Year-Old Children*

- *Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Standards (revised 4-year-old standards)*

List of approved developmentally appropriate curricula:

- Beyond Cribs and Rattles
- The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos, 2nd edition
- High Scope Infant Toddler
- DLM Early Childhood Program
- High Scope
- Creative Curriculum 4th Edition
- Scholastic Early Childhood Program
- Doors to Discovery
- Let's Begin with Letter People
- Kaplan Planning Guide to the Preschool Curriculum
- Wee Learn
- Literacy Express
- Beyond Centers and Circle Time
- Links to Literacy
- Houghton Mifflin Pre-K
- Montessori
- Read Together, Talk Together
- Curiosity Corner
- Investigator Club Pre-Kindergarten Learning System
- Opening the World of Learning
- Ready, Set, Leap!
- Saxon Early Learning
- We Can!
- Wright Skills/Growing with Mathematics
- Early Literacy and Learning Model/Plus
- Or any curriculum approved by the Department of Education for Low Performing VPK Providers.

II. Character Development Compliance Options

1. Activities that encourage the development of character values must be documented on lesson plans.
2. Providers may choose to use the *Commitment to Character* program.

OR

Providers may incorporate activities that encourage the development of character values into daily activities. For example, you may teach conflict resolution when two children are arguing over a toy or a responsibility during clean-up time..

Curriculum Adoption

Providers must document adoption of an approved Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Character Education program.

Curriculum Implementation

Providers must demonstrate implementation of a Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Character Education in lesson plans and classroom/childcare home practices. Lesson plans should be retained on-site for a minimum one (1) year.

Note:

Providers are prohibited from requiring School Readiness parents to cover payment for lost revenue due to violations of the School Readiness Agreement.

Providers may appeal action taken in accordance with this policy with the [School Readiness/VPK Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy \(ELCPC-10.1\)](#).

Procedures:

I. MONITORING

Initial Approval

Providers must complete the School Readiness Provider Application, which documents intended compliance, before an Agreement is executed.

Onsite Monitoring

Onsite monitoring will be unannounced and will include a review that provides evidence the provider is utilizing a developmentally appropriate curriculum and lesson plans.

Desk Audit Monitoring

Providers will be notified five (5) business days in advance of desk audit monitoring and must submit Lesson Plans for the current week and prior weeks as identified by Coalition Staff.

The Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Character Education Self Assessments are required for all new School Readiness Providers.

Once Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Character Education Self Assessments have been submitted, they do not need to be updated unless there are curriculum changes.

II. ENFORCEMENT

Failure to demonstrate curriculum implementation requirements will result in:

Technical Assistance

Providers not meeting Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum and Character Education requirements will receive technical assistance from Coalition Staff. Lesson plans will be reviewed again within six (6) weeks to evaluate compliance.

LEVEL 1 School Readiness Enforcement

Service Improvement Agreement

Failure to demonstrate compliance after technical assistance will result in a Service Improvement Agreement. The SIA clearly defines goals and timeframes to correct concerns.

LEVEL 2 School Readiness Enforcement

Nonpayment for School Readiness

Failure to comply with terms of the Service Improvement Agreement will result in a suspension of the School Readiness payment until compliance is demonstrated, within a maximum of ten (10) business days.

LEVEL 3 School Readiness Enforcement

Termination of School Readiness Agreement

Failure to demonstrate compliance upon conclusion of the nonpayment period will result in Termination of the School Readiness Agreement within 10 days. The Provider will be ineligible to receive School Readiness funding for a minimum of one (1) year from termination of the Agreement.

Parents of School Readiness funded children will be notified that the funding for this Provider's School Readiness program will cease and CCR&R staff will assist them in finding alternate care. Parents will have up to 10 days to find an alternative School Readiness provider. Parents choosing to keep their child enrolled with the terminated Provider will forfeit their School Readiness scholarship.