

Program self-assessment to determine readiness for RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program Approval

RIDE CECE 2013 Standards for Approval of Preschool and Kindergarten Programs
August 2014

Programs interested in seeking RIDE approval for one or more classrooms are encouraged to complete this self-assessment prior to initiating a CECE application in order to identify potential challenges or barriers to approval. Programs not yet meeting all CECE standards may wish to include necessary improvements as part of a BrightStars Quality Improvement Plan. Programs may also wish to access resources and supports available from the Center for Early Learning Professionals (www.center-elp.org). *Please note that applications for RIDE approval will not be accepted until the launch of the Common Application (expected late 2014).*

Please contact Carla Swanson (carla.swanson@ride.ri.gov) with questions about the RIDE CECE approval process.

Applicability

Our program:

- Is a community-based program licensed by the State of Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families;
- Is a public school approved through BEP Regulations and/or Special Education Regulations;
- Is a private school (PK-12) approved through the Rhode Island Department of Education's RIDE Private School standards; OR
- Is a special education school approved through the Rhode Island Department of Education's RIDE Special Education School standards and Special Education Regulations.
- None of the above**

- Is rated by BrightStars
- Has a pending application with BrightStars
- Will submit an application to BrightStars within 12 months
- Will not participate in BrightStars**
- Operates at least 13.75 hours per week
- Operates less than 13.75 hours per week
contact RIDE Education Specialist about conditions for short-term variance

Standard One: Physical Facilities

1.1 Our program:

- Is licensed by DCYF
- Is compliant with RIDE Basic Education Program Regulations, G-14-4 Ensuring a Safe and Healthy Physical Environment
- Neither of the above**

1.3 Our classroom:

- Has floor to ceiling walls
- Has stable partitions of at least 4 feet in height separating groups of children as defined in 3.4

1.4 Our facility:

- Is inspected and certified by OSHA,
- Is in compliance with building and fire codes,
- Provides evidence of being lead free or safe,
- Provides evidence of being asbestos-free or safe,
- Has an acceptable score on a radon test within the last 3 years and
- Has a public water supply or a Department of Health certificate related to a water supply of drinking water quality.

1.5 Our classroom has access to an outdoor play area that:

- Is appropriately equipped for gross motor activity
- Includes at least 75 square feet of space for 50% of the capacity of the center
- Is easily accessible from the classroom
- Is safe and properly fenced with fencing at least four (4) feet in height
- Is reasonably level, well-drained, and free from hazards.
- Contains surfaces and equipment that comply with the Handbook for Public Playground Safety, including:
 - Climbing equipment, swings, and large pieces of play equipment that are developmentally appropriate for the ages of children in that area, securely anchored, and maintained in good repair.
 - Cushioning materials such as rubber surfacing, wood chips, or sand used under climbers, slides, or swings; organic cushioning (i.e. sand, wood chips, etc.) is at least 9" in depth.
- Is separated by fencing or scheduling from outdoor areas used by children of first grade age and above (outdoor play areas for kindergarteners may be in the same area used for preschoolers, first and/or second graders but shall be separated by fencing or scheduling from those used by children in the third grade or higher grades).

1.6 Our facility:

- Has accessible toilet facilities in or immediately adjacent to the classroom
- Has a plan that addresses how toileting is supervised while maintaining staff adult/child ratios.
- Has one toilet and one sink for each group of 10 children.
- Has warm and cold running water faucets or one temperature faucets set at appropriate hand washing temperatures.
- Sets hot water temperature at sinks used for handwashing, or where the hot water will be in direct contact with children, at a temperature of at least 60°F and not exceeding 120°F or recommendations cited in the most recent version of *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care, A Joint Collaborative Project of the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care* [<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/3>]
- Has separate toilet facilities in the same building for staff.

1.7 Every room that is used for instructional purposes:

- Has adequate ventilation and natural and/or artificial lighting
- Has sufficient air changes to produce healthful conditions and to avoid odors or concentrations of toxic substances or dust particles.
- Has a window or skylight directly to the outdoors.
- Has emergency lighting that is available when normal lighting systems fail and in locations that permit an orderly egress from the building in an emergency situation

1.8 Our program:

- Has designated adult space with adult-size furniture for functions such as planning, meeting privately with parents, storage of staff materials, breaks, etc.

1.9 If our program operates for more than four hours we:

- Provide one cot for each preschool child that is washed and sanitized before reassignment to another child.
- Place at least two (2) feet of space between each cot during rest time.

1.10 Our program:

- Ensures that all equipment and materials is kept clean and sanitary and is checked monthly to ensure they are free from hazards.
- Documents monthly inspections, and program response, and maintained records on file.

For Public Schools

Child care centers in good standing with DCYF's 2013 Child Care Center Regulations are presumed to meet Standards 1.11– 1.16.

In our facility:

- Stairways used by children have a handrail with a maximum height of 48 inches for children's use.
- Exterior doors are locked, unless monitored by a staff person, at all times. The program's designated main entrance(s) has a doorbell, buzzer, keypad, swipe card or other comparable means for entrance.
- Storage is provided for each child's clothing at appropriate levels for the use of children.
- Adequate storage space for equipment, including cots and blankets, materials, supplies and seasonal toys, is provided
- A sufficient quantity of furniture accommodates the number of children enrolled. Furniture is safe, durable, child-sized and easily cleaned and conforms to all applicable safety regulations.

In our classroom and activity rooms:

- Seating is provided for every child.
- There is a minimum of 35 square feet of usable floor space for each child in classrooms or activity rooms.

Standard Two: Health, Safety and Nutrition

Standards 2.1 – 2.6 apply to all programs seeking approval.

Our program:

- Ensures that at least one staff person per classroom in the early childhood education program has a current valid certificate showing satisfactory completion of pediatric CPR training and first aid.
- Has written policies and procedures, which are shared with staff, for diapering, changing soiled pull-ups, underwear or clothing that are consistent with the guidelines consistent with the current recommendations of *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care, A Joint Collaborative Project of the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care*. (Recommended policies and procedures are included with the application materials).
- Uses individualized plans for toilet training, relevant to the age and needs of the child, and carried out in conjunction with the family.
- Reports any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours (1-800-RI-CHILD) in accordance with state law, including any death or serious injury while in care of the program.
- Ensures specific training is provided so staff can appropriately address health and safety of children with special needs including medical needs.

For Public Schools

Child care centers in good standing with DCYF's 2013 Child Care Center Regulations are presumed to meet Standards 2.7 – 2.11

In our program:

- Safe drinking water is available to children throughout the day. The source of drinking water is separate from the lavatory. When water fountains are used, children are provided with disposable, single use cups or washable, one use cups.
- We use bleach solution or other Environmental Protection Agency approved products for the routine cleaning and sanitizing of all surfaces consistent with the recommendations of *Caring for Our Children* (Recommended policies and procedures are included with the application materials).
- We post and follow a cleaning and sanitizing schedule that is consistent with the recommendations of *Caring for Our Children* (Recommended policies and procedures are included with the application materials).
- We display appropriate choke-saving posters outlining the Heimlich maneuver. The choke-saving poster is prominently displayed in the areas where the children eat. Child CPR posters are posted in every classroom.
- We maintain pets in a safe and sanitary manner according to state and local requirements, and children are protected from pets which are potentially dangerous to their health or safety.

Standard Three: Enrollment and Staffing

Standards 3.1 – 3.8 apply to all programs

Our program:

- Enrolls children only once they are 3 years of age and until entry into an approved kindergarten program.
- Enrolls children in an approved kindergarten program only if the child has turned 5 on or before September 1st of any school year, as defined by law.
- Maintains the following staff-child ratios and group size requirements maintained in all approved classrooms:

AGE	STAFF/CHILD RATIO	MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE
3, 4 and 5 year olds	1 to 9	18
Kindergarten children	1 to 12	24

Unless federal or state law of regulation, such as the IDEA or the RI regulations Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities, require more stringent ratios, or when determined to be appropriate considering student behavioral, health or educational needs.

- Ensures that in every classroom staff adult/child ratios include at least one qualified teacher as defined in 4.3 of these standards.
- Ensures staff adult/child ratios shall be maintained at all times of the day.
- Ensures that staff are aware of where children are at all times.
- Adheres to minimal staffing patterns for the size of the program.

One Classroom	Two to Four Classrooms	5 or more classrooms
Administrator (part time) Ed. Coordinator (part time) Teacher (full time) Teacher Assistant (full time)	Administrator (part time) Ed. Coordinator (part time) Teachers Teacher Assistants	Administrator (full time) Ed. Coordinator (full time) Teachers Teacher Assistants
Administrator/Ed. Coordinator (part time in each role) Teacher (full time) Teacher Assistant (full time)	Administrator/Ed. Coordinator (part time in each role) Teachers Teacher Assistants	Administrator (part time) and Administrative Assistant (part time) Ed. Coordinator (full time) Teachers Teacher Assistants
Administrator (part time) Ed. Coordinator/Teacher (full time) Teacher Assistant (full time)	Administrator (part time) Ed. Coordinator/Teacher (part time in each role) Teachers Teacher Assistants	Administrator/Ed. Coordinator (part time in each role) Teachers Teacher Assistants
Administrator/Ed. Coordinator/Teacher (full time) Teacher Assistant (full time)	Administrator/Teacher (part time in each role) Ed. Coordinator (part time) Teachers Teacher Assistants	

Standard Four: Staff Qualifications and Ongoing Professional Development

All standards related to this standard apply to all programs seeking approval.

- Our program has an Education Coordinator who serves as our pedagogical leader.

Our Education coordinator:

- Option One** - Holds a current Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Early Childhood Education Certificate (PreK – Grade 2).
- Option Two** - Holds a current Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Teacher Early Childhood Special Education Certificate (Birth - Grade 2), which includes Early Childhood Education Certification.
- Option Three** - Holds a Bachelor's or Master's degree in a related field such as Child Development, Elementary Education, or Special Education with 24 credits in Early Childhood Early Education from an accredited or approved institution of higher education. Public school staff must also hold a current Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Certificate.

Our Education coordinator:

- Has a minimum of 2 years of early childhood education classroom teaching experience.
- Has a 3-credit college course or a minimum of 40 documented hours of professional development over the course of 2 years in mentoring, supervision and leadership **OR** an individual professional development plan not to exceed 2 years from the date of employment for achieving this requirement.
- Has a Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standard certificate relevant to this position **OR** an individual professional development plan not to exceed 2 years from the date of employment for achieving this requirement.
- Has an individual professional development plan to complete at least 20 hours of professional development related to the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies appropriate to his/her position.

- Our program employs at least one professionally prepared early childhood **Teacher** in each classroom.

The classroom teacher:

- Option One** - Holds a current Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Early Childhood Education Certificate (PreK – Grade 2).
- Option Two** - Holds a current Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Teacher Early Childhood Special Education Certificate (Birth - Grade 2), which includes Early Childhood Education Certification.
- Option Three** – Holds a Bachelor's or Master's in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Human Development, or Child Development from an accredited or approved Institution of Higher Education **AND** an individualized plan for completing requirements to be a certified Early Childhood Education Teacher (PreK – Grade 2) within 1 year of employment **AND** documentation of progress toward plan completion that is submitted annually to the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as part of the early childhood education program's annual approval renewal.

The classroom teacher:

- Has a Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standard certificate relevant to this position **OR** an individual professional development plan not to exceed 1 year from the date of employment for achieving this requirement.
- Has a minimum of 3 months of successful supervised teaching in a licensed/approved education program for the appropriate age level (student teaching may fulfill).
- Has an individual professional development plan to complete at least 20 hours of professional development related to the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies appropriate to his/her position.

- Our program employs at least one adequately prepared early childhood **Teacher** in each classroom.

The classroom teacher assistant:

- Option One** - Meets teacher assistant qualifications as established in Rhode Island law (RIGL 16-11.2) for teacher assistants employed by school districts.

- Option Two** – is at least 18 years of age, has documentation of a high school diploma **OR** general equivalency, and has documentation of one of the following options at the time of employment **OR** an individual professional development plan not to exceed 2 years from the date of employment for achieving:
 - Successful completion of a Teacher Assistant Training Program approved by the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education **OR**
 - A minimum of 12 credit hours of college coursework relevant to the early childhood education program setting **OR**
 - A Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential PLUS nine credit hours of college coursework relevant to the early childhood education program setting.

The classroom teacher assistant:

- Has a Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standard certificate relevant to this position **OR** have an individual professional development plan for achieving this requirement within 2 years of employment.
- Has an individual professional development plan to complete at least 20 hours of professional development related to the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies appropriate to his/her position.

- Our program keeps a list of cleared and qualified substitutes who can be called upon in the event of the absence of a staff member in order to maintain the required staff-child ratio.
- Our day to day teacher substitutes hold a valid Substitute Permit or hold a valid Rhode Island teaching certification in any field.
- Our teacher assistant substitutes meet the minimum qualifications for the position, hold a valid Substitute Permit or hold a valid Rhode Island certification in any field
- Our long term substitutes meet the staff qualifications for the assigned position. Long term substitutes are engaged when a person is out for 20 or more consecutive days.

Standard Five: Administration

This section includes standards related to general administration, continuous quality improvement, staff evaluation and professional development. All standards related to this standard apply to all programs seeking approval.

Our program:

- Has a designated **Administrator**
- Provides a **minimum of two hours of paid time per week** for each classroom dedicated to curriculum planning, including authentic assessment and collaboration among teaching team members
- Provides **teachers with time and classroom support** to implement a system of authentic assessment.
- Submits reports to the **Commissioner of Education, or designated representative**, in such manner and form as may be required.
- Has a method for gathering **pre-entry information** such as an open house, family conference or phone interview from each family to gather health and family history, to obtain background information on the child and his/her home, and to develop the child's program.
- Provides families with copies of the program's policies and procedures and keeps verification in each child's file.
- Has **written policies and procedures** given to families and staff. Policies and procedures include information on:
 - child, family, and staff orientation programs;
 - medical emergency and sick child procedures;
 - toileting policies and procedures;
 - classroom management/guidance of children;
 - calendar, program closing, hours of operation;
 - open door policy;
 - schedule of daily activities;
 - curriculum goals and philosophy;
 - program evaluation;
 - children's records requirements;
 - evaluation of children/child assessment practices;
 - supervision of children; and
 - procedures for reporting cases of child abuse and neglect;
 - child drop off and release policies;
 - confidentiality policy and procedures;
 - program philosophy;
 - volunteer policies and procedures;
 - opportunities for family to be engaged in their child's education; and
 - opportunities for families to be involved in program leadership/decision making.

Our program:

- Has an efficient and effective record-keeping system to provide accurate and timely information regarding children, families, and staff.
- Releases children only to a parent/guardian or authorized individual and has written policies and procedures for releasing children to persons other than parents
- Ensures that children are dropped off to the custody and supervision of an authorized individual.
- Is in full compliance with all requirements related to criminal record checks

- Welcomes children and families of all abilities, modifies our program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support all children.
- Has a written plan¹ which describes the process for supporting all children including, but not limited to, those with developmental delays and disabilities, mental health diagnosis and behavioral challenges.
- Our program has a written philosophy statement describing the educational beliefs and practices which inform the implementation of a Comprehensive Early Childhood education program, including:
 - Philosophies, beliefs, and theories of central aspects of child development and learning child development, learning, child assessment and family engagement that inform the program’s practices;
 - How the community served is reflected;
 - How all children are welcomed into the program and exclusionary practices of any kind are not allowed (principal of “zero reject”);
 - How the program supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive/integrated classroom settings;
 - How each child’s individual interests, individual learning goals, and individual learning styles are supported, including English language learners as well as children with developmental disabilities and delays in inclusive settings;
 - How the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool and/or the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten are used to inform program practices, as well as the additional components of quality curriculum; context, process, teaching and facilitating;
 - The program’s commitment to using assessment practices that reflect research and best practices;
 - Purposes for collecting child assessment;
 - The programs commitment to engaging families in the education of their child;
 - The programs commitment to ongoing program improvement; and
 - The programs commitment to supporting staff and welcoming volunteers.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Each program shall have a system in place for engaging in continuous quality improvement.

Our program:

- Engages annually in a comprehensive self-assessment that includes a review and analysis of program-wide child assessment information that reveals patterns and trends. The process shall involve families and staff.
- Creates an annual improvement plan as a result of the self-assessment.

Staff Evaluation and Professional Development

Each program shall have a system of staff evaluation and professional development in place that provides individualized supervision and support to every person employed by the program, as defined herein, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies relevant to her or his position.

Our program:

- Has a staff and volunteer orientation which includes a review of the program’s staff and family handbook(s) and/or policies and procedures.
- Has an ongoing staff evaluation process that:
 - includes individual self-assessments;
 - includes supervisor feedback based on formal observation;

¹ May be part of the philosophy statement

- includes an evaluation of family engagement;
- is linked to the individual's job description;
- is performance-based;
- includes a formal supervisor/staff conference, conducted at least annually;
- leads to an annual individual professional development plan; and
- provides results that inform the program's annual professional development plan.

- Has individual professional development plans in place, aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies and the staff evaluation process.
- Develops a program-wide professional development plan annually that is informed by the program evaluation, individual staff professional development plans; and a variety of ongoing professional development strategies that reflect effective research-based professional development practices.

For Public Schools

Child care centers in good standing with DCYF's 2013 Child Care Center Regulations are presumed to meet Standards 5.19-5.21

Volunteers in our program:

- Have a personnel record maintained by the program;
- Complete an application for volunteering that shall include signing a statement that they do not have a criminal record or a communicable disease
- Are provided with an orientation to the program and the volunteer assignment
- Always work under the supervision of program staff and never be left alone with children or engage in any disciplinary action with a child, and shall sign a statement attesting to their understanding of this policy
- May be counted in the staff/child ratio when scheduled staff are absent due to illness or emergency provided that the volunteer has fulfilled all staff requirements.

Teen volunteers or interns at our program:

- Are at least 14 years of age
 - Are closely monitored by an adult who is physically present in monitoring at all times
 - Have signed consent agreement from a parent or guardian
 - Have provided copies of the child's emergency contact information and a signed school physical form
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- Our program has a confidentiality policy that requires all employees, consultants and volunteers to maintain confidentiality of child, family, and staff information included in files, conversations, observations, meetings, correspondence, electronic media or any other source.
 - Our program will release files only with written authorization from the child's parent/guardian.

Standard Six: Curriculum

Programs have an evidence-based written plan that describes program practices for supporting the learning of each child based on their individual developmental levels, learning styles and interests, and is informed by the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool and/or Common Core State Standards/ Grade Level Expectations for kindergarten.

Program Level ²

- Our program has a written curriculum framework aligned to the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations that recognizes the individual needs for all children. This framework includes context, content, teaching and facilitation and process.³

Our Curriculum Framework:

- Describes how our teachers intentionally choose materials and equipment to support children’s learning, interests, and skills levels while reflecting the lives of the children and families; reflecting the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language and abilities; encouraging exploration, experimentation, and discovery; organized to support independent use; rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels; rich in variety; and accommodate children’s developmental delays and disabilities.
- Guides our teachers in the development of a developmentally appropriate daily schedule that is predictable, yet flexible and responsive to the needs of the children.
- Guides our teachers in incorporating content, concepts and activities that foster and integrate the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations to support all children’s learning.
- Articulates that intentional teaching practices, such as learning through play, are the mechanisms through which children attain developmentally appropriate goals in all developmental domains.
- Reflects our understanding of how children learn and develop to guide teachers in meeting the individual needs of children.
- The framework shall act as a guide for teachers in designing and implementing a variety evidence based strategies and multi-level learning opportunities based on the assessment of the child’s developmental levels, learning styles and interests.

Classroom Level

Classroom Level curriculum policies and practices are not reflected in a single document – rather they are comprised of policies and practices observable throughout the program. Classroom level curriculum emerges from the program level curriculum framework as it is translated into the daily experiences for the individual children in the class. It is informed by the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards, and/or Common Core State Standards, as well as child assessment data and includes a variety of instructional strategies and multilevel learning opportunities. It also encompasses teaching staff roles, daily schedule, classroom environment, planned activities, intentional practice and nurturing relationships. *RIDE will assess classroom level curriculum standards while visiting the program (ECERS, CLASS, and/or RIDE site visit).*

Context

Our teachers:

- Design learning environments that are well organized, accessible to all children and equipped with clearly defined learning areas which include, at a minimum, areas devoted to: construction, dramatic play, discovery, books, manipulatives and creative expression.

² Program level policies should be captured in a single document.

³ Program level curriculum frameworks developed by programs that serve children birth – five should include guidance for teachers serving infants and toddlers.

- Organize space and select materials to stimulate exploration, experimentation, discovery and conceptual learning in all developmental areas. These materials are: Chosen intentionally to support children's learning goals; Well-maintained; Organized and labeled; Easily accessible to children; Representative of the interests, needs and cultures of children; Age-appropriate; Of sufficient quantity for the numbers of children being served.

Our teachers:

- Post, maintain, and follow a regular daily schedule which allows flexibility to meet interests and individual needs of the children. Our schedule prioritizes play and incorporates: a combination of teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities; learning opportunities, experiences, and projects that extend over the course of several days; large group, small group and individual activities; indoor and outdoor activities; and an age appropriate balance between active and quiet activities.
- Our outdoor environment is used to promote children's development and active physical play through intentional curriculum planning.

Content

Our teachers:

- Intentionally plan and imbed learning opportunities/activities aligned with the domains of the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade level Expectations to support all children's learning throughout the day.
- Maintain a method of documented planning that demonstrates that curriculum is developed based on the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade level Expectations. Plans should be written at least on a weekly basis with adjustments as needed based on emerging needs, skills and interests of children in the class.

Teaching and Facilitating

Our teachers:

- Create a positive learning environment by using a wide range of teaching strategies that are based on information gained through ongoing observation and documentation of children's behavior and learning; supportive of children's growth and development in the areas addressed in all domains; and supportive of the development of individual relationships through interactions that are respectful of and sensitive and responsive to differing abilities, temperaments, activity levels, culture and cognitive and social developmental levels.
- Implement curriculum in a manner that: reflects responsiveness to goals that families have for their children; is informed by child assessment and observation data; and supports the development and maintenance of children's home language whenever possible while promoting English language acquisition; while ensuring that all children have access to universal curriculum, are active participants in classroom activities, and provided accommodations, as needed, to facilitate such participation.
- Promote children's learning by responding to their observed and documented need for and interest in practicing emerging skills by providing targeted and individualized instruction; utilizing multi-level learning opportunities and a variety of instructional strategies to support children's development; using children's interest in and curiosity about the world to engage them with new content and developmental skills; and providing children opportunities to effect what happens in the classroom through participation in decision making about issues concerning classroom behavior, plans, and activities.
- Promote positive interactions with children by:
 - managing behavior, teaching and implementing classroom rules and expectations, and helping individual children learn socially appropriate behavior by providing positive guidance that is consistent with the child's level of development;

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

When a child presents with challenging behavior, our teachers:

- meet with parents/guardians to share observations, listen to parental/guardian insights, and discuss intentions of how best support the child's appropriate behavior;
 - observe the child, then identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior;
 - focus on teaching the child social communication and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support and other intervention strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior rather than focusing only on eliminating the challenging behavior;
 - respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the safety of the child and others in the classroom, is calm and respectful to the child and provides the child with information about acceptable behavior.
- Our teachers do not use food or outdoor play as a reward or as a behavior consequence. Exceptions may only be made if specifically stated in a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
 - For children requiring special education services our teachers collaborate with special education professionals and families to support children with disabilities and developmental delays to succeed in inclusive environments and ensure each partner has access to necessary information and supports for appropriate services.
 - In our program technology is used for the purpose of extending learning within the classroom to integrate and enrich the curriculum. Staff shall be actively engaged in this process with children.

Process

- Our teachers implement curriculum through play experiences that provide multiple opportunities for all children to attain developmentally appropriate goals in each developmental domain.
- Our teachers design learning opportunities that integrate multiple goals.

Standard Seven: Child Assessment

Program Level⁴

- Our program has a written plan and description of practices for implementing a child assessment system that is aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and program curriculum for preschool children and/or the Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations and program curriculum for kindergarten.

Our Child Assessment Plan includes:

- Timelines associated with assessments that occur throughout the year;
- Procedures to keep individual child records confidential;
- Ways we involve families in planning and implementing assessment;
- Methods for communicating assessment information with families, including two-way communication; and
- A description of the types of assessment we use and their appropriateness, including:
 - monitoring children’s development and learning;
 - informing curriculum and decision-making;
 - identifying children who might benefit from additional or increased supports and/or special services; and
 - monitoring program effectiveness
- The assessment methods we use are sensitive to and informed by family culture, experiences, children’s abilities, and home language; meaningful, accurate, and objective; and used in settings familiar to the children.
- Our program has a written statement in our family handbook informing families about their child assessment practices that includes information about the assessments used by the program, including: purposes for which assessment is used; methods used for assessment; tools used for assessment, and how staff or others are trained to use assessment procedures and interpret results; and how assessment information will be shared with families.
- In our program families have ongoing opportunities to share the results of observations from home to contribute to the assessment process and the identification of goals for their child.
- Our program makes provisions for teachers, families and relevant specialists to have regular opportunities to participate in two-way communication to discuss each child’s goals, progress, accomplishments and developmental challenges in the classroom, and at home, as well as to plan learning activities. We provide family members with information, either verbally or in writing, about their child’s development and learning on at least a quarterly basis, with written reports at least two times a year as part of the family conferences.
- Our program uses child assessment data at the program level to ascertain the degree to which the program is attaining desired child outcomes and goals for children; identify patterns and trends across the program; and inform the program’s continuous quality improvement plan as well as the professional development of staff.
- Our program collaborates with Child Outreach programs to screen children annually through active collaborations such as providing space for onsite screenings, coordinating onsite community screening events for children and their families in community-based setting and/or providing families with dates and times of upcoming child outreach screenings.

⁴ Program level policies should be captured in a single document.

Classroom Level

Classroom Level assessment policies and practices are not reflected in a single document – rather they are comprised of policies and practices observable throughout the program. Classroom level child assessment practices, aligned with the RI Early Learning and Development Standards developmental progressions and/or the Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations, emerge from the written program level assessment plan and are used to: monitor children’s development and learning; inform curriculum and decision making; determine who might require additional supports and/or special services; and communicate early learning and development information with families and other authorized parties. *RIDE will assess classroom level assessment standards while visiting the program (ECERS, CLASS, and/or RIDE site visit).*

Our teachers:

- Use ongoing, formative assessments to inform the implementation of classroom practices that reflect each child’s developmental level, learning style, and interests in each Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards domain and/or Common Core State Standards/Grade Level Expectations.
- Use a system to help manage and organize the collection of assessment information for each child.
- Assess the developmental progress of each child using assessment data from natural classroom environments and situations consistent with children’s culture, language, developmental abilities and everyday experiences.
- Use child assessment information to:
 - identify children’s strengths, learning styles and developmental levels;
 - inform classroom instruction, make sound decisions about individual and group curriculum content, inform teaching approaches, guide personal interactions, and inform the design of the children’s learning environment;
 - identify children who might benefit from additional or increased supports and/or special services;
 - document and implement a plan for each child that supports his or her inclusion and success; and
 - share information on each child’s progress with families and other authorized parties.
- For children requiring special education services, early childhood educators and special education providers work collaboratively, and in partnership with families, in supporting successful participation in inclusive environments and in ensuring that each partner has access to the necessary information and supports.
- Conduct child assessment as an integral part of the classroom, so that children are provided with multiple options and varied opportunities for learning and demonstrating what they have learned.
- Engage families and relevant specialists in regular two-way communication to discuss each child’s goals, progress, accomplishments and development needs, both in the program and at home.

Standard Eight: Family Engagement

Program Level⁵

- Our program has a written plan that describes program practices for communicating with and involving family members as partners in their child's education and in program decision-making. Family members include adults and children significant in the child's daily life who influence the child and support their learning.

Our Family Engagement Plan describes how our program:

- Is **open to families** for observation and visits whenever the program is in operation.
- Implements activities that facilitate the **transition of children and families** including:
 - o opportunities for the child and parent/guardian to visit our program one or more times prior to enrollment;
 - o activities to support internal transitions within the program, e.g., from class to class, during program enrollment; and
 - o strategies to support families with their transitions to other programs or schools as they transition out of the program. These strategies may include providing information on future program options, enrollment procedures and practices, networking with families who have already made this transition, and opportunities for program visitation.
- Uses a variety of methods to engage all families in **active two-way communication** on an ongoing basis such as new family orientations, small group meetings, individual conversations, notes between program and home, and written questionnaires.
- Plans and implements a wide variety of **opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's education**, both within our program and in the family's home.
- Delineate the expectation that our **teaching staff engage all families in the education of their child**, including families with special needs and circumstances, so that they can take full advantage of family engagement opportunities.
- Encourages collaboration with families by **making teachers available** to meet with families to discuss children's progress, collaborate with IEP teams by attending meetings, participating in relevant training, and/or sharing information to support children with and without developmental delays or disabilities and their families.
- Describes the **opportunities for all families to be actively involved** in program decision making (e.g. advisory groups) and leadership.
- Describes how program **actively seek and utilize input** from families in the following areas: establishing or refining program philosophies, long-term goals and short-term objectives; conducting program assessment and evaluation; designing family engagement opportunities; establishing strategies to ensure that the program remains relevant to the values, culture, identity and home language; and creating a physical environment that is welcoming to families.
- The program shall make efforts to **accommodate families with special needs and circumstances** so that they can take full advantage of family engagement opportunities.

⁵ Program level policies should be captured in a single document.

Classroom Level

Classroom Level family engagement policies and practices are not reflected in a single document – rather they are comprised of policies and practices observable throughout the program. Classroom level family engagement emerges from the program level written plan as it is translated into individual teacher and staff practices with families. *RIDE will assess classroom level family engagement standards while visiting the program (ECERS, CLASS, and/or RIDE site visit).*

Our teachers:

- Implement intentional practices designed to foster strong two-way relationships with all families from the first contact and maintain them over time.
- Communicate with all families in a variety of ways on at least a weekly basis regarding children's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being and development of their children.
- Collect information from individual families for use in designing family engagement opportunities appropriate to their interests and circumstances.
- Use a variety of resources to communicate with families who speak languages different from their own and, whenever possible, provide information for families in their primary language.
- Communicate with all families to gather information about their child's interests, approaches to learning and developmental needs, and to learn about each family's goals and concerns and goals for their children. This information shall be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning and assessment.
- Plan and implement a continuum of opportunities so that all families:
 - Know what young children should know and be able to do as articulated in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and/or the Common Core State Standards;
 - Recognize how standards-based programs support their child's learning; and
 - Understand and embrace the positive role that families play in supporting their child in learning at home and in the program.