

EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR GOLD SEAL PROGRAMS AND SCHOOLS

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA

AISF APPROVED

2024

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American Christian Consortium for Education and Accreditation
Association of Christian Schools International
Association of Christian Teachers and Schools/Assemblies of God
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Commission on International & Trans-Regional Accreditations
Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
Christian Schools International
Christian Schools of Florida
Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation
Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools
International Christian Accrediting Association
Kentucky Department of Education
Kentucky Nonpublic School Commission
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Commission on Elementary Schools)
Montessori School Accreditation Commission
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Christian School Association
National Council for Private School Accreditation
National Independent Private School Association
National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities
Ohio Department of Education
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Teled International
Texas Education Agency
Texas Private School Accrediting Commission
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Overview of AISF Early Education Accreditation Program and Standards

Over the past twenty years or more, a significant amount of research regarding early learning and child development supported the field of early education in setting benchmarks and best practice standards for programs serving children in early childhood programs from birth through five-years of age. This research has been incorporated in a variety of accreditation tools, including this one. The AISF recognizes the need for accrediting agencies to have a variety of accreditation tools available to provide parents the right to choose the type of quality early education program for their child to attend.

Research provided through a cooperative effort of the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, *The Children of the Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study Go to School* and The National Research Council in *Eager to Learn* notes that a well-planned, high-quality early childhood program leads to the success of children in later academic years. This is especially true for young children who are at greater risk of school failure because of poverty, low level maternal education, and other factors that limit opportunities and resources that enhance learning and development (Bowman 2001).

A large amount of research has been conducted concerning the effect of early education programs on young children. The education of the staff and the training they have received in the field, as well as child to staff ratios and group sizes and staff turnover, all play a role in the quality of an early education program. The longer the amount of time children attend such programs, the more likely both positive and negative consequences can be attributed to the quality of the program (Helburn 1995). The Task Force recognizes that although research can help us identify indicators for quality care and early education, it cannot relieve the difficulties of providing the needed infrastructure that will allow all programs in every state to meet high quality standards. Therefore, exceptional compliance indicators have been added to this document that may help the visiting teams and accreditation commissions see how quality is being achieved that exceeds the stated standard.

The importance of core knowledge development in the curriculum of the early education program has become prominent with the advent of Universal Pre-Kindergarten. Research on cognition and learning, child development, and the social and cultural context of learning has shown that young children are competent learners even at a young age. It is important to note, however, that the “pace of leaning will depend on whether and to what extent the child’s inclinations to learn encounter and engage supporting environments” (Bowman, et al. 2001). Federal-State partnerships in the delivery of quality early education programs have been and are being formed that impact all pre-kindergarten programs. These education reform initiatives have specifically targeted the need to:

1. Align expectations of the early education program prior to children entering kindergarten and what is expected of them once they enter the elementary school years.
2. Evaluate the success of the early education program by how well the children are prepared to succeed once in the elementary school system.

3. Develop informational pieces to educate teachers, parents, childcare providers, and others are in place to provide ways to prepare children to be ready for school.

It is the intent of the Task Force to provide an accreditation tool that would allow private early education programs to meet and or exceed Federal and State expectations for young children. The main concern of the Task Force is that whether children attend a part-time part-day program, or a full-day week-day program, they are safe, healthy, and receive age appropriate, research based, early education.

Accreditation Overview

I. Step one: Review Accreditation Standards and Expectations

Before submitting an application for accreditation, the early education program must carefully review the information in the accreditation standards. The early education board, faculty, and staff must commit to completing the self-study, meet all accreditation standards, and maintain accreditation through annual reporting.

II. Step two: The Self Study

After studying the Standards, Rationale, and Self-Study Document requirements, the director and staff begin preparing a self-study document describing the program as it meets the standards required in the accreditation manual. The accreditation manual will designate when a document is to be submitted in the self-study or to be made available for review upon the validation visit.

III. Step three: Rating the Standards

Each standard is preceded by a rationale and preceded by a self-study document requirement or on site review, and a series of ratings. The director and staff of the early education program will determine if the program exceeds, meets, partially meets, or does not meet each requirement depending on the rating opportunities. Programs that are able to meet a significant number of exceptional compliance ratings will be more likely not to have to meet every standard as written.

Directors are encouraged to add explanations for how the program meets a standard without compromising the integrity of the rating system in the self-study notebook.

IV. Step four: Evaluation and Program Improvement Plan

After the early education program has studied each section of the accreditation standards, the staff will be able to evaluate whether or not the program is already meeting the standard; will be able to add improvements prior to the validation team visit; or if a program improvement plan will need to be adopted. When a program improvement plan is adopted, submit a copy of the plan at the end of the section corresponding to the section topic.

V. Step five: Validation Process

Upon completion of the self-study, qualified validators will read, analyze and validate the self-study report, verify records, files, and other information listed as support documentation, visit the center to see indoor and outdoor environments and observe classrooms in progress, and interview administration, parents and staff. A report will be generated to reflect commendations and recommendations and affirm program improvement plans. The report will be presented to the AISF Board of Directors who will approve or deny accreditation.

V. Step six: Renewal Process

To maintain accreditation, the program will submit an annual progress report with applicable support documents for review and verification that the program may continue to maintain accreditation status. Additionally, the program will undergo a scheduled onsite visit every 3.5 years. The program may also be subject to periodic unannounced onsite visits.

SECTION I

PHILOSOPHY, GOVERNANCE, & ADMINISTRATION

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
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current research and “best practices” in the field and is consistent with the program's mission and vision statements.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the program’s philosophy statement and cite the research and/or “best practices” on which it is based.

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: It is evident that a substantial amount of research was used in developing the program’s philosophy statement, and the statement reflects the mission and vision of the program.
 - Standard met: The philosophy statement is based on research and reflects the program’s mission and vision.
 - Standard substantially met: The program has developed a philosophy statement. However, it is not backed up by research.
 - Standard not met: There is no written philosophy statement.

1.2 CORPORATE STRUCTURE

1.2.1 Bylaws The corporate status of the entity having oversight of the early education program, whether incorporated, franchised, proprietary, or religiously affiliated, has clearly articulated bylaws that include the early education program.

Self-study document # Define the corporate status of the entity having oversight of the early education program, demonstrating that clearly articulated bylaws include educational options sufficient to cover the early education program.

- Rating
- Standard met: The corporate status of the entity having oversight of the early education program—whether incorporated, franchised, proprietary, or religiously affiliated—has clearly articulated bylaws that include the early education program.
 - Standard not met: The corporate status of the entity having oversight of the early education program—whether incorporated, franchised, proprietary, or religiously affiliated—does not have clearly articulated bylaws that include the early education program.

- Self-study document # Include a copy of the corporation's bylaws that provides specific oversight of the early care and educational programs operated under the corporation.
- Rating Standard met: Bylaws of the corporation give specific oversight to early care and educational programs operated under the corporation.
- Standard not met: The self-study does not contain bylaws of the corporation that give specific oversight to early care and educational programs operated under the corporation.

1.2.4 Governing Policies and Procedures The governance establishes and maintains written governing policies and procedures that are consistent with the program's philosophy.

- Self-study document # Include a copy of the current policies and procedures manual for the early education program and/or inclusive of the early education program.
- Rating Standard met: Policies and procedures reflect the program's current practices and the program's philosophy.
- Standard substantially met: Policies and procedures are consistent with the program's philosophy. However, they have not been reviewed and brought up to date in more than a year.
- Standard not met: The policies and procedures are not consistent with the program's philosophy.

1.2.5 Governance Role and Responsibilities The governance has clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the early education program. New governance members are provided with an orientation when they join the governance consisting of the program's written policies defining roles and responsibilities of board members and staff.

- Self-study document # Define the roles and responsibilities of the governance and how new members receive orientation information.
- Rating Standard met: The roles and responsibilities of the governance are defined, and the governance orientation process includes written policies defining roles and responsibilities of board members and staff.

- Standard substantially met: The roles and responsibilities of the governance are loosely defined, and there is no governance orientation process described.
- Standard not met: The roles and responsibilities of the governance are not defined, and there is no governance orientation process described.

1.2.6 Minutes of Meetings Written minutes of governance meetings are maintained on file.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Copies of the governance minutes from three governance meetings referring to the early education program are available on site to the visiting team chair or to his/her designee.
 - Standard not met: Copies of three governance minutes referring to the early education program are not available on site to the visiting team chair or to his/her designee.

1.3 GOVERNANCE EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

1.3.1 Evaluation of Director The governance ensures an annual evaluation of the early education administrator/director (hereinafter referred to as “the director”).

Self-study document # Submit copies of the evaluation tools used, and explain the process used in the evaluation process of the director.

- Rating
- Standard met: An annual evaluation form used to annually evaluate the director is provided.
 - Standard substantially met: A satisfactory explanation of the director’s annual evaluation is supplied.
 - Standard not met: Evidence of an annual evaluation is not supplied.

1.3.2 Response to Civil Authorities' Requirements The governance ensures the program meets and/or exceeds all requirements of civil authorities in the areas of health and safety, child-staff ratios, background screening, fingerprinting, and staff training requirements (or training requirement equivalencies) regardless of any exception status that may be present.

Self-study document # Licensed programs must include a copy of the program's current license and last inspection report. Programs exempt from licensure will be expected to validate how all minimal state licensing requirements are met or exceeded, regardless of exemption.

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: Evidence throughout the visitation demonstrates that the program highly exceeds requirements by civil authorities in the areas stated above.
 - Standard met: The program meets/exceeds requirements of civil authorities in the areas stated above.
 - Standard substantially met: The program meets/exceeds some of the requirements of civil authorities in the areas stated above but not all of them.
 - Standard not met: The program does not meet any requirements of civil authorities in the areas stated above.

1.3.3 Evaluation of Program In collaboration with staff, families, and governance, the director (or director qualified personnel) submits an annual written program evaluation of the program's effectiveness which may include early childhood/child development theory, research, and best practices, and assists the governance in setting and prioritizing short- and long-range goals for the program.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the last annual evaluation of the program and a prioritized list of short- and long-range goals for the program.

- Rating
- Standard met: The last annual evaluation is provided, and the evaluation includes short- and long-range goals.
 - Standard substantially met: A copy of the last annual evaluation or a copy of goals is provided, but not both.
 - Standard not met: The data do not satisfactorily validate either an annual evaluation or short- and long-range goals.

1.4 FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1.4.1 Governance Responsibility for Fiscal Matters The governance provides fiscal oversight of the program, reviews the financial position of the program, and ensures its stability and consistency with program mission, vision & philosophy.

Self-study document # Describe how the information about the program's activities and financial records is prepared and from whom the governance receives this complete information. Discuss whether these records and the reporting system are adequate and how the governance ensures the stability of the program's financial position.

- Rating
- Standard met: The program's financial records and financial reporting system to the governance are adequate, and the governance ensures the stability of the program's financial position.
 - Standard not met: The self-study data do not satisfactorily demonstrate that the program's financial records and financial reporting system to the governance are adequate and that the governance ensures the stability of the program's financial position.

1.4.2 Financial Stability and Integrity The program is not undergoing financial reorganization to protect itself from creditors.

- Standard met: The program is not undergoing financial reorganization to protect itself from creditors.
- Standard not met: The program is undergoing financial reorganization to protect itself from creditors.

1.4.3 Financial Records The governance requires a review, such as quarterly, of the program's financial records, including an annual internal review. General accounting procedures used by the program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.

Self-study document # Available on site are the last internal review and verification that general accounting procedures used by the program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.

- Rating
- Standard met: A financial review report is available on site, as well as verification that general accounting procedures used by the program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.

- Standard not met: One or both of the following are not available on site: a financial review and verification that general accounting procedures used by the program have been validated by an appropriate outside source.

1.4.4 Insurance In order to ensure the stability of the program in the case of a significant litigation, the governance maintains adequate liability and accident insurance including insurance on any vehicle that transports children.

Self-study document # Include a copy of each proof of insurance that the governance maintains.

- Rating
- Standard met: The governance maintains adequate liability and accident insurance as described in the standard.
 - Standard not met: The governance does not appear to maintain adequate liability and accident insurance as described in the standard.

1.4.5 Staff Salaries and Benefits The governing entity approves wages and benefits. Wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention are reviewed at least annually by the governance. Policies reflect an effort to compensate and retain quality staff by including benefits such as health coverage, sick leave, vacation leave, continuing education, Social Security, and an opportunity to participate in some type of retirement plan on a prorated basis where applicable. Paid planning time away from children is also provided.

Self-study document # Report what percentage of the annual budget is reflected by wages and benefits for the staff. Define how wages are set and approved, what benefits are available to whom, and how often the governance reviews wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention.

- Rating
- Standard met: The governance approves wages and benefits that compensate staff as described in the standard, and the governance reviews wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention at least yearly.
 - Standard not met: The governance does not approve wages and benefits that compensate staff as described in the standard, and/or the governance does not review wages, benefits, recruitment procedures, and staff retention at least yearly.

1.6 CHILDREN'S INFORMATION AND CONDUCT

1.6.1 Records The director ensures current, complete, confidential records for each child are kept and are available to authorized personnel. The file might include such information as the child's life history, behavioral patterns, assessments of developmental and cognitive development, interests, and appropriate health records as noted in the Health and Safety section of this document.

On-site observation The visiting team chair or his/her designee will review children's records and the policies regarding who can see these records.

- Rating Standard met: Current, complete, confidential children's records are filed and available only to designated staff.
- Standard substantially met: Children's records are filed but at least one of the following is true: the records are not current, they are not complete, and they are not stored in a confidential location.
- Standard not met: Children's records are not kept.

1.6.2 Discipline The director oversees interaction between staff and children, publishing the discipline policies and procedures for parents/guardians and staff and taking appropriate measures to maintain discipline. Corporal punishment or legally questionable practices will not be utilized.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the program's discipline policies and explain how staff are trained and parents/guardians are informed of the policies.

- Rating Standard met: A copy of the above described discipline policies, training procedures, and information given to parents/guardians is included in the self-study.
- Standard substantially met: The above-described discipline policies are included in the self-study, but there is insufficient documentation that staff training regarding the policies takes place and that the program provides information regarding the policies to parents/guardians.
- Standard not met: The discipline policies are not sufficiently addressed.

SECTION II

PERSONNEL

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Section II

2.0 PERSONNEL

RATIONALE

Research suggests that *the performance of the program director, particularly as it relates to providing leadership in a program, functioning at the administrative level, and providing high-quality supervision and feedback, predicts program quality* (NCEDL). The quality of care and education received by the children, the continuing education and professional growth of the staff, and the confidence the parents will have in the program, is dependent on the knowledge and skills of the early education administrators (CFOC Standards 20011).

Extensive research has been conducted concerning the effect of early education programs on young children. The education of the staff and the training they have received in the field, as well as child to staff ratio's and group sizes and staff turnover, may play a significant role in the quality of an early education program. The longer the amount of time children attend such programs, the more likely both positive and negative consequences can be attributed to the quality of the program (Helburn 1995)

Children in early education programs who are taught and cared for by an educated staff have been shown to be more compliant and socially competent. College-educated early educators are also better equipped in developing age appropriate goals and activities for children (Fine 2002).

Several research studies suggest that child to staff ratio's and group size impacts the health, safety, and school readiness of young children (Fine 2002, Bowman 2001, CFOC 2011). The Children of the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study Go to School research project found that children in early education programs with lower ratio's and low staff turnover built closer teacher-child relationships which resulted in better classroom social and thinking skills, language ability, and math skills into the elementary school years (1999).

STANDARDS

2.1 STAFF HIRING PRACTICES AND BENEFITS

2.1.1 Employee Handbook All staff receive a copy of the employee handbook. The staff are instructed at least annually on the program's employee policies.

Self-study document # Submit a copy of the staff employee handbook.

Rating Standard met: All staff receive a copy of an employee handbook and have indicated receipt of same, and the administration reviews these policies with the staff on an annual basis.

- Standard substantially met: All staff receive a copy of an employee handbook. However, there is insufficient documentation that the administration reviews the policies with the staff on an annual basis.
- Standard not met: There is insufficient documentation that all staff receive a copy of an employee handbook and that the administration reviews policies with the staff on an annual basis.

2.1.2 Non-discrimination Policy The program has a published non-discrimination policy relating to its hiring practices regarding race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, and disability (if not exempt from Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act)

Self-study document # Include a copy of the program’s nondiscrimination policy and a copy of an actual position advertised in any form, the wording of which includes nondiscriminatory language.

- Rating
- Standard met: A copy of the program’s nondiscrimination policy and of an actual position advertised in any form, the wording of which includes nondiscriminatory language, is included in the self-study.
 - Standard not met: The program shows insufficient evidence of a nondiscrimination policy.

2.1.3 Diverse composition of Staff The program actively seeks a diverse staff that reflects the school population and its surrounding community.

Self-study document # Describe how the program actively seeks a diverse staff.

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: The program has a diverse staff.
 - Standard met: The program is seeking a diverse staff.
 - Standard not met: There is no documentation showing that the program has or is seeking a diverse staff.

2.1.4 Background Screening and Fingerprinting (Level 2) The program’s hiring procedures include background screening and fingerprinting to obtain a history regarding abuse and any criminal convictions for all employees and for others who have direct access with the children in the program.

On-site observation Personnel files will be reviewed by the visiting team chair or his/her designee in order to confirm background screening and fingerprinting.

- Rating
- Standard met: Civil authorities have cleared all staff to work with children after consideration of the staff's background screening and fingerprinting used to check for a history regarding abuse and any criminal convictions.
 - Standard substantially met: All staff documentation has been submitted to the appropriate civil authorities, and clearance is pending.
 - Standard not met: Insufficient evidence of staff screening and fingerprinting is available.

2.1.5 Staff Orientation New staff are provided with an orientation and/or a Staff Manual that should include but not be limited to the following:

- goals and philosophy of the program
- planned activities for the program
- appropriate classroom management techniques
- routines and transitions in which the children in the program are engaged
- discipline policies and procedures
- communication with parents
- mealtimes and food-handling policies
- occupational health hazards
- emergency health and safety procedures
- general health policies and procedures including but not limited to the following:
 - hand-washing techniques
 - diapering techniques and toileting (including proper diaper disposal and diaper-changing techniques where applicable)
- child abuse/child neglect detection, prevention, and reporting
- cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting procedures
- recognition of symptoms of illness, documentation of these symptoms, and implementation of ill-child policies that include the following:

- applying the program’s policies regarding exclusion of ill children and readmission of them after illness
- cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting procedures
- documenting and administering prescribed medication if given to children during program hours by program employees
- notifying parents/guardians regarding a communicable disease occurring in children or staff
- assessing the health of children daily

Self-study document # Include documentation of presentation of orientation procedures, verifying that the above-mentioned items are addressed with the staff.

- Rating Standard met: An orientation as described above is provided to the staff.
- Standard not met: An orientation program is not provided to the staff.

2.2 DIRECTOR

2.2.1 Qualifications The director of the early education program is a minimum of 21 years of age and has professional training as evidenced by having obtained a minimum of a bachelor’s degree (or documentation as listed below) from an accredited institution. The director also obtained a minimum of 9 credit hours of college course work in administration, leadership, or management and a minimum of 24 credit hours of specialized college course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education or early childhood special education and two years of experience as a lead teacher or director of early childhood education and care.

Director Qualification Documentation:

- Documents indicating a plan in place to meet the above qualifications within five years
- Documents meeting an appropriate combination of formal education, work experience, and relevant training and credentials, (as outlined in the NAEYC Alternative Pathways Table.)

Self-study document # Include a copy of the resume for the director and for any other director-qualified leadership staff that perform director duties.

Rating

- Exceptional compliance: The director has a post baccalaureate degree in early childhood education/child development from an accredited institution or has any post-baccalaureate degree with a minimum of twenty-four credit hours in early childhood education/child development from an accredited institution and a minimum of 9 credit hours in administration, leadership, or management.
- Standard met: The director has a minimum of a bachelor's degree as described above, 9 credit hours of college course work in administration, leadership, or management and a minimum of twenty-four credit hours of specialized college course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education or early childhood special education or a Director Qualification Documentation has been approved.
- Standard substantially met: The director does not have a minimum of a bachelor's degree as described above however, is qualified as defined by state statute and has acquired a minimum of five credit hours of college course work in business practices.
- Standard not met: The director does not have a minimum of a bachelor degree and does not have a professional development plan in place that will culminate in a bachelor's degree as described in the standard.

2.2.2 General Responsibilities The director is charged with assuming responsibility of the day-to-day operations of the program, maintaining program policies, having ~~and~~ knowledge of the impact of national and state policy changes, and monitoring the program's compliance with applicable requirements of civil authorities. The director's leadership addresses the program's goal of fostering the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and character development of children.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the director's job description.

- Rating
- Standard met: A current job description for the director delineates the above-mentioned responsibilities of the director.
 - Standard not met: The self-study does not contain a current job description for the director, delineating the above-mentioned responsibilities of the director.

2.2.3 Experience The director and/or program director has experience working directly with children whose ages are represented in the early education program for which the director/program director has oversight.

Self-study document # Submit a copy of the director's/program director's resume listing experience working with children.

- Rating
- Standard met: The director/program director has documented experience working with children the same ages as those represented in the early education program over which the director/program director has oversight.
 - Standard substantially met: The director/program director has experience working with children but not specifically with the age groups represented in the early education program over which the director/program director has oversight.
 - Standard not met: The director/program director has no previous experience working with young children.

2.2.4 Continuing Education and Development The director obtains a minimum of thirty clock hours during the first year of employment especially as relates to State requirements. An additional twenty-four hours per year of continuing professional development, provided by a qualified entity, in such areas as emergent literacy and mathematics, child or staff development, programming, administration, health and safety, family relations, legal issues, communications, and technology is recommended. Whenever possible, continuing education should be validated by college credit and provided as a benefit of employment, part of tuition reimbursement program or financial assistance.

Self-study document # Include verification of the director's continuing education

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: The director has obtained thirty hours of continuing educational training during the first year of employment in the area of State requirements. In addition twenty-four hours of annual

continuing education was obtained as a part of the director's professional development provided by a qualified entity and includes business administration.

- Standard met: The director obtained thirty hours of training in the first year and annually obtains twelve clock hours of professional development, provided by a qualified entity, in the stated areas.
- Standard substantially met: The director has not met the required thirty hours in the first year however, does meet the twelve clock hours of professional development and has an action plan in place with a target date for completion to obtain the remaining hours for the current year and the following years.
- Standard not met: The director had not obtained the thirty hours of training in the first year and does not annually obtain twelve clock hours of professional development. No action plan is in place with target dates for completion to obtain the remaining hours for the current year and the following years.

2.2.5 Hiring Staff The director/administrator is responsible for hiring staff in compliance with civil regulations and who support the philosophy and mission of the program in accordance with applicable governance procedures.

Self-study document # Include the documentation showing that staff sign to indicate their support of the program's philosophy and mission.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff sign to indicate their support of the program's philosophy and mission.
 - Standard not met: The self-study does not include documentation that staff sign to indicate their support of the program's philosophy and mission.

2.2.6 Evaluation of New Employees The director ensures a formal evaluation of new employees takes place within the first 90 days of employment and at pre-determined periods thereafter, such as once a year.

Self-study document # Include the formal evaluation document used with new staff during training period. Explain when the evaluation takes place.

- Rating
- Standard met: A formal evaluation of new employees takes place no more than six months into the orientation period.
 - Standard not met: A formal evaluation of new employees does not take place within six months after the orientation period begins.
 - Standard not met: Staff members' files are unavailable.

2.2.7 Evaluation of all Employees The director ensures for each staff member an annual written evaluation is conducted that contributes to the staff member's professional development and is kept in the staff member's file.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the annual evaluation forms used for staff members. Explain both how the evaluation process contributes to professional development of staff and whether the evaluations are kept in staff members' files.

- Rating
- Standard met: Annual written staff evaluations are performed that contribute to staff professional development and are kept in staff members' files.
 - Standard substantially met: The annual staff evaluations are performed, but documentation is not on file.
 - Standard not met: The evaluations are not performed, and the documentation is not on file.

2.2.8 Follow-up Evaluation of Staff The director discusses the formal written evaluations with each staff person confidentially and recognizes strengths as well as those areas needing improvement. The areas needing improvement receive follow-up.

Self-study document # Explain when and how a formal evaluation meeting takes place and how the discussion of strengths as well as those areas needing improvement are documented and addressed after the evaluation.

- Rating
- Standard met: A written explanation of the formal evaluation process as described above is included in the self-study, and documentation that verifies its implementation is available.
 - Standard substantially met: A written explanation of the formal evaluation process as described above is

included in the self-study, but documentation that verifies its implementation is not available.

- Standard not met: There is insufficient evidence that formal evaluation meetings take place.

2.2.9 Staff Substitutes The director has a current list of qualified substitutes who may be called upon to maintain the integrity of the program.

Self-study document # Describe how the director seeks qualified substitutes who may be called upon to maintain the integrity of the program.

- Rating
- Standard met: A current and sufficient list of qualified substitutes is included in the self-study, and evidence is clear that the integrity of the program is maintained during teacher absences.
 - Standard substantially met: A plan to obtain substitutes is in place, but it does not include qualified substitutes.
 - Standard not met: A plan to obtain substitutes is not in place, and a list of qualified substitutes is not available.

2.2.10 Acting Director The director designates a qualified person to assume leadership and responsibility of the early education program in the event of his/her absence.

Self-study document # Explain who assumes the responsibilities of the director in the director's absence, and include this person's qualifications.

- Rating
- Standard met: A qualified person is the designated leader in the absence of the director.
 - Standard not met: There is no specific person designated to assume the responsibilities of the director when the director is absent.

2.2.11 Developing Relationships

A. Staff treat colleagues, children and their families with equal respect and consideration regardless of culture, ethnicity, family background, race, religion.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Standard met: The staff handbook and evaluation includes evidence that respectful relationships exists.
- Standard not met: The staff handbook provides no evidence that respectful relationships are a condition of successful employment.

B. Respectful relationships with children are developed by smiling, touching, holding, and speaking to children at their eye level throughout the day, during routines such as arrival, departure, and mealtimes as well as during teacher planned and child-initiated experiences.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Standard met: The staff handbook and evaluation includes evidence that respectful relationships with children are expected.
- Standard not met: The staff handbook provides no evidence that respectful relationships with children are a condition of successful employment.

C. Respectful relationships between colleagues are encouraged and reflect mutual trust, respect, and support for each other. Staff members seek out and acknowledge each others' ideas and opinions. Staff gives positive recognition to each others' skills and accomplishments and provides appropriate support for each other in dealing with stress. Staff maintains confidences at all time.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Standard met: The staff handbook and evaluation includes evidence that respectful relationships with colleagues are expected as described.
- Standard not met: The staff handbook provides no evidence that respectful relationships with colleagues are a condition of successful employment.

2.2.12 Staff Meetings The director builds strong relationships and communication between the staff and administration, and encourages team collaboration and spirit among the staff. Regular staff meetings are held for staff to consult on program planning, to plan for implementing and attaining goals, to plan for individual children and family involvement, and to discuss program and working conditions.

Self-study document # Explain how relationships and communication are encouraged throughout the staff. Provide a schedule of staff meetings for the past twelve months.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff meetings take place a minimum of once a month, and they include relationship building and communication opportunities.
 - Standard not met: Staff meetings are not provided a minimum of once per month, and/or the staff meetings do not include relationship building and communication opportunities.

2.2.13 Program Evaluation with Staff The director meets with the staff annually to evaluate the early education program and to discuss areas of strengths as well as areas needing improvement. The areas needing improvement are addressed after the meetings through a specific Program/School Improvement Plan.

Self-study document # Explain how an annual evaluation is provided and how input from staff regarding areas of strengths as well as areas needing improvement are addressed.

- Rating
- Standard met: An annual evaluation is provided, and there is evidence that appropriate staff input is incorporated into the program.
 -
 - discuss areas of improvement, but there is little evidence that change takes place as a result.
 - Standard not met: Annual program evaluations do not take place.

Rating Standard met: All informational sources established by the early education program, including its enrollment policy, mission, and statement of nondiscrimination.

2.2.14 Personnel Files The director maintains a confidential personnel file on each employee. The file(s) should contain but not be limited to the following and/or contain information that civil authorities, including HIPPA, require:

- resume
- application
- copies of college or university transcripts
- background screening and results
- fingerprints/clearance
- annual staff evaluations

- documentation of any grievances
- evidence of in-service training
- copy of contract/work agreement
- I-9 form
- health screening data (if required)

On-site observation The visiting team chair or his/her designee will review staff members' files for compliance in documenting the above items.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff members' files are complete.
 - Standard substantially met: Staff members' files are available but incomplete.

2.2.15 Volunteers undergo orientation, background screening, fingerprinting, and training in accordance with federal, state, and local requirements. They work under the direct supervision of qualified staff.

On-site observation Volunteer files will be reviewed by the visiting team chair or his/her designee in order to confirm orientation, background screening, fingerprinting, and training as stated above.

- Rating
- Standard met: Orientation and training is provided to volunteers, their background screening and fingerprinting have resulted in clearance, and they are supervised by qualified staff.
 - Standard not met: One or more of the following are true: Orientation and training is not provided to volunteers, their background screening and fingerprinting have not resulted in clearance, and they are not supervised by qualified staff.
 - Standard not applicable: Volunteers are not used in the program.

2.3 INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

2.3.1 Qualifications Qualifications of all instructional and support staff meet or exceed the requirements of civil authorities.

Self-study document # Include a completed copy of the Personnel Qualification Form found in the appendix.

- Rating
- Standard met: A Personnel Qualification Form demonstrates that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirements of civil authorities.
 - Standard not met: A Personnel Qualification Form demonstrating that the qualifications of all staff meet or exceed the requirements of civil authorities is not included in the self-study.

2.3.2 Job Descriptions and Other Staff Policies Clear and up-to-date written personnel policies have been developed by the program. These policies include but are not limited to job descriptions; wages and benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the program’s personnel policies.

- Rating
- Standard met: Clear and up-to-date written personnel policies including but not limited to job descriptions for each position; information pertaining to wages and benefits; and the resignation, termination, and grievance procedures are included in the self-study.
 - Standard not met: Clear and up-to-date written personnel policies including but not limited to job descriptions for each position; information pertaining to wages and benefits; and the resignation, termination, and grievance procedures are not included in the self-study.

2.3.3 Communication of Personnel Policies Written personnel policies have been communicated with the staff, and receipt of them by the staff has been documented.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Documentation that the staff has received written personnel policies is available on site for review by the visiting team chair or his/her designee.
 - Standard not met: There is no documentation that written personnel policies have been communicated with the staff.

2.4 INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

2.4.1 Lead Teachers The director recruits and hires quality staff members that are at least 21 years of age with applicable degree, appropriate training, credential and experience to carry out their role in the early education program.

Self-study document # Personnel Qualification Form for Teachers

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that teachers have obtained a minimum of either a bachelor's degree in early childhood education/child development from an accredited institution or any bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with twelve credit hours in early childhood education/child development.

 - Standard met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that 75% of teaching staff have obtained a minimum of either an associate's degree in early childhood education/child development from an accredited institution or any associate's degree with twelve credit hours in early childhood education/child development from an accredited institution or one of the following:
 - Have a degree (associate's or higher) outside of the early childhood field and three or more years of work experience in a nationally accredited program

 - Have a degree (associate's or higher) outside of the early childhood field with three or more years of work experience in a non-accredited program and at least 30 contact hours of relevant training during that past three years

 - Standard substantially met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that all teachers have obtained a minimum of a state/nationally recognized competency credential, or a combination of college course work and at least one year of experience under qualified supervision and thus have obtained a competency credential.

- Standard not met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that not all teachers are credentialed.

2.4.2 Assistant Teachers Assistant Teachers have a minimum of a state/nationally recognized competency credential, two years of experience working in an early education program and a minimum of twelve clock hours of early childhood education/child development training. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Self-study document # Personnel Qualification Form for Assistant Teachers

Rating

- Exceptional compliance: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that assistant teachers have obtained a minimum of an associate’s degree in early childhood education/child development or its equivalent from an accredited institution or have obtained a minimum of any associate’s degree from an accredited institution with twelve credit hours in early childhood education/child development.
- Standard met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that assistant teachers have obtained a minimum of a state/nationally recognized competency credential, two years of experience working in an early education program and a minimum of twelve clock hours of early childhood education/child development training.
- Standard substantially met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that assistant teachers have obtained a minimum of a high school diploma and twelve clock hours of early childhood education/child development training or have at least two years of work experience in an early education program.
- Standard not met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that not all assistant teachers have at least two years of documented work experience with young children or at least twelve hours of early childhood education/child development training.

2.4.3 Early Childhood Specialist If an early childhood specialist is employed, the qualifications of the specialist are a baccalaureate degree in early childhood

education/child development and at least three years of full-time teaching experience with young children and/or a graduate degree in early childhood education/child development.

Self-study document # Personnel Qualification Form for Assistant Teachers

Rating

- Exceptional compliance: Program has an early childhood specialist with a graduate degree in early childhood education or child development and at least three years of full-time experience.
- Standard met: If an early childhood specialist is employed, the qualifications of the specialist are as listed in the standard.
- Standard substantially met: If an early childhood specialist is employed, the specialist is degreed but has less than three years of full-time teaching experience.
- Standard not met: If an early childhood specialist is employed, the specialist does not have the qualifications as listed in the standard.

2.5 SUPPORT STAFF

2.5.1 Training and Experience Support staff—such as secretaries, kitchen staff, substitutes, and aides—have training and/or experience to carry out their role in an early education program.

Self-study document # Personnel Qualification Form for Support Staff

Rating

- Exemplary compliance: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that the support staff have obtained a credential and/or specialized training in their field.
- Standard met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that the support staff have obtained specialized training in their field and/or a minimum of two years of experience in their field.

- Standard not met: A completed Personnel Qualifications Form demonstrates that not all support staff have specialized training in their field.

2.5.2 Continuing Education and Development Programs The teaching staff obtains a minimum of thirty clock hours during the first year of employment especially as it relates to State requirements. In addition, a minimum of twenty four documented clock hours of continuing education or professional development of which twelve hours are provided by an outside source relating to: child growth and development in the areas of cognitive learning and social, emotional, and physical development; safety and health issues for young children; family and community relations; classroom and program management; and professional development which may include special needs. Training may also include related language development, discipline, and technology. Whenever possible, continuing education should be validated by college credit and provided as a benefit of employment, part of tuition reimbursement program or financial assistance. All Staff should be encouraged to participate in relevant professional organizations.

Self-study document # Submit evidence of continuing education opportunities for staff, including the above areas.

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: All staff obtains thirty hours within the first year of employment and exceeds fifteen clock hours of continuing education provided by a source outside their early education program.
 - Standard met: All staff responsible for the care and education of the children in the program obtains thirty hours of training in the first year including the State required training and annually participates in a minimum of twenty-four clock hours of continuing education of which 12 clock-hours are provided by a source outside their early education program.
 - Standard substantially met: All staff meet State required training in the first year and 80 percent of the staff annually participates in a minimum of twelve clock-hours of continuing education provided by a source outside their early education program.
 - Standard not met: Not all staff meet State training requirements and less than 80 percent of the staff annually participates in a minimum of twelve clock hours of continuing education provided by a source outside their early education program.

2.6 CHILD-STAFF RATIOS

2.6.1 Primary Teacher/Caregiver In order to help ensure the care, bonding, and nurturing of the individual child, each group of children has one primary teacher/caregiver with verbal and non-verbal social interactions and minimal transitions.

Self-study document # Provide a list naming the primary teacher/caregiver assigned to each group of children.

- Rating
- Standard met: A list demonstrates that each group of children in the program has one primary teacher/caregiver.
 - Standard not met: A list demonstrates that each group of children does not have one primary teacher/caregiver.

2.6.2 Ratios

Section 2.6.2 Staff child ratios for each age group are as follows:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Maximum Child: Staff Ratio</u>	<u>Maximum Group Size</u>
Birth – 12 mos.	4:1	8
13 - 24 mos.	4:1	8
25 - 35 mos.	5:1	10
3-year-olds	9:1	18
4-year-olds	10:1	20
5-year-olds	12:1	24
6-8-year-olds	12:1	24
9-12-year-olds	15:1	30

When mixed age groups of infants and toddlers are in the same room, the child staff ratio is maintained according to the youngest child in the room. If the children in the mixed age group are older than toddlers, the child-staff ratio is maintained according to the average age of the children.

Self-study document # Roster list of children, lead teacher and assistant teachers for each classroom

- Rating
- Standard met: The program has established and maintains the child-adult ratios and group sizes as described in the above chart.

- Substantial compliance: The program has established and maintains the ratios and group sizes that are in compliance with requirements of civil authorities.
- Standard not met: Ratios and group sizes are not in compliance with requirements of civil authorities.

2.6.3 Supervision of Children The staff maintains a continuous, accurate account of the children in their care.

Self-study document # Describe methods used by staff to ensure children are accounted for at all times, such as during field trips and time on the playground or during transitions outside the classroom, which include trips to the restroom.

- Rating
- Standard met: A process is in place and is implemented to ensure children are accounted for at all times.
 - Standard not met: A process is not in place or is not implemented to ensure children are accounted for at all times.

2.6.4 Internal Communication Related to Supervision Staff who are sharing the primary responsibility of a group of children communicate with one another to ensure smooth operation of the program.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Exemplary compliance: Outside the classroom, staff has an opportunity daily to discuss events related to the children in their care.
 - Standard met: A process is in place to ensure good communication among staff caring for the same group of children.
 - Standard not met: A process is not in place to ensure communication among staff caring for the same group of children.

2.7 Internal Relations

All early care and education personnel are expected to work closely with the administration in the on-going efforts to ensure collaboration and good relations that will promote a high quality educational program.

2.7.1 Teacher/Caregiver/Staff Survey All early care and education teachers, caregivers and staff are given the opportunity to complete a survey in which they are asked to evaluate the quality of the early care and education program and work environment. A survey form is sent along with a letter that explains the purpose of the survey as an integral part of the program and solicits full participation. The letter also instructs the personnel to return the completed survey sealed in an envelope and given to a designated holder. The sealed surveys are opened and processed by an assigned validator the day of the site visit. Responses from the Survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration with a summary included in the final evaluation report.

Self-study document # Teacher/Caregiver/Staff Assessment Survey and response plans. (See the Appendix for a sample survey.)

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: A letter and survey are sent to all personnel on a yearly basis and the results processed by the board chair or designee on the years between the scheduled on-site evaluation. Board Chair meet with the director and staff to examine survey results and draft a response plan. A copy of each is included with this self-study document.
 - Standard met: The letter and survey were sent to all personnel as part of this evaluation for accreditation process as described in Standard 2.7.1. The sealed surveys will be opened and processed by a designated validator the day of the site visit and responses of the survey will be provided to the early childhood program administration and staff with a summary included in the final evaluation report.
 - Standard not met: The program did send out the survey or there were less than 25% response from the personnel.

SECTION III

CURRICULUM

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA



OFFICES OF EXECUTIVE MANAGER
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA
1200 BRICKELL AVE., SUITE 800
MIAMI, FL 33131
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Section III

3.0 CURRICULUM

RATIONALE

Research on cognition and learning, child development, and the social and cultural context of learning has shown that young children are competent learners even at a young age. It is important to note, however, that the “pace of learning will depend on whether and to what extent the child’s inclinations to learn encounter and engage supporting environments” (Bowman, et al. 2001).

Federal-State partnerships in the delivery of quality early education programs are now being formed that impact all pre-kindergarten program. These educational reform initiatives have specifically targeted the need to align expectations of the early education program prior to children entering kindergarten and what is expected of them once they enter the elementary school years.

Initiatives are also being developed to evaluate the success of the early education program by how well the children are prepared to succeed once in the elementary school system.

Finally, initiatives to develop informational pieces to educate teachers, parents, childcare providers, and others are in place to provide ways to prepare children to be ready for school.

Voluntary guidelines are being developed to support early education programs in preparing young children in the areas of literacy, language, pre-reading skills, pre-mathematics, science, and early social studies.

The following standards were based on a review of State and Federal pre-kindergarten curricular guidelines.

STANDARDS

3.1 GENERAL PRACTICE OVERVIEW

3.1.1 Curriculum Guide The curriculum used by an early education program consists of proven successful resources with a consistent scope and sequence for each age group. Written goals and objectives drawn from researched- based developmental benchmarks and scientifically based research is included and reviewed on an annual basis.

Self-study document #	Include an overview of the program’s scope and sequence with supporting research citations for each age group. Discuss the familiarity of instructional staff with the written goals and objectives.
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- Rating
- Exemplary compliance: Teachers from each age group of children are familiar the research and development of the scope and sequence. All staff are trained in the implementation of the guide.
 - Standard met: The self-study contains a complete scope and sequence guide with credible research citations.
 - Standard substantially met: A scope and sequence is provided. However, each age group is not addressed, or research citations have not been included.
 - Standard not met: A scope and sequence as described in the standard has not been developed or is not available for review.

3.1.2 Curriculum Involvement and Training Instructional staff is trained in the use and deliverance of the curriculum. Opportunities for instructional staff to share their suggestions and ideas regarding the curriculum are provided at least annually.

Self-study document # Provide a description of curriculum training and the procedure used to allow instructional staff to provide input regarding the curriculum.

- Rating
- Standard met: Instructional staff is trained in the use and presentation of the curriculum, and opportunities for instructional staff to share their input regarding the curriculum are provided.
 - Standard substantially met: Instructional staff is trained in the use and presentation of the curriculum. However, opportunities for the staff to share their input regarding the curriculum are not provided.
 - Standard not met: Instructional staff is not trained in the use and presentation of the curriculum, and opportunities for instructional staff to share their input regarding the curriculum is not provided.

3.1.3 Lessons Plans Instructional staff develop lesson plans for each class/age group that reflects the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Plans are developed through consultation and shared ideas with other colleagues who communicate frequently to ensure smooth operations.

Self-study document # Include a sample copy of lesson plans for each classroom/age group.

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Rating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary compliance: All lesson plans reflect thorough knowledge of and application of the scope and sequence and of child development principles. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: Written lesson plans are in alignment with the goals and objectives of the scope and sequence for all age groups represented in the early education program. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard substantially met: Goals and objectives have been identified in the scope and sequence for each age group, but these goals and objectives are not incorporated into the lesson plans of all groups represented in the early education program. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: Lesson plans for each classroom have not been included and/or a scope and sequence for each age group represented in the early education program. |
|--------|---|

3.2 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 Balanced Program--Indoor and Outdoor Play The curriculum is designed to meet the physical needs of each child. The curriculum includes a balance of indoor and outdoor play opportunities to enable the children to develop gross-motor skills.

Self-study document #	Include in the self-study a copy of the classroom schedule listing indoor and outdoor activities.
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- | | |
|--------|--|
| Rating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: The curriculum includes consistent daily practice of both indoor and outdoor activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: The curriculum does not include consistent daily practice of both indoor and outdoor activities. |
|--------|--|

3.2.2 Motor Skills The curriculum results in lesson plans that provide opportunities for children to develop fine- and gross-motor skills.

On-site observation	On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.
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Rating for infants/toddlers

- Standard met: Fine- and gross-motor activities are provided which may include such activities as sitting, kicking, rolling, swinging, walking, climbing, jumping, sliding, reaching, grasping, dropping, retrieving, carrying, and stacking.

- ❑ Standard substantially met: Fine- and gross-motor skills activities are not provided, but toys encouraging the use of fine- and gross-motor skills are available and thus result in opportunities for development to happen spontaneously during the day.
- ❑ Standard not met: Opportunities for developing fine- and gross-motor skills are not provided and toys encouraging the use of fine- and gross-motor skills are limited. The classroom and/or staff do not encourage the children to participate in such activities.

Rating for preschoolers

- ❑ Standard met: Fine- and gross-motor activities are provided in the preschool classroom which may include such activities as jumping, running, climbing, swinging, sliding, balancing, riding, stacking, squeezing, lacing, tracing, sorting, pounding, connecting, and snapping.
- ❑ Standard substantially met: Opportunities for developing fine- and gross-motor skills are not provided, but toys, tools, and other materials encouraging the use of fine- and gross-motor skills are available and thus result in opportunities for development to happen spontaneously during the day.
- ❑ Standard not met: Opportunities for developing fine- and gross-motor skills are not provided, and toys, tools, and classroom materials encouraging such activities are limited. The classroom and/or staff do not encourage the children to participate in such activities.

3.3 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The curriculum and environment provide opportunities to foster the social/emotional development of children through respectful interactions with and response to children by frequently making eye contact and using clear, correct language patterns, and affectionate, supportive words including when child is in distress. Staff-child interactions are an integral part of the social development of children's emotional development which is exemplified by a supportive and comfortable environment where they can be relaxed, happy, and involved in play and other activities.

On-site observation

On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating for infants/toddlers

- Standard met: The curriculum provides opportunities to foster the social/emotional development of children through activities in which the staff interact respectfully with infants/toddlers. Examples may include: listening and responding to needs, making eye contact, using each child's name in a positive manner, holding and singing to children, and encouraging children in such self-help skills as self-feeding, pulling up, walking, crawling, climbing, and sitting. Staff frequently makes eye contact and use clear, correct language patterns, and affectionate, supportive words ensure a supportive and comfortable environment where children are relaxed, happy, and involved in play and other activities.
- Standard not met: The curriculum lacks specific and intentional opportunities for the staff to foster the social/emotional development of children through activities in which the staff interact with infants/toddlers by listening and responding to needs, making eye contact, using each child's name in a positive manner, holding and singing to children, and encouraging children in such self-help skills as self-feeding, pulling up, walking, crawling, climbing, and sitting.

Rating for preschoolers

- Standard met: The curriculum provides opportunities to foster the social/emotional development of children including but not being limited to instruction and consistent daily practice of activities addressing the following: sharing, cooperating, helping, taking turns, problem solving, learning to transition from home to school, developing self-discipline, gaining confidence in performing age-appropriate tasks, and relating appropriately to adults and peers. Staff frequently make eye contact and use clear, correct language patterns, and affectionate, supportive words ensure a supportive and comfortable environment where children are relaxed, happy, and involved in play and other activities.

- Standard not met: The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities to foster the social/emotional development of children, in that (1) child-staff interaction is not an integral part of the social development of the child and (2) expectations of the children are not age appropriate and/or instructional techniques prohibit appropriate problem solving.

3.4 TEACHING STRATEGIES

3.4.1 Balanced Activities The curricular practices provide for a balance of active and quiet activities including large-group (teacher-directed), small-group (teacher/child-interactive), and individual-choice (child-initiated) activities throughout the day.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Classroom observation reflects appropriate balance of active and quiet activities as described in the standard.
 - Standard not met: The classroom observation does not reflect a balance of active and quiet activities as described in the standard.

3.4.2 Length of Group Times The length of group times is appropriate for the age and development of the children in the class. In mixed-age groupings, accommodations and flexibility meet the needs of each age group included in the class.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: The length of group times is appropriate for the age and development of the children in the class. In mixed-age groupings, accommodations and flexibility meet the needs of each age group included in the class.
 - Standard not met: The length of group times is not appropriate for the age and development of the children in the class, and/or in mixed-age groupings, accommodations and flexibility do not meet the needs of each age group included in the class.

3.4.3 Use of Transition Activities Staff uses transition activities to move the children from one activity to another throughout the day. Transitional tools may include songs, poems, or other signs that children recognize as signaling a change of activity.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Transition activities as suggested in the standards are used consistently and meaningfully to move children from one activity to another throughout the day.
- Standard substantially met: Transition activities as suggested in this standard are incorporated but inconsistently.
- Standard not met: Transition activities as suggested in the standard are lacking, causing children to have difficulty moving from one activity to another.

3.4.4 Materials and Equipment Ample developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are provided to support the learning objectives of the program’s scope and sequence. Materials and equipment may include but are not limited to manipulatives, puzzles, building materials, musical instruments, creative art materials, sand and water tables, dolls, and other props that support the educational objectives.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Ample developmentally appropriate materials and equipment as suggested in the standard are provided to support the learning objectives of the program’s scope and sequence.
- Standard substantially met: The classrooms contain ample materials and equipment. However, children have limited access to those resources.
- Standard not met: Materials and equipment as well as child access to them are limited.

3.4.5 Small Group and Large Group Instruction Ample opportunities for children to interact independently, in small groups and in large groups, are provided in order to help meet developmental needs of children.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Ample opportunities for children to interact independently, in small groups and in large groups, are provided in order to help meet developmental needs of children.
- Standard not met: Ample opportunities for children to interact independently, in small groups and in large groups, are not provided in order to help meet developmental needs of children.

3.4.6 Involving the Children Instructional staff recognizes the diversity of their children and families, initiates interaction with children individually, stimulates and expands the involvement of children who are disruptive or not engaged in the classroom offerings and facilitates the building of friendships and classroom community.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Instructional staff initiate interaction with children who are not engaged in order to stimulate and expand the involvement of these children in the classroom offerings.
- Standard substantially met: Instructional staff inconsistently initiate interaction with children who are not engaged in order to stimulate and expand the involvement of these children in the classroom.
- Standard not met: Instructional staff do not initiate interaction with children who are not engaged in order to stimulate and expand the involvement of these children in classroom offerings.

3.4.7 Healthy Nutrition in Curriculum Curricular plans include ensuring children learn about healthy nutrition through experience and instruction, as appropriate to the program.

On-site observation On-site observation of curricular plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Children gain nutrition awareness through experience and instruction, as appropriate to the program.

- Standard not met: Nutrition awareness is absent from or insufficient in the curricular plans.

3.4.8 Good Health Practices Children are made aware of good health practices. Methods may include the use of related daily routines, such as brushing teeth, by teachers, teacher example, visits to health facilities or from health care professionals, and other curricular presentations appropriate to the program’s curriculum.

Self-study document # Describe the methods used to make children aware of good health practices.

- Rating
- Standard met: Children are exposed to good health practices through activities as suggested in the standard.
 - Standard not met: Health practices are not addressed. Consequently, exposure to good practices is insufficient.

3.4.9 Disciplinary Policies and Practices The staff implement developmentally appropriate behavior management strategies and employ interactive procedures such as redirection, reflective listening, adult role modeling, and positive reinforcement. Corporal punishment or demeaning practices are not used.

On-site Observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff employs interactive procedures such as redirection, reflective listening, adult role modeling, and positive reinforcement. Corporal punishment and demeaning practices are not utilized.
 - Standard not met: Either of the following are true: Staff fails to employ interactive procedures such as redirection, reflective listening, adult role modeling, and positive reinforcement and/or corporal punishment and demeaning practices are utilized.

3.4.10 Forming Habits and Routines Staff prepares the environment and plans the flow of the day in such a way that encourages children to become independent and to accept personal responsibility with initiative. For example, routines are clearly established so that children know when to clean and organize the room, when to put on clothing for outside activities, and/or when to transition to different activities.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff prepare the environment and plan the flow of the day in such a way that encourages children to become independent and to accept personal responsibility with initiative in such ways as those suggested in the standard.
 - Standard not met: Staff do not prepare the environment and plan the flow of the day in such a way that encourages children to become independent and to accept personal responsibility with initiative in such ways as those suggested in the standard.

3.4.11 Hand Washing and Cleanliness Hand-washing techniques are appropriately taught as part of the curriculum. Specifically, hand-washing always precedes eating, and children regularly wash hands after bathroom use and outside activities.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Hand-washing techniques are appropriately taught as part of the curriculum. Specifically, hand-washing always precedes eating, and children regularly wash hands after bathroom use and outside activities.
 - Standard substantially met: Hand-washing is encouraged but not monitored to ensure every child has participated and/or washed their hands appropriately.
 - Standard not met: Hand-washing is not routinely followed and monitored.

3.4.12 Proper use of Media & Technology Media and technology used on a limited basis, and are used particularly for the reinforcement of a teaching topic.

On-site observation On-site classroom observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Media and technology are used on a limited basis and particularly for the reinforcement of a teaching topic.
 - Standard not met: Media and technology are used for entertainment and/or on a regular basis to occupy children during unstructured portions of the day.

3.4.13 Special Needs Children The early care and education program is designed to be an inclusive environment and include children with identified disabilities, special learning and developmental needs. Teachers of special needs children have developed individual program plans, maintain curriculum materials and equipment to accommodate special needs, and have access to a referral system. Children are professionally evaluated and their progress is reviewed through a team approach which includes parents, teachers, and specialist. Communication with parents takes place in a supportive and confidential manner and includes documentation with explanations.

On-site observation: On-site observation verifies that the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Exceptional compliance: Children with a variety of special needs are successfully included in the program. Teachers of special needs children have developed individual program plans and access to a referral system. Children are professionally evaluated and their progress is reviewed through a team approach which includes parents, teachers, and specialist.
 - Standard met: Children with special needs are included in the program. Teachers of special needs children have developed individual program plans and access to a referral system. Children are professionally evaluated and their progress is reviewed through a team approach which includes parents, teachers, and specialist.
 - Standard not met: The program is not designed to accommodate special needs children.

3.5 LANGUAGE & LITERACY—CORE KNOWLEDGE

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the whole child including social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and the development of character. This includes but is not limited to the multiple intelligences, learning styles, and learning preferences of each child.

RATIONALE

Children begin developing language and literacy at birth. As young children express their feelings, ask questions, and share imaginative stories, they are communicating what they know about their world. Between the ages of three and five children are becoming more aware of print in their environment, however, oral language continues to be their primary means of communicating (Preschool Planning Guide 1998).

STANDARDS

3.5.1 Appropriate Language Experience Receptive and expressive language experiences appropriate to the development of children are provided throughout the day. Children of all ages are provided with increased exposure to print and active experiences that support the development of listening and speaking concepts and skills.

On-site observation On-site observation of the classroom confirms the of receptive and expressive language experience for children.

Rating for infants/toddlers

- Standard met: Receptive and expressive language experiences are provided throughout the day through interactive language and eye contact by children with pictures, books, and objects through positive play experiences.
- Standard not met: Receptive and expressive language experiences are not provided throughout the day through interactive language and eye contact by children with pictures, books, and objects through positive play experiences.

Rating for preschoolers

- Standard met: Opportunities for using receptive and expressive language are provided throughout the day in a variety of ways, which may include writing, scribbling, copying, drawing, using puppets, singing, repeating finger plays, answering open-ended questions, playing, participating in show-and-tell, and writing stories.
- Standard not met: Opportunities for using receptive and expressive language are limited to responding to teacher-directed activities. Children are provided with few opportunities to experience writing, scribbling, copying, drawing, using puppets, singing, repeating finger plays, answering open-ended questions, playing, participating in show-and-tell, and writing stories.

3.5.2 Print-Rich Environment Teachers provide daily interactions with labels, signs, and/or other forms of print, and read aloud to the children. They provide exposure to the sounds and names of the letters of the alphabet.

On-site observation On-site observation of the classroom confirms the use of a print rich environment for children

- Rating
- Standard met: The preschool classroom is a print-rich environment that may include books, pictures, labeled materials and equipment, and opportunities for name recognition.
 - Standard not met: The preschool classroom is lacking a print-rich environment. There are limited opportunities for children to experience, books, pictures, labeled materials and equipment, and few opportunities for name recognition.

3.5.3 Vocabulary and Comprehensive Development The instructional staff consciously works to help children develop vocabulary and comprehension. They verbally interact with the children to guide them in the acquisition of new and expanded vocabulary, in anticipating outcomes, and in comprehension of what they have heard. This may include (1) “What if?” type questions to help children anticipate outcomes, (2) recall of a story, and (3) other verbal interactions that help the children understand sequence (building memory), interaction between characters, etc.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans confirm that the instructional staff intentionally plans for building vocabulary and comprehensive skills for the use of analytical questions with the children.

- Rating
- Standard met: The instructional staff use the above-listed approaches to help children develop vocabulary and comprehension.
 - Standard not met: The instructional staff do not use the above-listed approaches to help children develop vocabulary and comprehension.

3.5.4 Phonemic Awareness “Children begin to develop a phonemic awareness through understanding that words are made up of a combination of sounds. Lesson plans reflect a variety of songs, finger plays, stories, and games that have rhyming words and alliteration to strengthen phonemic awareness.” (Preschool Planning Guide 1998).

Lesson plans include activities that encourage the awareness of phonemes, such as (1) listening for sounds in words; (2) beginning to isolate the syllables of a word using snapping, clapping, or rhythmic movement (e.g., cat, apple); (3) learning to differentiate between sounds that are the same and different (e.g., environmental sounds, animal sounds, phonemes); and (4) beginning to recognizing when words

share phonemes (sounds) and repeat the common phoneme (e.g., /b/ as in Bob, ball, baby; /t/ as in Tom, kite, boat) (ODE 2002)

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating Standard met: Children begin to develop a phonemic awareness through the methods described in the standard.

Standard not met: Children do not begin to develop a phonemic awareness through the methods described in the standard.

3.5.5 Alphabet Children are exposed to the form and function of the alphabet through opportunities such as tracing shapes, copying or writing letters, and practicing writing names.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating Standard met: Children are exposed to the form and function of the alphabet through opportunities described in the standard.

Standard not met: Children are not exposed to the form and function of the alphabet through opportunities described in the standard.

3.6 MATHEMATICAL AWARENESS—CORE KNOWLEDGE

RATIONALE

Young children begin to develop the concept of number through interactions in their environment on a daily basis. They learn through observations and hands-on activities that objects may be manipulated, sorted, ordered, and quantified. They learn about relationships, when engaged in meaningful experiences involving skills that include collecting, counting, building, and comparing. “As they proceed through the daily routine, children experience a variety of ‘math moments.’” (Preschool Planning Guide 1998).

STANDARDS

3.6.1 Mathematical Activities The instructional staff plan activities that expose children daily to math activities such as sorting and classifying concrete objects; recognizing and identifying likenesses and differences; recognizing first, middle, and last; using opposite concepts such as long and short, in and out, up and down, over

and under, and top and bottom; and using concepts of quantity, such as more than and less than.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating Standard met: The instructional staff plan activities that expose children daily to math activities as described in the standard.

 Standard not met: The instructional staff do not plan activities that expose children daily to math activities as described in the standard.

3.6.2 Mathematical Concepts The instructional staff plan ample opportunities for children to be exposed to basic math concepts such as numbers and numeration through counting; placing objects in one-to-one correspondence; grouping objects by color, shape, or other characteristics; patterning; and recognizing numbers in their environment.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating Standard met: The instructional staff plan ample opportunities for children to be exposed to early math concepts such as numbers and numeration through the methods described in standard.

 Standard not met: The instructional staff does not plan ample opportunities for children to be exposed to early math concepts such as numbers and numeration through the methods described in standard.

3.7 SCIENCE—CORE KNOWLEDGE

RATIONALE

Preschool children learn about the natural world, including the physical properties of things around them, as they interact with objects, people, and other living things. Children whose early lives are rich in sensory experiences and accompanying verbal labels tend to have greater facility for building up the more complex labels and patterns required for thought and problem solving in later life.

STANDARDS

3.7.1 Sensory-Rich Environment The preschool classroom is a sensory-rich environment, and it includes numerous objects and organisms with which the students

can interact. Opportunities are provided throughout the day for children to use their senses for observing and learning about objects, events, and organisms. Instructional staff help children to perform simple investigations and to describe their observations.

On-site observation

On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating for preschoolers

- ☐ Standard met: The preschool classroom is a sensory-rich environment, and it includes numerous objects and organisms with which the students can interact. Opportunities are provided throughout the day for children to use their senses for observing and learning about objects, events, and organisms. Instructional staff help children to perform simple investigations and to describe their observations.
- ☐ Standard not met: One or more of the following are true: The preschool classroom is not a sensory-rich environment; it does not include numerous objects and organisms with which the students can interact; opportunities are not provided throughout the day for children to use their senses for observing and learning about objects, events, and organisms; and/or instructional staff do not help children to perform simple investigations and to describe their observations.

3.8 SOCIAL STUDIES—CORE KNOWLEDGE

RATIONALE

Young children are dependent upon their interactions with peers and adults to construct a sense of self. When children participate in activities that bring the community into the classroom, their sense of self-worth is affirmed and they begin to find out how different groups of people live. As young children negotiate rules, responsibilities, and challenging issues, they begin to develop a sense of community that is based upon kindness, equality, and justice.

The Social Studies content in early childhood education should support children to develop an appreciation of self and others in relationship to social systems, places, economics, civic responsibilities, and events. (NCCS, 2010)

STANDARDS

3.8.1 Community, Family, and Diversity The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities that encourage the children to develop an

awareness of and sense of belonging and acceptance in family, classroom, and the community in which the child lives and encourages the children to appreciate people of various ages, genders, abilities, cultures, and ethnicity, and their interdependence through multicultural experiences and materials.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating

- Standard met: The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities as described in the standard.
- Standard not met: Instructional staff do not plan activities that expose children to social studies activities as described in the standard.

3.8.2 Geography and the Environment The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities that encourage the children to understand physical features and characteristics of geography; develops an awareness of the relationship between people, places, and regions; and understands how people can affect environments and take positive actions to show care for the environment in which one lives. To better understand the children and families enrolled, staff use a variety of strategies to become more knowledgeable of and learn from the families about their cultural backgrounds, family structure, child-rearing practices, linguistic habits, and other information the family wishes to share.

On-site Observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating for preschoolers

- Standard met: Instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities and help the staff better understand the children as described in the standard.
- Standard not met: Instructional staff do not plan activities that expose children to social studies activities and help the staff better understand the children as described in the standard.

3.8.3 Economic Concepts The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities that encourage the children to recognized the relationship between needs versus wants, supply and demand, and other economic concepts; and realizes that money is used in exchange of goods and services.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating

- Standard met: Instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities as described in the standard.
- Standard not met: Instructional staff do not plan activities that expose the children to social studies activities as described in the standard.

3.8.4 Past, Present, and Future The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities that encourage the children to begin tracking events of the past, present, and future.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating

- Standard met: The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities as described in the standard.
- Standard no met: The instructional staff do not plan activities that expose children to social studies activities as described in the standard.

3.8.5 Relationships The instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities that encourage the children to participate in discussions about fairness, responsibility, differences, friendship, and authority.

On-site observation On-site observation of lesson plans verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating

- Standard met: Instructional staff plan activities that expose children to social studies activities as described in the standard.
- Standard not met: Instructional staff do not plan activities that expose the children to social studies activities as described in the standard.

3.9 FINE ARTS—CORE KNOWLEDGE

RATIONALE

Fine arts are an important component of the curriculum of any early childhood program. Young children feel a sense of emotional satisfaction when they are

- ❑ Standard not met: The curriculum does not daily provide opportunities to expose children in each age group to a variety of age-appropriate creative arts experiences.

3.10 ASSESSMENT

RATIONALE

Assessment of the educational program and of children’s learning should be conducted to inform and improve learner outcomes and school effectiveness. Assessment serves many purposes including screening children for learning styles and needs; assessing readiness for the next educational level; assisting in developing curriculum and daily activities; evaluating the effectiveness of a project or a program; and providing feedback to parents. Program and child assessment allows a program to evaluate its progress in meeting its goals and direct design and implementation of curriculum. Child assessment should support the diversity of the children served by the program which includes not only children’s ages and developmental stages, individual learning styles, and temperaments but also their culture, racial identity, language, and the values of their families and communities.

STANDARDS

3.10.1 Continuous Student Assessment Ongoing assessment of children’s progress takes place and is used to plan activities for individual children and for groups of children. Children’s progress is reported with supporting documentation, and the assessment methods are consistent with the program’s philosophy and methodology.

Self-study document # Describe the assessment of children’s progress, including how often it takes place, whether it contains supporting documentation, how it affects individual and group activities, and whether the methods used are consistent with the program’s philosophy and methodology.

Rating Standard met: Ongoing assessment of children’s progress takes place, is used to plan activities for individual children and groups of children, is reported with supporting documentation, and is consistent with the program’s philosophy and methodology.

- Standard substantially met: Ongoing assessment of children’s progress takes place, but one or more of the following are true: The assessment is not used to plan activities for individual children and groups of children, it is not reported with supporting documentation, and/or it is not consistent with the program’s philosophy and methodology.

- ❑ Standard not met: Ongoing assessment of children's progress does not take place.

3.10.2 Variety of Assessment Techniques The program recognizes that instructional improvement, as evidenced by the progress of children, requires the use of multiple tools for assessment such as but not limited to:

- Samples of children's concrete learning explorations (writing and art projects) and sketches of constructions with blocks or sand
- Photographs, audio recordings, and videos of children engaged in play while alone and while in groups in a variety of situations
- Written observations such as time and event samplings of children's interactions, individual and group activities, and language while alone and in groups
- A checklist of developmental levels and behaviors, on which to mark children's progress and increasing capacities across time
- Observations that address all areas of children's development—that is, the multiple intelligences, not just cognitive development
- Results of screenings and formal assessments
- Individual portfolios that contain a wide array of these records and other documentation and that aid teachers in using flexibility to adapt lesson plans
- Written assessment tools shared with parents

Self-study document #

Provide evidence of assessing children by using more than one tool. Discuss how the use of multiple tools has led to instructional improvement and thus to progress of children.

- Rating
- Standard met: Instructional staff use a variety of such assessment tools as those described in the standard, and assessment has led to instructional improvement and thus to the progress of the children.
 - Standard substantially met: Instructional staff use a variety of such assessment tools as those described in the standard, but assessment has not led to instructional improvement or to the progress of the children.
 - Standard not met: Instructional staff do not assess the progress of children.

3.10.3 Training for Assessment The director ensures instructional staff either are qualified to observe children and record these observations or have aid from personnel trained in methods of observing children and recording these observations. Results of observations are used for curriculum planning after identification of each child's stage of development, and parent/guardian conferences.

Self-study document # Provide documentation that instructional staff either are qualified to observe children and record these observations or have aid from personnel trained in methods of observing children and recording these observations. Describe how observations are used for curriculum planning, identification of each child's stage of development, and parent/guardian conferences.

- Rating
- Exemplary compliance: (1) A specific person is identified and trained to assist instructional staff in observing children and documenting these observations, (2) instructional staff are using observation effectively for teaching individual children, and (3) these observations are discussed in parent/guardian conferences.
 - Standard met: (1) Instructional staff are qualified to observe children and record these observations or have aid from personnel trained in methods of observing children and recording these observations, (2) instructional staff are using observation effectively for teaching individual children, and (3) these observations are discussed in parent/guardian conferences.
 - Standard substantially met: Instructional staff observe children and record these observations but are not qualified to do so and do not have aid from personnel trained in methods of observing children and recording

these observations. However, these observations are used to teach individual children.

- Standard not met: Observation of children and the curriculum are not correlated.

3.10.4 Age Appropriate Assessment Tools An age-appropriate, research-based assessment tool is used to identify the developmental levels and growth of children.

Self-study document # Describe the procedure of assessment, including the methods used and the determination of levels and growth of children.

- Rating
- Exemplary compliance: Several age-appropriate, research-based assessment tools are used to identify the developmental levels and growth of children.
 - Standard met: An age-appropriate, research based assessment tool is used to identify the developmental levels and growth of children.
 - Standard not met: An age-appropriate, research based assessment tool is not used to identify the developmental levels and growth of children.

3.10.5 Observations of Child Development Observations of children by staff address all areas of children’s development, including but not limited to multiple intelligences, learning styles, learning preferences, and character development.

Self-study document # Describe the staff’s child observations that focus on all areas of children’s development, including but not limited to multiple intelligences, various learning styles, learning preferences, and character development.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff use child observations that focus on all areas of children’s development, including but not limited to multiple intelligences, learning styles, learning preferences, and character development.
 - Standard substantially met: Staff use child observations that focus on at least one of the following: multiple intelligences, learning styles, learning preferences, and character development.
 - Standard not met: Staff use child observations that do not address any of the following: multiple intelligences,

learning styles, learning preferences, and character development.

3.10.6 Teaching Toward Individual Needs Staff incorporate observations and assessment findings into classroom activities that address the individual needs, learning styles, strengths, and preferences of the children in their care.

Self-study document # Provide lesson plans that include activities that (1) address the individual needs, strengths, and preferences of the children and (2) result from the application of classroom observations of multiple intelligences, learning styles, and learning preferences.

- Rating
- Standard met: Classroom activities that address the individual needs, strengths, and preferences of the children include those resulting from the application of classroom observations of multiple intelligences, learning styles, and learning preferences.
 - Standard substantially met: Classroom activities include those resulting from the application of classroom observations of at least one of the following: multiple intelligences, learning styles, and learning preferences.
 - Standard not met: Classroom activities do not include those resulting from the application of classroom observations of at least one of the following: multiple intelligences, learning styles, and learning preferences.

SECTION IV

NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICES

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA



OFFICES OF EXECUTIVE MANAGER
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA
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Section IV

4.0 NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICES

RATIONALE

One of the basic responsibilities of every parent and caregiver is to provide nourishing food that is clean, safe, and developmentally appropriate for children (Caring for Our Children 2011).

Early food and eating experiences are the foundation for the formation of attitudes about food and eating behavior and consequently of food habits. Sound food habits build on eating and enjoying a variety of healthful foods. Including culturally acceptable family foods is a dietary goal for feeding infants and young children.

Current research documents that a balanced diet combined with regular and routine age-appropriate physical activity can reduce the risks of chronic diseases later in life that are related to diet (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2010).

STANDARDS

4.1 FOOD PREPARATION

4.1.1 Response to Civil Authorities' Standards If food is prepared on the premises, the program must be in compliance with the requirements of civil authorities for food storage, preparation, and service. Food may be prepared at an approved facility and transported to the program in approved containers and at approved temperatures.

Self-study document # Describe where, how, and by whom food is prepared and served to the children.

- Rating Standard met: The program meets all requirements governing the storage, preparation, and serving of food on the premises.
- Standard not met: The program does not meet all requirements governing the storage, preparation, and serving of food on the premises.
- Standard not applicable: The program does not store, prepare, or serve food on premises.

4.1.2 Nutritional Guidelines The meals and/or snacks provided for the children meet the nutritional guidelines regarding health, food groups and quantities that are

age appropriate for the children, food safety and special feeding needs as suggested by the Child Care Food Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Self-study document # Include two months of menus showing the appropriate food groups and quantities offered to each age group participating in the program.

- Rating Standard met: The program meets all requirements governing the nutritional guidelines regarding food groups and quantities offered to children in the program.
- Standard not met: The program does not meet all requirements governing the nutritional guidelines regarding food groups and quantities offered to children in the program.
- Standard not applicable: Parents/guardians provide all meals and snacks for children on an individual basis.

4.1.3 Sanitary Conditions Kitchen equipment is monitored by civil authorities, where applicable, to ensure healthy and sanitary conditions.

Self-study document # Describe how the kitchen equipment is monitored to ensure healthy and sanitary conditions and how often this monitoring is performed. Include any food service inspection reports if applicable.

- Rating Standard met: Kitchen equipment is monitored for healthy and sanitary conditions on a regular schedule, and inspection reports are included.
- Standard not met: Kitchen equipment is not monitored for healthy and sanitary conditions.
- Standard not applicable: Kitchen facilities are not used by the program.

4.2 PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

4.2.1 Availability of Menus Parents/guardians have access to written menus that meet all nutritional guidelines established by civil authorities. Written menus of all snacks and meals provided by the program are also posted in such a way that they are easily seen by parents/guardians.

Self-study document # Include two months of snack/meal menus, which are provided to parents/guardians.

- Rating
- Standard met: Parents/guardians are given information regarding children’s menus that are offered by the program.
 - Standard not met: Menus are not provided to parents/guardians.
 - Standard not applicable: The program does not store, prepare, or serve food on premises.

4.2.2 Suggestions for Food from Home Suggestions for food choices that meet nutritional requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture are made available to the parents/guardians who send meals and/or snacks with their own children.

Self-study document # Include copies of suggestions given to parents/guardians who send meals and/or snacks to children.

- Rating
- Standard met: Suggestions for nutritional choices are given to parents/guardians who send meals and/or snacks to children.
 - Standard not met: Parents/guardians do not receive appropriate suggestions and information regarding the meals and snacks they send to the children in their care.
 - Standard not applicable: Parents/guardians do not send meals and/or snacks with their own children.

4.2.3 Food Storage Food brought from home is stored appropriately, labeled with child’s name and date, and supplemented by the program, if necessary, per state requirements.

Self-study document # Describe what foods may be brought from home, how they are stored, and whether they are refrigerated when appropriate.

- Rating
- Standard met: Food items are appropriately stored when brought from home.
 - Standard not met: Food items may be brought from home but are not monitored for refrigeration needs, and/or refrigeration is not available for perishable foods.
 - Standard not applicable: Food items are not brought from home.

4.3 SOCIAL INTERACTION

4.3.1 Standards for Mealtime Meal time is to be cultivated as a pleasant social time. Staff members encourage healthy social interaction, appropriate table manners, and good eating habits. Staff ensure that food is cut and served according to regulations.

Self-study document # Include a description of snack/mealtimes for the children while they are under the supervision of the adults in the program.

- Rating Standard met: Children engage in pleasant social interaction while eating. Staff model appropriate table manners and good eating habits.
- Standard not met: Staff do not interact with the children during snack/mealtimes.

4.3.2 Size of Furniture Tables and chairs used for snack/mealtimes are appropriate size for the children.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Observations are made that children are provided size-appropriate furniture during snack/mealtimes.
- Standard not met: Tables and chairs are not appropriate for the sizes of the children using them for snack/meal times.

4.3.3 Children's Responsibilities The children are encouraged to serve themselves and assist with cleanup, within age-appropriate levels of ability.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: Staff are observed providing opportunities for children to set the table, serve themselves, and assist with cleanup at an age-appropriate level.

- Standard not met: Staff do not allow children to set the table, serve themselves, or assist with cleanup.

4.4 FOOD FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

4.4.1 Feeding Infants Infants are always held when bottle fed. The program supports breastfeeding and complies with health regulations regarding bottle feeding. Liquid containers should not be carried by children when walking or crawling.

Self-study document # Provide a copy of staff procedures for feeding infants.

- Rating
- Standard met: Infants are always held when bottle fed.
 - Standard not met: Infants are not always held when bottle fed.
 - Standard not applicable: Infants are not enrolled in the program.

4.4.2 Recording of Food Intake and Times Feeding practices, times and amount of food consumed are recorded and made available to parents/guardians of infants, toddlers and children with special needs on a daily basis.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the program's form for documentation of feeding information. Discuss how parents/guardians are provided with this information.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff record amounts of food-consumed by infants and toddlers and make the information available to parents/guardians daily.
 - Standard not met: Staff do not record feeding times and amount of food consumed for infants and toddlers.
 - Standard not applicable: Infants and toddlers are not included in this program.

SECTION V

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA



OFFICES OF EXECUTIVE MANAGER
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA
1200 BRICKELL AVE., SUITE 800
MIAMI, FL 33131
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Section V

5.0 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RATIONALE

Programs should provide equipment, materials, and space to facilitate the children's success in learning, by encouraging teachers to effectively organize the classroom and playground environments in a way that not only promotes the achievement of each child's educational goals but also increases the number of opportunities for achieving these goals during both child- and teacher-initiated activities (Bowman, et al. 2001).

STANDARDS

5.1 LIGHTING AND VENTILATION

The physical environment of the program provides sufficient lighting, good ventilation, and a comfortable temperature.

On-site observation		On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: The program provides sufficient lighting, good ventilation, and a comfortable temperature for the children.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: The program does not maintain sufficient lighting, good ventilation, or a comfortable temperature for the children; and/or maintenance is needed.

5.2 CLASSROOMS

5.2.1 Suitable for Class Size. Classrooms are suitable for the age and activities of the children in the program. Floor space meets or exceeds the minimum state and local requirements for usable space per child.

Self-study document #		Provide a floor plan or diagram of the early education facility and note the square footage of all classrooms and children's play spaces.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: The program meets all local and state space requirements governing children's classrooms and indoor play spaces.

- Standard not met: The program does not meet the minimum space requirements governing children’s classrooms and/or play spaces.

5.2.2 Classroom Maintenance Classrooms and furniture are clean, well maintained and secured according to safety regulations.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: The classrooms are clean, ~~and~~ in good repair, and well maintained.
 - Standard not met: The classrooms show signs of neglect and/or are in disrepair.

5.2.3 Classroom Arrangement of Furnishings The physical environment of the classroom is arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children but also to encourage exploration and experimentation. Appropriate adult seating is available in locations that will avoid injury to children.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: The physical environment of the classroom is arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children but also to encourage exploration and experimentation.
 - Standard not met: The physical environment of the classroom is not arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children but also to encourage exploration and experimentation.

5.2.4 Environment The physical environment facilitates optimal age-appropriate learning experiences. Indoor equipment for large motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised as per outdoor equipment.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: The physical environment facilitates optimal age-appropriate learning experiences, has equipment that meets national safety standards, and activities are supervised.

- Standard not met: The physical environment does not facilitate optimal age-appropriate learning experiences, have equipment that meets national safety standards, or activities are not supervised.

5.2.5 Children's Personal Storage Space Children are provided with individual spaces, such as cubbies, in which they can store their work and personal belongings.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating Standard met: Child ren are provided with individual storage spaces.

- Standard not met: Children are not provided with individual storage spaces.

5.2.6 Appropriate Classroom Flooring The physical environment includes appropriate flooring, and foot attire for children and adults is clean at all times.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating Standard met: The physical environment includes appropriate flooring.

- Standard not met: The physical environment does not include appropriate flooring.

5.2.7 Drinking Water Drinking water is adequately provided to the children as regulated by civil authorities.

Self-study document # Describe the location of drinking water in relation to the children in the program.

Rating Standard met: Drinking water is accessible to children indoors and on the playground.

- Standard not met: Drinking water is not accessible to children indoors and/or on the playground.

5.3 RESTROOM FACILITIES

5.3.1 Accessible & Appropriate Sinks and Toilets Sinks and toilets are readily accessible to children. To prevent unaccompanied entrance by children under two

years of age, a barrier to the bathroom is in place. The number of sinks and toilets (child-sized ones are recommended) must be in compliance with civil authorities and adequate for the number of children in attendance.

Self-study document # Describe the number and location of sinks and toilets in relation to the number of children in the program.

Rating

- Standard met: Sinks and toilets are easily accessible to the children, and the facilities are in compliance with the regulations of civil authorities.
- Standard not met: Children’s restrooms are not easily accessible or the number of sinks and/or toilets is inadequate for the number of children enrolled in the program.

5.3.2 Location and Adequacy of Sinks Sinks are located in the area near the toilets, with soap and paper towels accessible to the children, in compliance with civil authorities.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating

- Standard met: Sinks are located near toilets, and soap and paper towels are accessible to the children.
- Standard substantially met: Sinks are located near toilets. However, children are not able to access soap and paper towels without assistance.
- Standard not met: Sinks are not located near toilets.

5.4 DIAPERING OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS

The diapering area is away from food preparation areas, in good repair and is sanitized after each use, and soiled diapers are stored in a sealed container. Gloves as well as running water and soap for hand washing are accessible and utilized by the staff during diapering. Diapering area, equipment, supplies, and protocol meets state and local requirements.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

Rating

- Standard met: The diapering area contains gloves, running water, and soap, which are utilized by the staff during diapering; is in good repair; and is sanitized after each use. Soiled diapers are stored in a sealed container.

- Standard not met: At least one of the following is true: The diapering area is not sanitized after each use; diapers are not stored in a sealed container; and/or gloves, running water, and soap for hand washing are not accessible and/or utilized by the staff during diapering.
- Standard not applicable: Infants and toddlers in diapers are not enrolled in the program.

5.5 STAFF SPACE

5.5.1 Director's Office The facilities include appropriate office space for the director of the program.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: The director has an office that is of sufficient size and location to effectively administrate the early education program.
 - Standard not met: An office is not provided for the director or not sufficient in size or location.

5.5.2 Staff Meeting Room The facilities include an appropriate area for staff meetings and breaks.

Self-study document # Describe the location of staff meetings and of the area designated for staff breaks, and address the sufficiency of this space.

- Rating
- Standard met: An appropriate area(s) is provided for staff meetings and breaks.
 - Standard not met: No area is provided for staff meetings and/or breaks.

5.5.3 Storage Space The facilities provide suitable storage space.

Self-study document # Describe the areas designated for storage and include how adequate and accessible the provided storage and shelving are.

- Rating
- Standard met: A sufficient amount of storage and shelving is available for the program's use.

- Standard not met: There is an insufficient amount of storage and shelving available for the program's use.

5.6 OUTDOOR FACILITIES

5.6.1 Adequate Outdoor Space To accommodate the children's various play activities, the outdoor physical environment meets or exceeds the minimum state and local requirements for usable space per child, and is safe from potentially harmful animals, plants and chemicals.

Self-study document # Provide evidence of the outdoor play area that includes the square footage and the maximum number of children playing there at any given time.

- Rating
- Standard met: The outdoor play area meets the minimum standard established by local and state authorities.
 - Standard not met: The outdoor play area does not meet the minimum standard established by local and state authorities.

5.6.2 Playground The playground is designed and equipped to provide learning experiences for children.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: The playground is designed to provide learning experiences for children.
 - Standard not met: The playground is not designed to provide learning experiences for children.

5.6.3 Playground Supervision Children are supervised at all times, and the child-adult ratio is maintained while the children are on the playground.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Child-adult ratios remain the same when children are in the outdoor play area.
 - Standard not met: Child-adult ratios do not remain the same when children are in the outdoor play area.

5.6.4 Playground Safety, Security, and Protection The program provides adequate protection for the play area, including fencing and a balance of sun and shade.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating Standard met: The outdoor play area is fenced and provides a balance of sun and shade.
- Standard not met: The outdoor play area is not fenced and/or does not provide a balance of sun and shade.

5.6.5 Playground Surfaces Wood chips, sand, and other cushioning materials of recommended depths are used under equipment such as swings and climbing apparatus, as recommended by civil authorities or national playground safety standards.

Self-study document # Include a description of the playground coverings required in fall zones, and note who is responsible for maintaining the upkeep of the cushioning materials.

- Rating Standard met: All fall zones are appropriately covered, and there is a person responsible for maintaining the upkeep of the cushioning materials.
- Standard not met: Fall zones are not covered with appropriate types of material, and/or the depths of the material are substantially lower than the recommended depths.

5.6.6 Inspections and Repairs Through routine daily inspections and resulting timely repairs, the outdoor play area is well maintained to prevent children from being injured by broken equipment, sharp edges, and rusty parts. Sandboxes are cleaned regularly and covered when not in use.

Self-study document # Describe the procedure used to maintain safe equipment on the playground, and note how concerns are reported, logged, and addressed.

- Rating Standard met: The outdoor play area and equipment are routinely inspected for maintenance needs and procedures are in place for reporting concerns and for timely repair.
- Standard not met: A procedure is in place for reporting concerns, but concerns are not consistently addressed to ensure the safety of the children.

5.6.7 Substitute and Adequate Space Indoors for Large Group Play When inclement weather or unhealthy air quality prevents children from playing outdoors, alternative activities are planned to ensure large-motor exercise and to foster large-motor development.

Self-study document # Describe what alternative activities are provided to children in the program when inclement weather prevents outdoor play.

- Rating
- Exemplary compliance: During inclement weather, children have the opportunity to participate in large-motor activities in an indoor play area, other than their regular classroom, with varied equipment and appropriate floor cushioning.
 - Standard met: Children have the opportunity to participate in large-motor activities during inclement weather.
 - Standard not met: No alternative large-motor activities are provided for the children during inclement weather.

5.6.8 Maintenance of Buildings and Grounds There is a process in place that ensures proper maintenance of the buildings, grounds, and equipment. Any body of water on property is enclosed by a fence at least four feet in height with child-proof gates.

Self-study document # Describe the process that ensures proper maintenance of buildings, grounds, and equipment.

- Rating
- Standard met: A written description of the maintenance process for the facility confirms a safe and healthy environment for the children.
 - Standard not met: The maintenance of the facility is insufficient and may be unsafe and/or unhealthy.

5.7 CLASSROOM PETS AND VISITING ANIMALS

Pets or visiting animals have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter that shows immunization per state and local laws, and that animals are suitable for contact with children. Staff instruct children on appropriate behavior in the presence of animals and supervise all interactions between children and animals. Staff ensure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to it. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets due

to the risk for salmonella infection; any birds or animals that may also be identified by authorities as at risk for salmonella infection are also prohibited.

Self-study document #	Official documentation regarding immunization and safety of animals.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: Program is in compliance as stated, in regards to animals' documentation, children's allergies, delivery of instruction on behavior and safety, and prohibited animals.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: Program is not in compliance, as stated in this indicator.

SECTION VI

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA



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ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA
1200 BRICKELL AVE., SUITE 800
MIAMI, FL 33131
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Section VI

6.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

RATIONALE

The early education program has a responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of each child in attendance. The staff should have continuing and required training in emergency first aid and in special medical needs in order to be alert and prepared for emergencies. Staff members need to be safety conscious with a view toward prevention (Caring for Our Children 2011).

STANDARDS

6.1 DOCUMENTATION OF INSPECTIONS

The program is inspected by civil authorities as applicable for licensing or exemption under state or federal law (i.e., fire department, health department, food services, etc.). Inspection documentations are on file. If the program is exempt from licensing, voluntary inspection has been sought, and recommendations for improvement have been followed.

Self-study document #		Provide a copy of the program's license or inspection documentation to operate where applicable.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: For licensing/compliance purposes, documentation of inspections is on file for each required area (e.g., fire marshal's report).
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: The program provides inadequate documentation of compliance with any areas in which it is required to be inspected.

6.2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH RECORDS

Up-to-date, complete, and confidential health records for each child enrolled in the program are maintained in a safe and secure area and are available to authorized personnel. These files may include such information as the child's life history, developmental milestones, screening or assessment results, typical behaviors, and interests. Children in attendance are in compliance with the requirements of civil authorities regarding immunizations, physical examinations, and communicable diseases.

Self-study document #		Include copies of any documents kept in a child's file regarding the health and immunization of children as required by civil authorities.
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| Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: All children have a file documenting that their health records and immunizations are up to date. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: Complete children's files are not kept or are incomplete and/or indicate that children whose health records and immunizations are not up to date are attending the program. |

6.3 EMERGENCY, HEALTH, AND SECURITY INFORMATION

Current emergency information is maintained for each child enrolled in the program, including expected attendance, parent/guardian contact information, people authorized to take the child off the premises, allergies, and other important health information.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| On-site observation | On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met. |
| Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: Children's files include all the current emergency information described above. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: Children's files do not contain all the current emergency information described above. |

6.4 POLICIES REGARDING ILLNESSES

A written policy regarding the attendance of children who are ill, have been diagnosed with a contagious disease, or have been found to have a communicable condition has been developed and made available to parents/guardians. An isolation area is made available for ill or contagious children while they wait for someone to take them home.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Self-study document # | Provide a copy of the ill-child policy given to parents/guardians. Describe how children are cared for when they are ill and waiting to be taken home. |
| Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: Parents/guardians are provided with a policy that includes when ill children are removed and are permitted to return to the program. An isolation area is made available for ill or contagious children while they wait to be taken home. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: The program does not have an ill-child policy, a policy regarding ill children has not been provided to parents/guardians, and/or an isolation area for ill or contagious children is not provided. |

6.5 SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS OF CHILDREN

Staff are alerted to special health conditions of children and are equipped, when applicable, to handle such concerns.

Self-study document #		Describe how staff are equipped to handle children who have special medical conditions (e.g., asthma or severe allergies).
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: Information about the special health conditions of children is provided in detail to the staff. When applicable, training is provided on such topics as medicines and the handling of equipment.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: Little or no information is provided to the staff regarding the special health conditions of children. Appropriate training has not been provided on topics such as medicine and the handling of equipment.

6.6 ADMINISTERING AND STORING OF MEDICINES

A written policy that complies with the requirements of civil authorities for administering and storing medications has been developed and made available to the parents/guardians of the children in the program.

Self-study document #		Provide a copy of the policy pertaining to administering and storing medications on the program's premises and a copy of the information made available to parents/guardians pertaining to medication.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: The program has a policy pertaining to administering and storing medications and a copy of the information made available to parents/guardians pertaining to medication.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: The program does not have an appropriate policy pertaining to administering and storing medications and/or a copy of the information is not made available to parents/guardians.

6.7 MEDICAL LOG

A detailed medical log is maintained that includes a record of all medications given to children, the time the medication was given, and the person administering the medication.

Self-study document #		Provide a copy of the program's medical log for the past two months.
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|--------|---|
| Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: The medical log as described above is complete. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: The program does not keep a medical log as described above or the medical log is incomplete. |

6.8 BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

The program has developed policies and procedures to protect the staff and children from blood-borne pathogens by developing a blood-borne exposure control plan and by providing annual in-service to the staff regarding protective procedures. As a result, the staff use “universal precautions” when encountering children’s body fluids.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Self-study document # | Describe the program’s blood-borne exposure control plan, the education of the staff regarding blood-borne pathogens, and the use of universal precautions. |
| Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: A blood-borne exposure control plan is in place, and annual training is provided to the staff regarding blood-borne pathogens and the use of universal precautions. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: The program does not have policies and procedures regarding blood borne exposure, does not provide staff training, and/or staff does not follow established procedures. |

6.9 CLEANLINESS REQUIREMENTS

Children and adults wash their hands after toileting, before eating or handling food, and as otherwise necessary to prevent the spread of disease.

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|-----------------------|--|
| Self-study document # | Describe the program’s hand-washing policy and how the policy is implemented throughout the facilities. |
| Rating | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard met: A hand-washing policy is in place, and it includes not only training for the children and staff but also monitoring for compliance. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard not met: An official hand-washing policy that includes monitoring is not in place. |

6.10 WASHING OF INFANT AND TODDLER BEDDING

Infant and toddler bedding is washed at a minimum of twice per week and more often when soiled, and it is used by only one child between washings. Bedding used by preschoolers is washed a minimum of once per week and more often when soiled, and it is used by only one child between washings.

Self-study document #		Describe laundry procedures provided for the program.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: Soiled bedding and other items are laundered and used as suggested above.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: Bedding is used by more than one child between washings and/or is not washed as suggested above.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not applicable: Infants and toddlers are not enrolled.

6.11 HEALTH SCREENINGS

The program makes visual, auditory, speech, language development, physical development, cognitive development, and other health screening assessments available to the children as needed, with the consent of their parent or guardian. The program obtains annual updates on relative health information and advice when communicable disease occurs.

Self-study document #		Describe how the program makes visual, auditory, speech, and other health and developmental screenings available to the children as needed.
Rating	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: The program makes developmental and health screening as described above available to the children as needed.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: The program does not make developmental and health screening as described above available to the children as needed.

6.12 SAFETY

6.12.1 Supervision of Arrivals, Departures and Transporting Written procedures address all aspects of arrival, departure, and transportation by the program that ensure all children are signed in upon arrival, accounted for throughout the day, and signed out by and released only to authorized adults. Children are supervised by sight at all times and transition of children from one teacher to another or from one area to

another is accounted for to ensure the supervision and whereabouts of children at all times.

Self-study document # Describe how the program ensures children are accounted for throughout the day and released only to authorized adults and how the administration ensures children are supervised by sight at all times.

- Rating
- Standard met: Procedures are in place that ensure children are accounted for throughout the day, released only to authorized adults, and supervised by sight at all times.
 - Standard not met: Procedures are not in place that ensure children are accounted for throughout the day, released only to authorized adults, and/or supervised by sight at all times.

6.12.2 Signs of Child Abuse and Neglect The staff is trained to recognize signs of child abuse and neglect. They know the laws and procedures for reporting to the appropriate agency. All communications with authorities are documented and placed in a confidential file.

Self-study document # Describe how staff are trained to recognize signs of child abuse/child neglect, how such abuse and neglect are reported, and how the information is kept confidential. Include a copy of any requirements of civil authorities.

- Rating
- Standard met: Staff are trained in recognizing signs of child abuse/child neglect, and a reporting process to the appropriate agency is in place. All communications regarding reports are kept in a confidential file.
 - Standard not met: One or more of the following are true: Staff are not trained in recognizing signs of child abuse/child neglect, there is not an official process in place for reporting such abuse and neglect to the appropriate agency, and/or reports are not kept in a confidential file.

6.12.3 Policies and Procedures to Eliminate Child Abuse Abuse prevention is practiced throughout the early education program and may include-a minimum of two teachers assigned to a group of children, viewing windows that allow for visual access into the classrooms, bathroom doors-left open, and random walk-throughs are practiced throughout the day. Written procedures are in place, in the event a staff member is accused of neglect or abuse, to protect the staff member as well as a child.

Self-study document # Describe how the program maintains exceptional abuse prevention compliance.

- Rating
- Standard met: Child abuse prevention measures are practiced throughout the early childhood program.
 - Standard not met: Child abuse prevention measures are not practiced throughout the early childhood program.

6.12.4 First Aid Certified Personnel All staff are trained in and maintain certification for pediatric first aid and CPR.

Self-study document # Provide documents for all staff showing current certifications in pediatric first aid and CPR.

- Rating
- Standard met: All staff hold verifiable certification in pediatric first aid and CPR.
 - Standard not met: One or more staff are not certified in pediatric first aid and CPR.

6.12.5 First Aid Supplies The program maintains adequate first aid supplies and a universal precaution kit that are conveniently available to the classrooms but not to the children. The program maintains a detailed medical log regarding the use of these items.

Self-study document # Describe how first aid supplies and a universal precaution kit are made available to staff members, where these items are located, and how a detailed medical log is maintained regarding the use of these items.

- Rating
- Standard met: First aid supplies (as defined by civil authorities) and a universal precaution kit are conveniently available to staff and are located in areas accessible only to adults. A detailed medical log is maintained regarding the use of these items.
 - Standard not met: First aid supplies and/or a universal precaution kit is not conveniently available to the classrooms, and/or a detailed medical log is not maintained regarding the use of the items.

6.12.6 Written Record of Accidents and Illnesses A written notice of accidents and/or illnesses is kept on file and a copy is given to the parents/guardians of the child(ren) involved.

Self-study document # Provide a copy of the program's accident/illness form. Describe the process that staff follow when notifying a parent/guardian of an illness or accident.

- Rating
- Standard met: A system is in place to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of an ill or injured child. An accident/illness form is completed and filed, and a copy is given to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - Standard not met: No system is in place to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of an ill or injured child, and/or accident/illness forms are not completed, filed, and given to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

6.12.7 Emergency Preparedness Plans The program has a general disaster plan and/or an Emergency Crisis Manual that includes evacuation procedures and inside actions in the event of a disaster or crisis (e.g., snowstorm, tornado, lightning, flooding, fire, bomb threat, violence, and hostage situation). The plan includes directions for disasters common to the geographic area. Staff members are familiar with routes and procedures, which are posted in each classroom, and staff regularly practice monthly drills with the children. Such plan should be reviewed periodically by the civil authorities, local law enforcement and/or emergency personnel.

Self-study document # Provide a copy of the policies and procedures relating to emergency drills and evacuations and of the records of drills and evacuations for the past twelve months. Include a copy of any requirements of civil authorities.

- Rating
- Standard met: Disaster drills are held monthly, in compliance with civil regulations, their occurrence is recorded, and the reports are filed. Escape routes and procedures are posted in each classroom.
 - Standard not met: Disaster drills are not held monthly, in compliance with civil regulations, and/or escape routes and procedures are not posted in each classroom.

6.12.8 Fire Extinguishers and Detectors Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are provided and checked as mandated by the local fire marshal, and staff is trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

Self-study document # Describe the location of fire extinguishers and smoke detectors, their maintenance, and the training of staff regarding the use of fire extinguishers.

Rating Standard met: Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are located in areas as regulated by civil authorities. Staff are trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

Standard not met: Fire extinguishers or smoke detectors are not in use in the facilities as mandated by civil authorities and/or the staff are not trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

6.12.9 Emergency Phone Numbers Emergency phone numbers are posted by readily accessible telephones to allow for quick reference.

Self-study document # Provide a listing of all emergency phone numbers and describe the location of all readily accessible telephones.

Rating Standard met: Readily accessible telephones have emergency numbers clearly posted and quickly accessible in the case of an emergency.

Standard not met: One or more of the following are true: Telephones are not readily accessible, they do not have emergency numbers clearly posted, and/or the numbers are not quickly accessible in the case of an emergency.

6.12.10 Notifying Parents/Guardians in Emergencies A plan is in place to contact parents/guardians in case of an emergency closing, and the parents/guardians have been made aware of the plan.

Self-study document # Provide a copy of the information given to parents/guardians regarding the program's emergency closure policy.

Rating Standard met: A policy is in place for notifying parents/guardians in the case of an emergency closing, and the parents/guardians have been made aware of the policy.

Standard not met: A policy is not sufficiently in place for notifying parents/guardians of an emergency closing.

6.12.11 Proper Chemical Labeling and Storage All chemicals, medicines, and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in their original containers. All potentially dangerous products are stored in a locked area. All art and craft materials are non-toxic. An MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) is strategically placed near harmful chemicals.

Self-study document # Describe the location where potentially “dangerous if swallowed” materials are kept. Address whether all chemicals, medicines, and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in their original containers and whether an MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) is strategically placed near harmful chemicals.

Rating Standard met: All chemicals, medicines, and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in their original containers, all potentially dangerous products are stored in a locked area, and an MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) is strategically placed near harmful chemicals.

Standard not met: One or more of the following are true: Chemicals, medicines, and other “dangerous if swallowed” materials are stored in containers other than their original containers, potentially dangerous products are not stored in a locked area, and an MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) is not strategically placed near harmful chemicals.

6.12.12 Vehicle Inspection, Permits, and Qualified Drivers Current documentation is available on all vehicle safety inspections and driver qualifications, verifying that all requirements of civil authorities and all specific vehicle transportation requirements are being met.

Self-study document # Provide documentation on all program vehicles and their drivers, verifying that all requirements of civil authorities and all specific vehicle transportation requirements are being met.

Rating Standard met: With regard to vehicle safety inspections and driver qualifications, all requirements of civil authorities and all specific vehicle transportation requirements are being met.

Standard not met: With regard to vehicle safety inspections and driver qualifications, not all requirements of civil authorities and not all specific vehicle transportation requirements are being met.

- Standard not applicable: Children are not transported by the program.

6.12.13 Vehicles with Restraining Devices and Emergency Equipment Vehicles are equipped with age-appropriate restraint devices, a first aid kit, children’s emergency information, and appropriate safety precautions are taken when children are being transported.

Self-study document # Provide documentation that all program vehicles are equipped with age-appropriate restraint devices along with a first aid kit and that appropriate safety precautions are taken when children are being transported.

- Rating
- Standard met: All program vehicles are equipped with age-appropriate restraint devices along with a first aid kit, and appropriate safety precautions are taken when children are being transported.
 - Standard not met: Not all program vehicles are equipped with age-appropriate restraint devices along with a first aid kit, and/or appropriate safety precautions are not taken when children are being transported.
 - Standard not applicable: Children are not transported by the program for any reason.

6.12.14 Field Trip Policies and Procedures The program has written field trip policies and procedures that ensure the supervision of all children at all times and thus promote the safety of the children. These are shared with parents/guardians and implemented by the program. The policies and procedures must include that prior to the excursion, parents receive details and give written permission for their child’s participation, and that roll checks are logged before, regularly during, and upon return to the program’s facilities.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the policies and procedures regarding all aspects of field trip protocol, including supervision, transportation, and parent/guardian approval.

- Rating
- Standard met: The program has written field trip policies and procedures that ensure the supervision of all children at all times and thus promote the safety of the children. These are shared with parents/guardians and implemented by the program, and they include the elements described above.

- Standard not met: One or more of the following are true: The program does not have written field trip policies and procedures that ensure the supervision of all children at all times and thus promote the safety of the children, these are not shared with parents/guardians and implemented by the program, and/or they do not include the elements described above.

6.12.15 Cleanliness of Facilities The facilities are cleaned on a daily basis, including sanitizing the bathrooms and removing trash. The facilities are free of mold and offensive odors. Smoking is not permitted in or around the facility or in the presence of children.

Self-study document # Describe the arrangements for maintaining clean facilities.

- Rating
- Standard met: Facilities are thoroughly cleaned on a daily basis, and they are free of mold and offensive odors.
 - Standard not met: Facilities are not thoroughly cleaned on a daily basis, and/or they are not free of mold and offensive odors.

6.12.16 Toys and Equipment The program has an established plan of sanitizing toys and equipment regularly per civil regulations and removing choking hazards.

Self-study document # Describe the procedures and schedule for sanitizing toys and equipment as described above.

- Rating
- Standard met: The procedures and schedule are documented as described above.
 - Standard not met: The procedures and schedule are not documented as described above.

6.12.17 Water Conditions Water heaters are set according to civil regulations.

On-site observation On-site observation verifies whether the standard has been met.

- Rating
- Standard met: Water heaters are set according to civil regulations.
 - Standard not met: Water heaters are not set according to civil regulations.

SECTION VII

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA



OFFICES OF EXECUTIVE MANAGER
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA
1200 BRICKELL AVE., SUITE 800
MIAMI, FL 33131
<http://www.aisfl.com>

Section VII

7.0 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

RATIONALE

Parents are a child's first teacher and the early education program respects the critical role parents play in supporting the growth and development of their child. Partnerships with parents are a part of a quality early education program. A rapport is built between staff and parents, which supports communication between the home and the early education program.

STANDARDS

7.1 PUBLIC RELATIONS

All informational sources established by the program accurately describe the early education program, including its enrollment policy, mission, and statement of nondiscrimination and satisfied consumer protection requirements as established by state, Federal law or Administrative Rule.

Self-study document #	Provide evidence and/or a description of all informational sources that accurately portray the early education program—including its enrollment policy, mission, and statement of nondiscrimination.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard met: Informational sources established by the program are available and address the program's enrollment policy, mission, or statement of nondiscrimination.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard substantially met: Informational sources established by the program are available but do not address the program's enrollment policy, mission, or statement of nondiscrimination; and/or the information is not current.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Standard not met: Informational sources established by the program are not available.

7.2 PARENT OR GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

7.2.1 Contents and Communication Parents/guardians of the children in the program receive a parent/guardian handbook in language recipient can comprehend that includes but is not limited to (1) the philosophy statement regarding the care and education of young children attending the program including what discipline techniques will be used; (2) policies regarding holidays, illnesses, hours of operation,

fees, refunds, enrollment, conflict resolution procedures, and termination procedures; and (3) an explanation of the program’s day-to-day functioning. Parents/guardians sign a statement acknowledging that they understand and support the program’s policies as outlined in the parent/guardian handbook.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the parent/guardian handbook and the form that parents/guardians sign to acknowledge that they understand and support the policies.

- Rating Standard met: The parent/guardian handbook includes and satisfactorily explains the above-mentioned items, and parents/guardians are expected to sign an acknowledgment of support.
- Standard substantially met: The parent/guardian handbook includes the above-mentioned items. However, additional information needs to be included in the handbook regarding these items, and/or parents/guardians are not expected to sign an acknowledgment of support.
- Standard not met: The parent/guardian handbook does not include the above-mentioned items.

7.2.2 Visitation Rights The program has an open-door policy regarding visits by parents/guardians on the program’s premises, including in their child’s classroom. Policies concerning parent/guardian involvement (e.g., visiting, observing, and volunteering) are in place to ensure the partnership between home and program is maintained.

Self-study document # Include a copy of the information given to parents/guardians with regard to parent/guardian involvement policies.

- Rating Standard met: Parents/guardians are welcome on the premises, including in their child’s classroom, and a policy regarding parent/guardian involvement is included in the parent/guardian handbook.
- Standard not met: Parents/guardians of the children are not welcome in the classrooms and/or elsewhere on the premises.

7.3 COMMUNICATION

7.3.1 Communication with Parents or Guardians Administrators and staff communicate about each child’s day and program information to the parents

/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis in language(s) every family can understand including, but not limited to—daily verbal communication, posted information, newsletters, classroom calendar of events, written notes, and/or electronically.

Self-study document # Include a copy of communications provided to parents/guardians from the administration and from classroom staff.

- Rating Standard met: Administrators and staff communicate with the parents/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis.
- Standard not met: Administrators and staff do not communicate with the parents/guardians in a variety of ways on a regular basis.

7.3.2 General Conferences about their Children Conferences with each child’s parent(s)/guardian are offered at least twice per year—and at other times as needed—to promote dialogue with families, discuss personal care and education, work through any raised concerns and plan solution implementation together. Conferences accommodate parents/guardians schedules, preferred spoken language, and location.

Self-study document # Describe how parent/guardian conferences are held and what staff are expected to discuss at such meetings.

- Rating Standard met: Parent/guardian conferences are held a minimum of twice per year; they address the child’s developmental progress, personal care, and education; and a variety of appointment times are made available to accommodate parents/guardians.
- Standard substantially met: Parent/guardian conferences are held a minimum of twice per year. However, parents/guardians must attend during program hours.
- Standard not met: Semiannual parent/guardian conferences are not scheduled.

7.3.3 Conferences Regarding the Child's Development Progress Parents/guardians of the children in the program receive communication regarding their children’s developmental progress at least twice per year. During parent/guardian conferences, child observation and assessment results are shared with parents/guardians, and parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the goal-setting process for the child.

Self-study document # Describe how, when, and by whom children are observed and how information is recorded and appropriately shared with parents/guardians. Explain the process used for setting parent/guardian-teacher goals for children.

- Rating
- Standard met: Children are observed by qualified personnel who record the information and appropriately share it with parents/guardians at least twice per year. Observations are used by parents/guardians and teachers to set goals for children.
 - Standard not met: Staff do not officially observe and/or record observations, and/or observations are not used for parent/guardian-teacher goal setting.

7.3.4 Reporting of Significant Changes in Behavior Significant changes in a child’s pattern of behavior and/or physical condition are reported to the parent(s)/guardian(s), documented, and placed in the child’s file.

Self-study document # Include information given to the staff not only about documenting significant changes in a child’s pattern of behavior and/or physical condition but also about informing parents/guardians of these changes.

- Rating
- Standard met: A policy is in place requiring the staff not only to document any significant changes in a child’s pattern of behavior and/or physical condition but also to inform parents/guardians regarding these changes.
 - Standard not met: Either (1) a policy is not in place requiring the staff to document any significant changes in a child’s pattern of behavior and/or physical condition and to inform parents/guardians regarding these changes or (2) a policy is in place but is not adhered to by the staff.

7.4 PARENT OR GUARDIAN EDUCATION

7.4.1 Parent Training Programs The program director plans and implements regularly scheduled parent/guardian programs that support parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforce the mission of the program. The director and staff foster collaboration with families to plan events that facilitate building relationships with and support for each other, and working together on projects that support the program, their families and community.

Self-study document # Include documentation of programs provided during the past twelve months.

- Rating
- Standard met: Programs supporting parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforcing the mission of the program are offered quarterly to the parents/guardians of children attending the program.
 - Standard not met: Programs that support parents/guardians in their parenting role and reinforce the mission of the program are not offered to the parents/guardians of children attending the program.

7.4.2 Referral to Community Resources The director is familiar with community services and resources regarding children and families with specific needs and provides this information to parents/guardians. The director and staff work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information and services as needed. The director and staff encourage parents to obtain needed services.

Self-study document # Include a list of community resources available to the director. Describe how this information is provided to parents/guardians and how the director and staff work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed.

- Rating
- Standard met: The director is familiar with community services and resources regarding children with specific needs and provides this information to parents/guardians. In addition, the director and staff work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed.
 - Standard not met: Either the director is not familiar with community services and resources regarding children with specific needs and/or the director and staff do not work collaboratively with community agencies in providing information as needed.

7.4.3 Parent Feedback All parents/legal guardians of children enrolled in the early care and education program are given the opportunity to provide periodic feedback regarding the quality and effectiveness of the program.

Self-study document # Evidence of a mechanism for gathering periodic parental feedback which may include completed Parent Assessment Surveys (see sample in the Appendix) and response plans.

Rating

- Standard met: The program has a mechanism for gathering feedback from parents regarding the quality and effectiveness of the program and uses feedback to inform decisions.
- Standard not met: The program does not seek periodic feedback from parents regarding its effectiveness.

7.5 Stakeholders Feedback

All early care and education program stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide periodic feedback regarding the quality and effectiveness of the program. (Sample document in the Appendix)

Self-study document #

Evidence of a mechanism for gathering periodic stakeholder feedback which may include completed Stakeholder Assessment Survey (see sample below) and response plans.

Rating

- Standard met: The program has a mechanism for gathering feedback from stakeholders regarding the quality and effectiveness of the program and uses feedback to inform decisions.
- Standard not met: The program does not seek periodic feedback from stakeholders regarding its effectiveness.

7.6 Moving Children to Another Program

The program has a written procedure for transitioning children to another program or elementary school. The protocol includes helping children and parents/guardians make the transition, reviewing child and family needs and the parent signing a consent form that states specifically what will be shared with the next program/school.

Self-study document #

Evidence of a written procedure, completed review assessment, and a consent form template.

Rating

- Standard met: The program has written procedure and consent form
- Standard not met: The program does not have a written procedure.

APPENDIX

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA



OFFICES OF EXECUTIVE MANAGER
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF FLORIDA
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Child to Staff Ratio Form

Room # or Group Name			
Age(s) of Children in Group			
Highest # of Children Enrolled in the Class or Group			
# of Teachers			
# of Assistants			
# of Teacher Aides			
Teacher's Hours			
Assistant's Hours			
Aide's Hours			

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Staff member (first name only)			
Job Title			
Years of work experience with young children			
Employment date			
Years of high school completed			
Years of college completed			
Degree's awarded			
Number of early education credits acquired			
ECE Credential/Certificate			
A.A. degree in ECE/CD			
B.A./B.S. degree in ECE/CD			
Graduate work in ECE/CD			
Master's degree in ECE/CD			
Doctorate degree in ECE/CD			

TEACHER/CAREGIVER/STAFF ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Instructions: Your opinion about our early care and education program is important. Please complete this survey. Do **NOT** sign your name. Return it to the center sealed in the envelope provided. For questions 1-12, circle the number that corresponds with your level of agreement with the statements. (Number 1 indicates no agreement with the statement, and 5 indicates strong agreement.) You may add a brief comment about any statement. Upon completion of the ranked response items, answer the open-ended questions 13-17.

How many years/months have you worked at this early childhood education and care program?

Circle one: 1 to 12 months 1 to 3 years 3 to 6 years more than 6 years

Agreement
Low ----- High

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. The program administration keeps me informed of working policies, schedules, and procedures and any changes thereof in a timely manner. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Staffing at this early care and education program is good and fair; there are no discriminatory problems. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. I feel accepted and respected by my coworkers. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. Staff are usually involved in the development and implementation of new programs. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. The governance, administration and program offered where I work is high quality. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. The administration assists me in developing professionally. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. Positive teamwork and collaboration among staff members is high. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 8. Reports from program governance and civil authorities containing information that affects my work/responsibilities are shared with me by my administration in a timely manner. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 9. The administration models maintaining a healthy, safe and orderly environment. |

- 1 2 3 4 5 10. The everyday working relationship among the personnel in my specific area (e.g. food service, classroom, front office) is amiable and professional.
- 1 2 3 4 5 11. The due process provided by the administration for seeking solutions is adequate.
- 1 2 3 4 5 12. I feel that my suggestions to the administration regarding curriculum, classroom management, programming, building parent and community relations are appreciated and taken into consideration.
13. Why did you choose to work at this early childhood program, and what do you like most about your work?
14. What do you consider to be the strengths of this early childhood program?
15. What areas of the early childhood program could be improved?
16. What suggestions would you offer the administration for improvement?
17. Additional comments:

SAMPLE PARENT ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Instructions: Your opinion about the quality of the early care and education program is important. Please complete this parent survey. Do **NOT** sign your name. Return it to the early childhood program facility sealed in the envelope provided. For questions 1–12, rate your early childhood program by circling the number that corresponds with your level of agreement with the statements about the early childhood program. (Number 1 indicates no agreement with the statement, and 5 indicates strong agreement.) You may add a brief comment about any statement. Upon completion of the ranked response items, answer the open-ended questions 13–16.

How many year/months have you had a child / children enrolled in this early childhood program? _____

Please indicate in which group(s) you have a child/children:

A. infant B. toddler C. three-year-old D. four-year-old E. five-year-old

Agreement
Low ----- High

- | | | |
|-----------|-----|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. | I am informed of the early childhood education and care programs and policies. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. | Communication and reports concerning my child's development and progress are regular and adequate. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. | The director and teachers have informed me of a variety of resources available to my child and I. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. | The children, teachers, caregivers and staff have a good working relationship. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. | Accommodations for children with special needs are made in this early childhood education and care facility and program. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. | My child receives adequate help from the teachers and staff. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. | I feel welcome at this early childhood program facility. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 8. | I am respected and feel that the teachers and staff respect my child and family. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 9. | Children and staff are provided a safe and orderly environment for living and learning. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 10. | I believe that the teachers are effective in fostering appropriate development and growth for my child. |

- | | | |
|-----------|-----|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 11. | Teachers / caregivers hold high expectations for learning, growth and development. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 12. | The educational program and care offered at this early childhood program is of high quality. |

13. Why have you chosen this early childhood program for your child(ren) to attend?

14. What do you consider to be the strengths of the early childhood program?

15. What areas of the early childhood program could be improved / what suggestions would you offer for improvement?

16. Additional concerns or comments:

SAMPLE STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Instructions: Your opinion about the quality of the early care and education program administration is important. Please complete this survey. Do **NOT** sign your name. Return it to the early childhood program facility sealed in the envelope provided. For questions 1–10, rate your responses by circling the number that corresponds with your level of agreement with the statements. (Number 1 indicates no agreement with the statement, and 5 indicate strong agreement.) You may add a brief comment about any statement. Upon completion of the ranked response items, answer the open-ended questions 11–13.

How many years have you been a stakeholder of this early childhood education and care program? _____

Agreement
Low ----- High

- | | | |
|-----------|-----|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. | Adequate information on the program’s governance, policies and practices is available to stakeholders. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. | Communication and reports from the program’s administration to its stakeholders are regular and adequate. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. | The director and staff display resourcefulness and positive community relations. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. | The administration facilitates a good working relationship among all program personnel. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. | The administration makes itself available and responds to stakeholders in a timely fashion. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. | I feel that stakeholders are respected by the administration. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. | The administration maintains a consistently safe, healthy and orderly environment for children and adults. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 8. | The educational program and care offered at this early childhood program is of high quality. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 9. | This early care and education program administration maintains and follows its claimed mission, vision, and purpose. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 10. | Stakeholders have adequate opportunity to give input to the administration and governance. |

GLOSSARY

Background checks - The process of checking for history of criminal charges of potential child-care providers before they are allowed to care for children.

Body fluids - Urine, feces, saliva, blood, nasal discharge, eye discharge, and injury or tissue discharge.

Bottle propping - Bottle-feeding an infant by propping the bottle near the infant's mouth and leaving the infant alone rather than holding the bottle by hand.

Caregiver – The person responsible for the care and education of the children in an early education program.

Center - A facility that provides care and education for any number of children in a nonresidential setting and is open on a regular basis (for example, it is not a drop-in facility).

Child abuse - For the purposes of this set of standards, its definition is considered to be that contained in the laws of the state in which the standards will be applied. While these differ somewhat, most of them contain basic elements as follows:

Emotional abuse - Acts that damage a child in psychological ways, but do not fall into other categories of abuse. Most states require for prosecution that psychological damage be very definite and clearly diagnosed by a psychologist or psychiatrist; this category of abuse is rarely reported and even more rarely a cause of protective action.

Neglect - Neglect is divided into two categories: general neglect and severe neglect.

General neglect - Failure to provide the common necessities, including food, shelter, a safe environment, education, and health care, but without resultant or likely harm to the child.

Severe neglect - Neglect that results or is likely to result in harm to the child.

Physical abuse - An intentional (non accidental) act affecting a child that produces tangible physical harm.

Sexual abuse - Any sexual act performed with a child by an adult or by another child who exerts control over the victim. (Many state laws provide considerable detail about the specific acts that constitute sexual abuse.)

Child: Staff ratio - The maximum number of children permitted per teacher/caregiver.

Compliance - The act of carrying out a recommendation, policy, or procedure.

Corporal punishment - Pain or suffering inflicted on the body (such as spanking).

Credential – A competency-based award granted to early educators based on formal and informal education, experience working with young children, and observations of competency within the classroom.

Developmental – Activities and experiences designed to meet the varying stages of cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth of individuals.

Disinfect - To eliminate virtually all germs from inanimate surfaces through the use of chemicals (e.g., products registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as "disinfectants") or physical agents (e.g., heat). In the child care environment, a 1:64 dilution of domestic bleach made by mixing a solution of 1/4 cup household liquid chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of tap water and prepared fresh daily is an effective method to remove germs from environmental surfaces and other inanimate objects that have been contaminated with body fluids (see Body fluids), provided that the surfaces have first been cleaned of organic material before applying bleach and at least 2 minutes of contact time with the surface occurs. (Since complete elimination of all germs may not be achieved using the 1:64 dilution of domestic bleach solution, technically, the process is called sanitizing, not disinfecting. The term sanitize is used in these standards most often, but disinfect may appear in other or earlier publications when addressing sanitation in child-care.)

Diversity - the inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic stratum, etc.

Early Education – the care and education of young children between the ages of birth through five-years of age prior to entering formal kindergarten programs whether in part-time part-day programs traditionally called “preschool” or full-day week-day programs traditionally called “childcare”.

Evaluation - Impressions and recommendations formed after a careful appraisal and study.

Facility - A legal definition. The buildings, the grounds, the equipment, and the people involved in providing child-care of any type.

Fever - An elevation of body temperature the body temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Gross-motor skills - Large movements involving the arms, legs, feet, or the entire body (such as crawling, running, and jumping).

Group size - The number of children assigned to a caregiver or team of caregivers occupying an individual classroom or well-defined space within a larger room. See also Child: Staff Ratio.

Health plan - A written document that describes emergency health and safety procedures, general health policies and procedures, and policies covering the management of mild illness, injury prevention, and occupational health and safety.

Immunizations - Vaccines that are given to children and adults to help them develop protection (antibodies) against specific infections. Vaccines may contain an inactivated or killed agent or a weakened live organism. Childhood immunizations include protection against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and *Haemophilus influenzae* type b. Adults need to be protected against measles.

Infant - A child between the time of birth and the age of ambulation (usually between the ages from birth to 18 months).

Instructional Staff – teachers/caregivers responsible for the early education instruction provided to young children within a program

Medications - Any substance that is intended to diagnose, cure, treat, or prevent disease or is intended to affect the structure or function of the body of humans or other animals.

Parent - The child's natural or adoptive mother or father, guardian, or other legally responsible person.

Pediatric first aid - Emergency care and treatment of an injured child before definite medical and surgical management can be secured. Pediatric first aid includes rescue breathing and first aid for choking.

Phonemic awareness - The ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. An example of how beginning readers show us they have phonemic awareness is combining or blending the separate sounds of a word to say the word ("/c/ /a/ /t/ - cat.")

Preschooler - A child between the age of toilet learning/training and the age of entry into a regular school; usually aged 3 to 5 years and related to overall development.

Sanitize - To remove filth or soil and small amounts of certain bacteria. For an inanimate surface to be considered sanitary, the surface must be clean and the number of germs must be reduced to such a level that disease transmission by that surface is unlikely. This procedure is less rigorous than disinfection and is applicable to a wide variety of routine housekeeping procedures involving, for example, bedding, bathrooms, kitchen countertops, floors, and walls. To clean, detergent or abrasive cleaners may be used but an additional sanitizer solution must be applied to sanitize. A number of EPA-registered "detergent-disinfectant" products are also appropriate for sanitizing. Directions on product labels should be followed closely.

Scope and Sequence – A curriculum plan or guide in which a range of instructional objectives, skills, etc., is organized according to the consecutive levels in which they are expected to be taught.

Staff - Used here to indicate all personnel employed at the facility, including both caregivers and personnel who do not provide direct care to the children (such as cooks, drivers, and housekeeping personnel).

Substitute staff - Caregivers (often without prior training or experience) hired for one day or for an extended period of time, who work under direct supervision of a trained, licensed/certified permanent caregiver.

Teacher – The person responsible for the planning and implementation of the classroom early education program.

Toddler - A child between the age of ambulation and the age of toilet learning/training, usually one aged 13 to 35 months.

Universal precautions - apply to blood, other body fluids containing blood, semen, and vaginal secretions, but not to feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, saliva and vomitus unless they contain visible blood or are likely to contain blood. Universal precautions include avoiding injuries caused by sharp instruments or devices and the use of protective barriers such as gloves, gowns, aprons, masks, or protective eyewear, which can reduce the risk of exposure of the worker's skin or mucous membranes that could come in contact with materials that may contain blood-borne pathogens while the worker is providing first aid or care.

Volunteer - In general, a volunteer is a regular member of the staff who is not paid and is not counted in the child: staff ratio. If the volunteer is counted in the child: staff ratio, he/she must be 16 years or older and preferably work 10 hours per week or more in the facility.

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AISF

Infant and Early Childhood Education Accreditation Standards

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