FLORIDA VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) EDUCATION PROGRAM:

CURRICULUM APPROVAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR PROVIDERS ON PROBATION

Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards:

4 Years Old to Kindergarten

2018

Office of Early Learning

Florida Department of Education

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I. Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

A. Background

The state constitution was amended in 2004 to include Section 1(b), Article IX:

Every 4-year old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality prekindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

Most children who attend Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Programs are four years old; however, parents of younger four-year-olds may opt to wait and enroll their child in VPK as a five-year-old, so the term prekindergartener is most often used to describe VPK participants.

The legislation implementing the VPK Education Program includes the requirement for an accountability measure for providers offering the VPK program. Section 1002.67(2)(c), Florida Statutes (F.S.), directs the Office of Early Learning (OEL/Office) to approve curricula for use by private prekindergarten providers and public schools that are placed on probation as a result of their kindergarten readiness rates falling below the minimum rate adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). The OEL maintains a list of such approved curricula. The curriculum approval process described in this document has been developed in accordance with this statutory requirement.

B. Developmentally Appropriate Curricula

Section 1002.67, F.S., requires that all curricula used in VPK programs must be developmentally appropriate, be designed to prepare a student for early literacy, enhance the age-appropriate progress of children in attaining the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* (also known as *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*), and prepare children to be ready for kindergarten based upon the statewide kindergarten screening (i.e., Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screening (FLKRS). Developmentally appropriate curriculum should be appropriate for prekindergarteners and flexible enough to modify for individual four-year-olds who have skills at either end of a developmental continuum (individually appropriate). The current *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* were approved by the Florida State Board of Education in December 2017 (form OEL-VPK 15) for use in fall 2018 and are incorporated by reference in rule 6M-8.602 F.A.C. the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards maybe found at https://www.flrules.org/gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-08828

For the purposes of this approval process, curricula is defined as a set of written materials that
- are replicable
- address the use of materials, scheduling, arranging the environment, and interaction between children and adults either separately or in combination
- include more than activity suggestions and more than theory and pedagogy
- are aligned with the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* (note: as of December 28, 2017, the standards approved for use in VPK Education Programs beginning in fall 2018 are titled: *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Olds to Kindergarten*)
- are aligned with scientifically-based research.

The following is a description of characteristics expected of curricula, including professional development, submitted for consideration.

1. Comprehensiveness

A comprehensive core curriculum is one that contains a mix of instruction and practice activities sufficient to build strong skills in each of the eight domains of the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* (also known as the *Standards - 4 Years Olds to Kindergarten*).

A comprehensive curriculum may contain some or all or the following characteristics:
- Intentional teaching
- Comprehensive domains of learning
- Specific learning goals
- Well-designed learning activities
- Culturally and linguistically responsive
- Individualized/differentiated instruction
- Ongoing assessment (check for knowledge)
- Family engagement
- Appropriate for program staff, children and families

2. Integration

The curriculum used in any VPK education program used to teach skills in any of the domains must be authentic and support and reinforce the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* in other subject areas. Research emphasizes the importance of providing real-world applications and presenting information that is related to students' lives. Use of such concept development strategies promotes cognition and comprehension by assisting students to make connections across subject areas and integrate new information with previous knowledge. This level of instructional support is accomplished most effectively when children are encouraged to move seamlessly from one activity to the next.

3. Alignment with the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*

Section 1002.67, F.S., requires that OEL develop and adopt performance standards for children in the VPK program that address emergent literacy, including oral communication, knowledge of print and letters, phonemic and phonological awareness, and vocabulary and comprehension development, in addition to the specific capabilities, capacities, and skills referenced in the Florida Constitution. High-level child performance standards, originally called the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards, were initially adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) on March 15, 2005. These Standards were revised in 2008, 2012 and most recently in 2017, when they were renamed *the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*. The purpose of the Standards is to describe the knowledge and skills that a child on a developmental trajectory (progression) should know and be able to do by the end of their age related timeframe.

The *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* are grouped around the following eight domains:
  I.   Physical Development
  II. Approaches to Learning
  III. Social and Emotional Development
  IV. Language and Literacy
  V.   Mathematical Thinking
  VI. Scientific Inquiry

VII.   Social Studies
VIII.   Creative Expression Through the Arts

The eight developmental **domains** are divided into **components, sub-components** (where applicable), **standards** and where appropriate, **benchmarks**. All submitted curricula and associated instructional methods must align with and support these standards and benchmarks. The *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* can be viewed at: https://www.flrules.org/gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-08828

4. Use of Scientifically-Based Research: Language and Literacy

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP), funded by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) and the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), has worked to synthesize scientific research of emergent literacy skills in young children. Among empirical research studies reviewed, five emergent literacy skills have been found to consistently and uniquely predict children's later (conventional) reading skills. These skills include alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming of letters and digits or naming of objects and colors, writing/writing name, and phonological short-term memory. Several of these skills relate directly to the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* and require specific attention by publishers and reviewers in this approval process. (Alphabet and Print Knowledge: IV.F.3., Phonological Awareness: IV.F.2., Writing/Writing Name: IV.G.1.c.). For further information on the final report, Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel, visit https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf

5. Use of Scientifically-Based Research: Mathematical Thinking

The *What Works Clearinghouse* sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), have worked in conjunction with a panel of experts to develop the *Teaching Math to Young Children* practice guide. This guide provides five recommendations for teaching math to young children in preschool, prekindergarten and kindergarten. The first two recommendations identifying early math content areas that should be included in preschool, prekindergarten and kindergarten curricula. Listed below are the five recommendations.
    1. Teach number and operations using a developmental progression.
    2. teach geometry, patterns, measurement and data analysis using a developmental progression.
    3. Using progress monitoring to ensure that math instruction builds on what each child knows.
    4. Teach children to view and describe the world mathematically.
    5. Dedicate time each day to teach math and integrate math instruction throughout the school day.

Curriculum utilized in the VPK program must align to the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* in the Domain of Mathematical Thinking, ensure that children are introduced to mathematical skills and provide significant opportunity for practicing skills and discussing mathematics in developmentally appropriate ways. You may access the *Teaching Math to Young Children* practice guide at https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/18

C. Access to the Curriculum

Florida's VPK Education Program ensures prekindergarteners access to a high quality prekindergarten learning opportunity. It is important to note the great diversity of prekindergarteners residing in Florida, including children with special developmental, behavioral, or physical needs, who are English language learners (ELLs), or who may be at-risk of future learning or school difficulties for a variety of reasons. Evaluating the extent to which a curriculum can accommodate a wide range of children's needs and/or skill levels and be implemented across a variety of settings is part of the curriculum approval process.

Accommodations implemented to foster access to the program do not lessen achievement expectations; they

should, however, provide a wide range of techniques and support systems to help children work around areas of special need or challenge. Frequently, accommodations that may be required to ensure meaningful participation by a given child are found to benefit many other children in the class. Accommodations include changes in instructional methods and materials, learning activities and assessments, time demands and scheduling, the learning environment and the use of special communication systems, among others.

D. Digital Curriculum Programs or Components

Submission of digital curriculum programs or curriculum that includes digital components is encouraged.

II. Submissions for VPK Curriculum Approval: General Description

A. Publishers' Submissions

The Office of Early Learning will review submissions of comprehensive early childhood curricula for prekindergarten children which address the eight domains of *the Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten.* In order to be considered comprehensive, the materials submitted must "stand alone" and cover *the Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* in all eight domains.

B. Comprehensive Core Curricula

A VPK approved curriculum must cover all eight domains of the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten.* Development of many skills requires explicit instruction in the particular skill area, strategies or steps to follow and scaffolding of instruction by the teacher. The curriculum must provide explicit, systematic instruction, assessment and intervention that leads to children's growing proficiency at each stage of skill development. To support success in learning, a VPK curriculum should include clear presentation and explanations of the following:
- purposes, goals and expected outcomes
- concepts, processes, rules, information and terms
- models, examples, questions and feedback.

The overall instructional design should include the following:
- a clear 'road map' or 'blueprint' for teachers to get an overall picture of the program (i.e., a scope and sequence)
- clearly stated goals and objectives
- a cohesive approach for the teacher to set a positive emotional climate to ensure children's social and emotional development
- resources to help the teacher understand the rationale for the instructional approach and strategies utilized in the program (e.g., articles, explanations in the teacher manuals, references, reliable websites)
- a coherent instructional design
- explicit instructional techniques or strategies
- consistently systematic and intentional instruction – a logical organization to the materials so that it is clear how the curriculum proceeds over the course of the program (day, week, month, year)
- consistent 'teacher friendly' instructional routines
- student materials aligned with the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*
- examples of constructive instructional support and feedback
- scaffolding with specific instructions to:
  - o differentiated instruction
  - o guidelines and materials for flexible grouping
  - o enrichment activities for advanced children
- guidelines for use with diverse populations such as English Language Learners and children with special needs
- components that foster intrinsic motivation in children (Approaches to Learning domain)
- ample opportunities for practice.

Brief, frequent engaging activities and interactive games must be included within the curriculum to

attain mastery of each of the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten.* Activities should include options for children with varying abilities and backgrounds, providing teachers with alternatives to teach all children the required skills and content. Work sheets, drills or simply allowing children to play without teacher planning and reflection **will not** facilitate optimal progress for children.

C. Learning Opportunities in the VPK Program

In order to provide Florida's prekindergarteners with a high-quality, developmentally appropriate learning opportunity, several things are of critical importance.

Children need one-on-one interactions with teachers and peers each day. Through one-on-one interactions with children, teachers scaffold children's activities and can provide feedback and support. Additionally, they build rapport and a trusting relationship. When children are given many daily experiences to interact with peers, they begin to develop skills in negotiating, turn-taking, and cooperative play.

Four-year-old children are very curious and inquisitive by nature. The curriculum used in a VPK program should include active learning experiences that are child-initiated, as well as those planned and initiated by the teacher. As stated previously, the curriculum must be developmentally appropriate, meaning that it is appropriate for four-year-olds and can be modified for individual four-year-olds who have varying skills across the developmental continuum (i.e., individually appropriate). Also, when planning and implementing the curriculum the teacher should take into account the children's personal knowledge, often related to culture (culturally appropriate), and then use this information to build on their strengths and skills. It is not developmentally appropriate to use a kindergarten curriculum with prekindergarteners.

Throughout the course of the VPK schedule, the curriculum should include instruction in varying formats, such as large group, small group and learning centers. Teachers have a very distinct role in facilitating and scaffolding the activities of the program, but it is not developmentally appropriate for four-year-olds to spend extended amounts of time in teacher-directed activities. Of course, children's attention spans will grow over the year and will be longer when engaged by an enthusiastic, invigorating teacher.

As a part of active learning within a VPK program, children should be engaged in many hands-on experiences throughout the day. Children should not learn about concepts through paper and pencil activities, work sheets, or coloring pages. Research shows that young children learn best through hands-on, intentional learning experiences (e.g., "play with a purpose") that have been planned by knowledgeable teachers. When young children explore things directly with their senses and practice new skills through play, they are learning in ways that are meaningful to them at their stage of development.

Early literacy skills are critical to children's success in K-12, and curricula used in the VPK program must be designed to prepare a student in this area. There is a large body of empirical research in the area of emergent literacy, specifically phonological awareness and letter knowledge, which shows that daily attention to these skills, as little as twenty minutes a day, can make a huge impact on children's emergent literacy skills.

D. Assessment

All children attending VPK take part in the VPK Assessment at least twice annually. The VPK Assessment is focused on 4 areas: Print Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Oral Language Vocabulary and Mathematics (number sense).

Publishers must include assessment(s) that teachers can use to guide student instruction. The assessments should measure progress in the eight domains of the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten.* The assessment(s) should identify children who are at-risk or are experiencing difficulty with learning and/or development.

The curriculum should then include strategies for the teacher to use to guide instruction, based on how each child, as well as the group, performed on the assessment(s). In other words, data from assessment is used in meaningful ways to plan next steps.

III. Major Priorities for VPK Curriculum

VPK curriculum selections must be effective in six major priority areas: content, presentation, learning, professional development, parent/family materials and research base. The following sections describe essential features for each of these priority areas. These features generally apply to all formats of VPK curriculum, whether print or other media/multiple media formats.

Each curriculum MUST receive an average score of 1, across reviewers, in the six major priority areas in order to be further considered for curriculum approval.

Curriculum Evaluation Form Targets

A. Content

A.1. Alignment with the Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten

Content must align with *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* for each of the eight domains. The *Standards for 4-Year-Olds to Kindergarten* can be accessed at http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com/. This document includes the standards and benchmarks where applicable, by domain as well as related skills; descriptions of child skills; environmental considerations; supportive instructional strategies; and, other information pertinent to the curricular implementation of a VPK education program. Each domain is scored separately. The following requirements must be met with each of the eight domains of the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*

- **Correlations** – Publishers are expected to provide information that identifies exactly where and to what extent (e.g., included in one or more activities, in-depth coverage across multiple activities and/or domains) the VPK curriculum addresses each of the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* and benchmarks. If a particular standard is not addressed, the information provided should also indicate this. However, since the VPK curriculum approval process is only for the review of comprehensive curricula, all eight domains should be adequately covered, even if each individual standard may not be addressed directly.
- **Scope** – The content should address the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* for each domain and associated learning outcomes, including thinking and learning skills.
- **Completeness** – The content of the curriculum should be complete enough to "stand on its own," without additional curricular supports. To be useful for class instruction, the curriculum must be adaptable to the instructional goals of individual VPK instructors. There should be no major omissions in the required content coverage. The curriculum may include concepts and topics that enrich and extend children's knowledge and learning, but should be free of unrelated facts and information that would detract from achievement of *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*.
- **Curriculum Integration** – The curriculum should include integration across subject areas/domains, and over the course of the program year. Young children do not separate their activities and learning by subject area and it is necessary that the curriculum used for four-year-olds should not be separated. Integration that allows children to be engaged, active learners provides a positive learning environment that builds the foundational skills needed for kindergarten entry.

A.2. Level of Treatment of Content: Scope and Sequence

Scope and Sequence: The level of complexity or difficulty of content must be appropriate for developmental levels of the children, and the time periods allowed for teaching (540 hours for the school-year VPK program and 300 hours for the summer VPK program). Level of Treatment of Content pertains to the skills outlined below. Publishers should submit a document for each area requiring a scope and sequence. The document may include narrative, tables, or other means to demonstrate month-by-month, an overview of pertinent skills and/or teaching strategies introduced. Because VPK programs can vary in length, publishers should include the scope and sequence for use in both 300-hour programs (e.g., summer programs) and 540-hour (e.g., typical school year program of 3-hours daily for 180 days or 6-hours daily for 90 days). The *What Works Clearinghouse* and *IES* practice guides may be utilized as a curriculum development resource.

Reviewers will review the following four elements to determine if the curriculum's scope and sequence relates fully to the skills outlined when compared to the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten.*

- **Objectives** – Content should be sufficiently simple or complex, technical or non-technical, to match the objectives and developmental levels of a typical group of four-year-old children.
- **Children** – Content should be developmentally appropriate for four-year old children, while still allowing for individual and cultural differences. It should contain sufficient details for children to understand the significance of the information presented and to engage in reflection and discussion.
- **Time** – The level of complexity or difficulty of content also should allow for its coverage during the time periods available for teaching, given the daily schedule and the hour requirements of the VPK program year.
- **Coverage** – The program submissions must adequately and comprehensively cover the Language and Literacy and Mathematics standards and benchmarks throughout the curriculum. Skills should be introduced and practiced throughout the year, in varying group settings (whole group, small groups, and one-on-one) as well as throughout the program day (transitions, center time, routine times, planned small groups, whole group time, and outdoor play).

Emergent Literacy

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP), funded by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) and the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), worked to synthesize scientific research of emergent literacy skills in young children. Among empirical research studies reviewed, five emergent literacy skills have been found to consistently and uniquely predict children's later (conventional) reading skills. These skills include alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming of letters and digits or naming of objects and colors, writing/writing name and phonological short-term memory. Several of these skills relate directly to the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* and require specific attention by publishers and reviewers in this approval process. (Alphabet knowledge: IV.F.3., Phonological Awareness: IV.F.2., Writing/Writing Name: IV.G.1.c.

Vocabulary and oral language development are moderate predictors of later literacy skills (Knowing how to put concepts, thoughts and ideas into spoken words, and understanding other people when they talk). These skills relate directly to the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* and require specific attention by publishers and reviewers in this approval process (Vocabulary: IV. C., Oral Language: IV.A.,

IV.B., IV.C., IV.D., IV.E.). For further information on the final report, Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel, visit https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf

Mathematical Thinking
Curriculum utilized in the VPK program must align to the *Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* in the Domain of Mathematical Thinking, ensure that children are introduced to mathematical skills and provide significant opportunity for practicing skills and discussing mathematics in developmentally appropriate ways.

The *What Works Clearinghouse* sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), have worked in conjunction with a panel of experts to develop the *Teaching Math to Young Children Practice Guide*. This guide provides five recommendations for teaching math to young children in preschool, prekindergarten and kindergarten. You may access the *Teaching Math to Young Children Practice Guide* at https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/18
The *Teaching Math to Young Children Practice Guide* may be utilized as a curriculum development resource.

Curriculum Evaluation Form Targets

A.2.a. Scope and Sequence: Alphabetic Knowledge
A systematic way of ensuring that *all alphabet letter names* and at least *the most common sounds associated with each letter* are introduced and revisited throughout the year in meaningful, developmentally-appropriate ways should be included.

A.2.b. Scope and Sequence: Phonological Awareness
A systematic way of ensuring that phonological awareness skills are introduced and revisited throughout the year, to include a minimum of ten to twenty minutes per day, and occur in meaningful, developmentally appropriate ways, must be included. These skills include blending and elision of compound words, syllables and onset and rime to form a familiar one-syllable word.

A.2.c. Scope and Sequence: Vocabulary Development
A systematic way to introduce new vocabulary words, and provide opportunities for children to incorporate the use of vocabulary words should be included. This must occur during the program day and across the program year.

A.2.d. Scope and Sequence: Mathematical Thinking
A systematic way of ensuring that mathematical thinking skills are introduced and revisited throughout the year, with particular attention on number sense and operations m be included. Skills in these areas should be integrated with geometry, patterns, seriation, measurement and data collection.

A.3. Language-Rich Programs
The curriculum should provide many opportunities to foster a language-rich class environment.
This will be evident in teacher materials that encourage opportunities to:

- Engage children in extended conversations
- Encourage children to tell and retell stories and describe events
- Discuss a wide range of topics
- Model use of new and unusual words
- Discuss word meanings

- Ask open-ended questions
- Give explicit guidance on vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation
- Challenge children to explain their thinking
- Focus on the expression of ideas
- Encourage frequent conversations
- Utilize advanced language
- Repeat and extend children's responses

A.4. Accuracy of Content

Content must be accurate in historical context and contemporary facts and concepts.

- **Objectivity** – Content that is included in the materials should accurately represent the domain of knowledge and events. It should be factual and objective. It should be free of mistakes, errors, inconsistencies, contradictions within itself and biases of interpretation. It should be free of the biased selection of information. Materials should distinguish between facts and possible interpretations or opinions expressed about factual information. Visuals or other elements of instruction should contribute to the accuracy of the text or narrative.
- **Representativeness** – The selection of content should not misrepresent the domains of the *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*. It should include the generally accepted and prevalent theories, major concepts, laws, standards and models used within prekindergarten education.
- **Correctness** – Presentation of content should be free of typographical and visual errors. It should include correct grammar, spelling, linguistics, terminology, definitions, descriptions, visuals, graphs, sounds, videos and all other components of the VPK curriculum.

A.5. Relevance of Content

Content must be up-to-date for the academic discipline and the context in which the content is presented.

- **Dates or editions** – Copyright dates for photographs and other materials and editions should suggest sufficient currency of content. Copyright dates and editions serve as indicators about currency. However, neither the copyright date nor the edition guarantees currency. Subsequent editions should reflect more up-to-date information than earlier editions. Informed examination of the text, narrative and visuals contained in the materials provides the most direct information about currency of the materials.
- **Context** – Text or narrative, visuals, photographs and other features should reflect the time periods appropriate for the objectives and the intended learners. Sometimes context should be current. For example, a photograph used to show stages of human growth and development will be more relevant when the clothing, hairstyles, and activities reflect present-day styles. Sometimes context should be historical. For example, illustrations and photographs of historical events should reflect the historical time period. Sometimes context should be both current and historical. For example, historic images alongside modern ones would convey changes in styles over time. At all times the context should be relevant to the learner, to the *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* and to the concept presented.

A.6. Authenticity of Content

Content should include solution-centered connections to life in a context that is meaningful to children.

- **Life connections** – VPK curriculum should include connections to the child's life situations in order

to make the content meaningful. Children might be expected to deal with time constraints, consider risks and trade-offs in decision-making and work with teams. Connections may be made to children's situations in daily home life, family, their local community, community events and services.

- **Interdisciplinary treatment** – VPK curriculum also should include interdisciplinary connections in order to make content meaningful. Examples of situations that connect a variety of subject areas include building projects, playing sports or games, retrieving information or objects, creating products and researching information. In addition to subject area connections, VPK curriculum must connect themes or lessons taught to other disciplines. Examples of approaches to interdisciplinary connections include:

  - Explanations and activities for using skills and knowledge from other domains
  - Projects and activities that require children to relate learning from other domains rather than to isolate knowledge or skills
  - The focus on common themes across several subject areas (infusion, parallel, transdisciplinary or multidisciplinary instruction)

A.7. Multicultural Representation

Portrayal of gender, ethnicity, age, work situations and various social groups must include multicultural fairness and advocacy.

- **Multicultural fairness** – Through balanced representation of cultures and groups in multiple settings, occupations, careers and lifestyles, the materials should support equal opportunity without regard for age, color, gender, disability, national origin, race or religion. It is not the number of pages devoted to diversity, equity or work roles, but the substance of what is stated and portrayed that matters most. For this reason, it can be misleading to count the number of pages or illustrations devoted to a social issue or group. It is more important to focus on the integration of social diversity throughout a set of VPK curriculum. In addition to balanced representations, the portrayal of individuals and situations must exclude biases and stereotypes. These portrayals must promote an understanding and appreciation of the importance and contributions of diverse cultures and heritage.
- **Multicultural advocacy** – The understanding and appreciation of multiple cultures extends beyond fair representation. It involves embracing a multicultural context, not just through pictures, but through information about ways to honor differences and deal with conflicts, promote a positive self-image for members of all groups and provide for the development of healthy attitudes and values. Effective treatment of multicultural issues requires consideration of the age and ability levels of children and whether or not it is appropriate to include multicultural issues in the study of a particular topic. Overall, however, materials should reflect both multicultural fairness and advocacy.

A.8. Humanity and Compassion

Portrayal of the appropriate care and treatment of people and animals must include compassion, sympathy and consideration of their needs and values.

- **Inclusion of compassion** – When providing examples in narrative or visuals, materials sometimes depict the care and treatment of people and animals. Generally, this means showing in some way a measure of compassion, sympathy or consideration of their needs and feelings.
- **B. Presentation**

Features of presentation affect the practical usefulness of materials and the ease of finding and understanding content.

B.1. Comprehensiveness of Teacher and Student Resources

Resources must be complete enough to address the targeted learning outcomes without requiring the teacher to prepare significant teaching materials for the class beyond those available in a typical preschool program.

Materials should contain support for children in completing instructional activities and assessments and for teachers in implementing all of the instructional elements. A variety of components can accomplish this purpose. Typically, materials will include outlines and strategies for teaching, media supplements, learning activities and projects.

All curricula will likely include activities that use additional materials that are not a part of the curriculum, such as play dough, blocks or puppets, which are typically available in a preschool program. Activities of this sort should explain in detail, possibly with illustration, the material(s) needed to include alternate ways of making or substituting the material.

The major components generally expected for teacher and student resources are listed below.

B.1.a. Comprehensiveness of Teacher Resources

Teacher materials typically include a teacher's manual, so that the teacher has to use only one guide, or one guide per unit/theme. The materials for the teacher should support continued teacher learning. Support, guidelines, resources or features such as the ones described below should be available to help teachers effectively implement materials in class and school settings.

- **Components and materials are easy to use:** Examples include clearance, license or agreement for copying and use of materials; clear description and accurate directions for use of required equipment, facilities, resources and environment; clearly labeled grade, lesson, content and other information to identify components; correct specifications for making instructional media and electronic programs work effectively.
- **Teacher materials support lesson planning, teaching and learning:** Examples include an overview of components and objectives; background for group time and discussions; vocabulary, and reinforcement and review strategies; scope and sequence chart for activities and planning; sample lesson plans; suggestions for learning centers, individualized study, small-group and large-group presentations and discussions, opportunities for community-based experiences, safety procedures and other extension activities; suggestions for integrating themes across the subject area or course curriculum and forming connections to other disciplines; and suggestions for family and community involvement.
- **Suggestions are provided for adapting instruction for varying needs:** This section includes children with disabilities, English language learners, children who may benefit from additional supports, etc... Examples include alternative approaches to teaching, pacing and options for varied delivery of instruction such as media, tools, equipment and emerging technology; strategies for engaging all children, such as open-ended questions to stimulate thinking, pictorial journaling, hands-on investigations, explorations and multisensory approaches; suggestions for addressing common student difficulties or adapting to multiple learning styles; and alternative reeteaching, enrichment and remediation strategies.
  - **Guidelines and resources are provided on how to implement and evaluate learning:**

Examples include suggestions for using learning tasks for class assessment; guidelines for alternative assessments, such as sample project guides and checklists, rubrics, and portfolios.

- **Resources are provided to use in class activities:** Examples include technology resources; lists of resources and references, reading strategies, materials to use for displays or photocopies, class management strategies and documentation on how to manage the entire instructional program.

B.1.b. Comprehensiveness of Student Resources

Student materials could include a variety of materials, such as children's trade books, manipulatives, posters, games, puzzles, CDs or computer software, puppets and other props. Formats may include print, audio, visual, computer or other media, but *should not include work sheets and ditto-type activities, as they will not facilitate optimal progress for children.* The student resources should be complete enough, labeled correctly, and have directions that are easily followed.

Review and practice activities might include participation activities such as role-playing activities, opportunities for hands-on practice. Review works best as a logical extension of content, goals, objectives and lessons, with increased similarity to real-life situations. Review activities should require children to recall or apply previously taught knowledge and skills. Frequent short reviews over time or space improve learning more than a concentrated review after a longer period of time.

B.2. Alignment of Instructional Components

All components of an instructional package must align with each other, as well as with the curriculum as a whole. All components of an instructional package—teacher's edition and materials, any student materials, and supplementary materials—must be integrated and interdependent and must correspond with each other. For example, support materials in the teacher's edition should align with student activities or projects. They must match in content and progression of instructional activities across the eight domains of the *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* and over the course of the program year.

B.3. Organization of Curriculum

The structure and format of materials must have enough order and clarity to allow children and teachers to access content and explicitly identify ideas and sequences. Providing an explicit and teachable structure can double the amount of information remembered. Clear organization allows teachers to discriminate important pieces of information through skimming, reading, or browsing. Clear organization may be accomplished through a combination of features, but generally not through one feature alone.

B.3.a. Access to Content

Some features help in searching and locating information, such as a table of contents; menu or map of content; directions on how to locate information; an index for quick reference; goals and/or objectives, outlines, lists or checklists for major sections; bibliographies and lists of resources; glossaries for quick access to major terms; introductions, key concepts and themes, visual cues, illustrations, labeled examples and labeled reviews or summaries.

B.3.b. Visual Features

Visual features that improve readability include print that is dark and clear, with good contrast, on paper with clean-cut edges and without glare; or computer screens without glare; or, margins wide enough on a page or screen to allow easy viewing of the text. Other features are more important in establishing the readability of the curriculum, such as

- chunking text (e.g., sentence ends on same page as it begins)

- visuals that are relevant, clear, vivid and simple enough for children to understand
- quantity of visuals suitable for the intended children—both lower ability children and higher ability children tend to require more visuals
- left-justified text (ragged on the right) rather than full-justified (lined up on the left and right)
- visuals that contain information in a form different from the text
- graphs, charts, maps and other visual representations integrated at their point of use
- colors, size of print, spacing, quantity and type of visuals suitable for the abilities and needs of the intended children.

B.3.c. Visible Structure and Format
At-a-glance features should signal the organization of content. The following features are desirable:

- theme or unit titles and/or frames; headings and subheadings
- typographic cues such as bold, italics or changes in size of type
- divisions of content such as borders, boxes, circles, highlighting, visual signposts, icons or color cues
- diagrams, labels and visuals placed near the related content; and numbering of pages and other components.

Objectives or a content outline may serve a similar purpose by introducing main ideas, providing guideposts to use in searching for key information, or serving as a checklist for self-assessment.

Certain types of brief narrative sections also contribute to clear organization. For example, the statement of a clear purpose with content organized around main ideas, principles, concepts and logical relationships supports the unity and flow of information. Introductions also play a major role when they include anchoring ideas, a list of key points or conceptual schemes such as metaphors. Summaries also can assist children in understanding the logical order of topics presented.

B.3.d. Logical Organization
The pattern of organization of the content should be consistent and logical for the type of domain or topic. Patterns of organization may include compare and contrast, time sequence, cause-effect or problem-solution-effect, concrete to abstract, introduction-review-extension (spiral structure), simple-to-complex, whole-part or part-whole, generalization-examples-review- practice and conflict-inside view-structure.

B.4. Readability of Instructional Materials/Language Style
Curriculum narratives and visuals such as books, posters, puppets, sound or letter cards, etc., should engage children in activities as well help them understand the instructional content provided by the teacher. Instructional materials should include a user friendly language style and visual features which influence the readability of curriculum materials. Readability formulas may be helpful at times but they often focus only on a few countable characteristics of language style such as the length of words, sentences and/or paragraphs. Additional features are more important in establishing the readability of curriculum content and may include the following:
- instructional materials are organized, coherent text
- use of language and concepts familiar to the teacher
- language that clarifies, simplifies and explains information
- use of transitional words such as "yet," "also," "next," "for example," "moreover," or "however"
- other phrases that create logical connections

- words with concrete and specific images
- active rather than passive voice
- varied sentence structures and avoiding both choppy sentences and unnecessary words
- specific questions or directions to guide student attention to visuals or key information.

B.5. Pacing of Content

The amount of content presented at one time or the pace at which it is presented must be of a size or rate that allows children to perceive and understand it. It is important that materials contain "bite-size" chunks or blocks of information. The chunks should not be so large, nor the pacing so fast, as to overwhelm children. Neither should the chunks be so small, nor the pacing so slow, as to bore them. Information must be included to assist teachers in scaffolding – extending content up or down for learners who need additional opportunities for practicing and extending skills.

B.6. Ease of Use of Materials

Both print and other formats of the curriculum must be easy to use and replace and be durable enough for multiple uses over time.

B.6.a. Use

Materials must be designed for practical use in the class setting and school environments. They must be easy to identify and store. Teachers and children must be able to access and use the materials. Some of the factors influencing their ease of use include number of components, size of components, packaging, and quality of materials, equipment requirements and cost to purchase or replace components.

The best choice about weight, size and number of volumes depends on several factors, such as the organization of the content, how well separate volumes may fit time periods for instruction and the ages of children. Technical production requirements, such as page limits or different types of bindings, may lead to multiple volumes.

Examples of class use include repeated copying of consumable materials and repeated use of other materials by children over time. Technology-rich resources should work properly without the purchase of additional software and run without error. Electronic media for student use should be encoded to prevent accidental or intentional erasure or modification. As with textbooks, electronic media should allow teachers to easily access and interact with them without extensive supervision or special assistance.

The physical and technical qualities of materials should match with the resources of VPK programs. Materials such as videos, software, internet sites and other resources may serve an instructional purpose, but have little value unless they can be implemented with the program's equipment. Publishers should include training, in-service and consultation to help in effective use of the materials.

B.6.b. Durability

Children and teachers should be able to have materials that will be durable under conditions of expected use. For example, boxes, books or other materials should not fall apart after normal class use. The packaging and form of materials should be flexible and durable enough for multiple uses over time. Durability includes considerations such as

- high-quality paper, ink, binding and cover
- back, joints, body block and individual pages

- worry-free technology that runs properly, with easy to hear, see and control audio and visuals
- teaching materials that have been tested for use in real-world class environment
- the publisher's guarantee for replacement conditions and agreements for reproduction needed to effectively use the materials

C. Learning

Several features have been found to promote learning and apply to most types of learning outcomes. The following sections describe the learning features expected for each of these priority areas.

C.1. Motivational Strategies

The curriculum must include features to create and maintain learner motivation.

C.1.a. Expectations

Materials should positively influence the expectations of children. Examples include

- positive expectations for success
- novel tasks or other approaches to stimulate intellectual curiosity
- meaningful tasks related to child's interests, cultural backgrounds and developmental levels
- activities with relevance to the child's life
- thought-provoking challenges such as paradoxes, dilemmas, problems, controversies and questioning of traditional ways of thinking
- challenges that are neither too difficult to achieve nor so easy that a child become bored
- hands-on tasks in a concrete context and images, sounds, analogies, metaphors or humorous anecdotes
- variety, including the opportunity for the child to ask their own questions, set their own goals and make other choices during learning.

C.1.b. Feedback

Materials should include informative and positive feedback on progress. Examples include

- frequent checks on progress, including formal and/or informal assessments
- explanatory feedback with information about asking questions to further the completeness or accuracy of responses, how to avoid or correct common errors (problem-solving approach) and/or different approaches to use
- varied forms of assessments (self-assessment, peer assessment and some learning tasks without formal assessments).

C.2. Explicit Instruction

The curriculum must contain clear statements of information and outcomes. It should effectively focus children's' attention toward specific learning objectives. To support success in learning, the curriculum should include clear directions and explanations of

- purposes, goals and expected outcomes
- concepts, rules, information and terms
- models, examples, questions and feedback.

For example, development of specific thinking skills requires an explicit statement of the particular *thinking skills* to be learned, along with the *strategies* or *steps to follow*. Explicit instruction for thinking skills might also involve showing *examples* of successful thinking contrasted with examples of poor

thinking processes.

Similarly, the development of learning skills requires explicit directions, the teacher making thinking visible by verbal modeling, *when* and *how* to do activities such as problem-solving, analyzing, summarizing, self-coaching, memory strategies, persistence, preview and questioning, reading and listening, reflecting and reciting.

C.3. Scaffolding Guidance and Support
The curriculum must include guidance and support to help children safely and successfully become more independent learners and thinkers.

C.3.a. Scaffolding
The type of guidance and support that helps children to become more independent learners and thinkers is sometimes referred to as *scaffolding*. Scaffolding is a solid structure of support that can be removed after a job has been completed. As children gain proficiency, support can diminish and children can encounter more complex, life-centered problems. Information and activities should provide guidance and support at the level that is needed—no more and no less. Too much can squelch student interest and too little can lead to failure. Presenting opportunities to practice existing abilities and scaffolding more complex tasks, facilitates young learners to develop an awareness and understanding of their own thinking processes (metacognition).

Scaffolding guidance and support can be accomplished by a combination of the following features:

- organized routines
- advance organizers or models such as
  - simplified views of information
  - visual representations of new information during initial instruction
  - questions to focus on key ideas or important features
  - explanations of how the problems were solved
  - analogies, metaphors or associations to compare one idea to another
  - prompts or hints during initial practice
- step-by-step instructions
- feedback that fosters and supports the learning of skills
- simulations with features for realistic practice
- opportunities for children to do research and to organize and communicate results.

C.3.b. Adaptability
Guidance and support must be adaptable to developmental differences and various learning styles. For example, young children tend to understand concepts in concrete terms and over-generalize new concepts. Some children need more time, some tend to be more impulsive than reflective, some have trouble distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information and some have better written than spoken language skills. Teachers may maximize students' interest and engagement through effective facilitation and quality feedback such as prompting the thought process, providing encouragement and scaffolding.

Approaches for scaffolding based on developmental differences and learning styles of children include a variety of *activities* such as
- structured and unstructured activities

- independent and group work
- teacher-directed and discovery learning
- visual and narrative instruction
- hands-on activities
- open-ended activities
- practice without extrinsic rewards
- simple, complex, concrete and abstract examples
- variable pacing or visual breaks
  - hints and assistance
  - allowing choice
  - reorientation statements

C.4. Active Participation of Children

C.4.a. Activities
The curriculum must engage the physical and mental activity of children during the learning process. The curriculum should include organized activities of periodic, frequent, short projects that are logical extensions of content, goals and objectives. Activities should address a variety of modalities, encourage hands-on exploration and active engagement.

C.4.b. Child Responses
Projects and activities should include questions and application activities during learning that give children opportunities to respond. Active participation of children can be accomplished in a variety of ways. For example, information and activities might require children to

- respond orally or through drawing and emergent writing
- create visual representations (block structures, emergent writing, puppet shows, dramatic play scenarios, drawings, two- and three-dimensional artwork)
- generate their own questions or examples
- think of new situations for applying or extending what they learn
- make predictions and complete discovery activities
- add details to concepts from prior knowledge
- form their own analogies and metaphors
- practice lesson-related tasks, procedures, behaviors or skills
- choose from a variety of activities
- share ideas and perspectives
- engage in classifying and comparing

C.5. Formal, Informal and Formative Assessment(s) and/or Progress Monitoring Tool(s)
Submitted curricula must include one or more of the curriculum based formal, informal, formative assessment(s), and/or progress monitoring tools(s). The submitted assessment(s)/tool(s) must relate to the eight standard domains, which instructors could use to guide instruction with the goal of increasing child success.

All assessment(s)/tool(s) should be purposeful and results should link back to strategies and activities which will enhance instruction. Instructors should be able to easily identify next steps for instruction for children struggling or excelling in any particular area or skill.

Types of Assessments:

Formal (standardized) Assessment(s) may
- be curriculum-specific, but they are not required to be
- supported by data, providing percentiles, or standardized scores*

Informal Assessment(s) may include
- instructor checklists for specific skill ability (e.g. letters, sounds, numbers, shapes, etc.)
- instructor observation tool(s) for specific skills or behaviors (e.g. communications skills, cooperative play, physical activity, etc.)

Formative Assessment(s)
- may include techniques or tools used to check for understanding through teacher observations, student participation and/or student work to then determine if the student has mastered identified skills(s) or if additional and/or different instruction needs to occur.
- the instructor should use the collected information to determine the next steps for instruction.

Progress Monitoring (PM) assessments may consist of the following:
- periodic assessments for the purpose of evaluating individual child progress as related to the *Standards - 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*.
- direction and guidance for the instructor and program administrator in identifying children who are at-risk or are experiencing difficulty in one or more areas.
- guidance directing instructors to resources which may be utilized to target specific areas of need.

Additional Resources:
- sample class record sheets for tracking individual child progress
- guidance for using and implementing results of any assessment products and collected data provided with in the curriculum
- strategies for instructor use to assist in guiding additional instruction, based on how a particular child or group of children performed on the assessments. These strategies or "next steps" should be linked directly to the curriculum.

D. Professional Development

Publishers must submit a *Professional Development Plan* for use with the curriculum. In-service training, workshops and consulting services should be made available and include as part of the VPK curriculum pricing to support teachers with implementation. Professional development is essential to the success of any program, especially when a program contains non-traditional elements. Publishers should clearly indicate the required amount and types of professional development necessary for VPK instructors to implement and for VPK instructional coaches to support the curriculum (initial and ongoing).

Instructional Coach is defined for purposes of the VPK Curriculum Approval Process as leadership staff (e.g., director, owner, Pre-K supervisor), a lead teacher or other staff person responsible for working alongside the VPK instructor(s) and assistants to ensure the curriculum is implemented with fidelity. The instructional coach must have the necessary content and instructional knowledge to observe and provide guided feedback on curriculum implementation and assist teachers with instructional decisions.

Instructional Staff for the purpose of VPK Curriculum Approval, are all VPK instructor(s) and assistant(s) in VPK classes, if applicable.

Professional Development may be provided in a variety of timed options as well as via webinar, face-to-

face or via online tutorial. All trainings should be user friendly and include a facilitator's guide to assist instructional coaches in supporting current as well as new instructors entering the program mid-year. The facilitator's guide should provide the instructional coach with tools and resources which will assist them in the delivery of training geared toward increasing participation and successfully implementing the curriculum. A tiered levels of professional development support should also be available to assist instructors and instructional coaches with various experience levels. All professional development opportunities should be adaptable for diverse learners include scientifically-based instructional strategies such as those outlined in the Effective Teacher Professional Development Report outlined below.

Supported by the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO), the Learning Policy Institute identified the following seven characteristics of effective professional development.

- Is **content focused**
- Incorporates **active learning** utilizing adult learning theory
- Supports **collaboration**, typically in **job-embedded** contexts
- Uses **models and modeling** of effective practice
- Provides **coaching and expert support**
- Offers opportunities for **feedback and reflection**
- Is of **sustained duration**

https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective_Teacher_Professional_Development_REPORT.pdf

https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/effective-teacher-professional-development-brief

Additionally, CEELO confirms that when the curriculum, **instructional and assessment practices** are aligned, are developmentally appropriate and are implemented with fidelity the instruction and assessments can work together to support growth and learning.

In addition to the seven characteristics of effective professional development, CEELO notes the following features are important to consider.

- There is collective participation of teachers from the same classrooms or schools in professional development.
- Educators are prepared to conduct child assessments and interpret their results as a tool for ongoing monitoring of the effects of professional development.

file:///H:/OEL/Curriculum%20Review%20and%20Approval%202018/Rule%20Development%20and%20Workshop%20Documents/2ceelo_fast_fact_LA-Instruction-LCT_041218_final.pdf

For small providers where the defined instructional coach and instructional staff may be the same person, such as in a Family Child Care Home (FCCH), the instructional staff must access the initial and ongoing professional development for instructors and assistants as outlined in D.1. and D.2. and provide documentation of completed trainings to the early learning coalition within the time frame specified. In this situation an instructional coach may not be appropriate. If the provider has more than 2 instructional staff an instructional coach must be identified.

D.1. Initial Professional Development for Instructors and Assistants

Initial professional development must provide adequate opportunities for instructors to learn new concepts and practice what they learn. Teachers must be instructed in the administration, interpretation and instructional implications of assessments that accompany the program.

All instructional staff must submit documentation of initial professional development completed prior to the beginning of the VPK program scheduled hours. For instructional staff hired after a VPK program begins its scheduled hours, initial PD must be completed within 45 calendar days of hire. All documentation must be submitted by the VPK provider within the VPK Provider Readiness Rate website.

D.2. Ongoing Professional Development for Instructors and Assistants

After initial professional development, ongoing professional development must be offered to provide support and a deeper level of knowledge of the curriculum, including how the curriculum enhances children's development and skills in the eight domains of the *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*. Ongoing professional development should also target areas of instructional need based on student performance on program assessments and progress monitoring tools.

All instructional staff must take part in all ongoing professional development, based on the activities prescribed in the publisher's professional development plan, and submit documentation of completion within 30 calendar days of completion of each professional development activity.

All documentation must be submitted by the VPK provider within the VPK Provider Readiness Rate website.

D.3. Initial Professional Development for Instructional Coaches

Initial professional development must be available to instructional coaches on the instructional components of administration, interpretation of assessment data and instructional implications based on assessment results. The training must be available to directors/instructional coaches prior to the beginning of the VPK school year or summer program with adequate technical support from the publisher. This training may also be available throughout the school year for new staff entering the program mid-year.

Additionally, fidelity checklist and targeted guidance on how to support instructors based on observations would be beneficial to directors and instructional coaches as they support staff with the implementation of a specific curriculum.

All instructional coaches must submit documentation of initial professional development completed prior to the beginning of the VPK program's scheduled hours.

For instructional coaches hired after the VPK program begins it scheduled hours, initial professional development must be completed within 45 calendar days of hire.

All documentation must be submitted by the VPK provider within the VPK Provider Readiness Rate website.

D.4. Ongoing Professional Development for Instructional Coaches

Ongoing professional development must provide instruction on the administration, interpretation of assessment data and instructional implications based on assessment results. The training must be available to instructional coaches prior to the beginning of the VPK school year or summer program with adequate technical support from the publisher.

All instructional coaches must take part in all ongoing professional development, based on the activities

prescribed in the publisher's professional development plan, and submit documentation of completion within 30 calendar days of completion of each professional development activity.

All documentation must be submitted by the VPK provider within the VPK Provider Readiness Rate website.

D.5. Supporting High Quality, Consistent Teaching
The professional development must emphasize implementation of high quality, consistent teaching. The professional development must meet the needs of both instructors and directors/instructional coaches. The professional development plan should outline how instructors will learn to differentiate their instruction based on assessment data, adjust instructional pace based on the group being taught and to individualize instruction as needed. The professional development should also provide support (e.g., principal/director checklists, follow-up in class modeling, a resource for teachers to view model lessons) to facilitate application of content. Additional supports such as fidelity checks, class observation checklist or other administrative/teacher resources are encouraged.

D.6. Access to Professional Development Opportunities
The publisher must provide a single web location where approved trainings can be registered for, along with an up-to-date monthly schedule. The postings should include webinar opportunities, online tutorials, researcher chats and any other supporting trainings available to educators.

D.7. Assessment/Progress Monitoring Professional Development for Instructional Staff and Coaches
The professional development should provide resources and guidance on the following:
- how to administer the assessment(s)/tool(s)
- how to use the data
- how to identify levels of student performance in specific learning areas. (e.g., identification of students at specific age ranges scoring below expectation, at expectation or above expectation)
- instructional implications based on assessment data

E. Materials for Parents and Families
The VPK Education Program is a parent choice program; as such, it is recognized that parents are an important component in the child's education. Parents are the child's first teacher. The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) identified research which indicates that supportive parental involvement is related to a child's oral language and cognitive development (See Chapter 5 of Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel, 2009 for more information).

E.1. Family Support Materials for the VPK Instructor
Curriculum materials that provide information for VPK instructors and directors on the importance of family involvement, tips and ideas for involving family members, as well as materials that are sent home with parents and families are required. Designs for parent involvement are endless and could include, for example, materials to send home, family workshop materials, and/or access to online resources.

E.2. Materials Available in Multiple Languages
In a state such as Florida, where there is great diversity of children, it is recognized that there is as much

or more diversity among children's families. Parent/Family materials should be available in multiple languages, including Spanish at a minimum, to ensure that the child's family can participate as actively as possible in their child's learning.

F. Research Base

Each publisher should submit a resume or curriculum vitae for <u>each author</u> of the curriculum.

F.1. Expertise for Content Development

Expertise in the content area and in education of the intended children must be reflected in the authors, reviewers, and sources that contributed to the development of the materials. The authors, consultants, and reviewers must have actually contributed to the development of the VPK curriculum and should have credentials that reflect expertise in the subject area, course, course category, grade level, pedagogy, education, teaching, or class instruction. Qualifications may include expertise in educational psychology or instructional design.

IV. Criteria for Evaluation

The VPK Curriculum Approval Process for Providers on Probation must be fair to all publishers. Applying evaluation criteria consistently to each submission assures that the materials will be judged fairly.

Regardless of format or technology, effective materials have certain characteristics in common, and the basic issues, important for the evaluation of VPK curriculum, apply to all subject areas and all formats. These issues are addressed in Florida's Vision for Voluntary Prekindergarten Education and the criteria as detailed in the previous pages of this document. Committee members will evaluate each curriculum using the Curriculum Evaluation Form 5 (Appendix A). Committee members will use the criteria-based instrument to engage in systematic reflection of the processes they follow and decisions they make about the quality of materials submitted by publishers.

The extensive research base and review processes used to identify these criteria establish their validity as an integral part of Florida's VPK curriculum approval process. Applying these criteria consistently to each submission helps assure that the materials submitted by publishers will be judged fairly.

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Appendices

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Curriculum/Publisher:_____

Reviewer's Name:_____Date of Evaluation:_____.

Curriculum Evaluation Form

CRITERIA		RATING VALUE			
A. CONTENT		**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain. **Notes:** **Rating Value:**			
A.1.	Alignment with the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* – How well does the content align with each domain of the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Olds to Kindergarten*? • Correlation • Scope • Completeness • Curriculum Integration				
A.1.a.	**I. Physical Development** ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0

A.1.b.	II. Approaches to Learning ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0
A.1.c.	III. Social and Emotional Development ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0
A.1.d.	IV. Language and Literacy ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0
A.1.e.	V. Mathematical Thinking ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0
A.1.f.	VI. Scientific Inquiry ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0
A.1.g.	VII. Social Studies ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0
A.1.h	VIII. Creative Expression Through the Arts ☐ Correlation ☐ Scope ☐ Completeness ☐ Curriculum Integration		2	1	0

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE			
A. CONTENT	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.			
	Notes:	Rating Value:		
A.2.	**Scope and Sequence** - Does the level (complexity, difficulty developmental progression) of the treatment of content match the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten*, the abilities of four-year-olds, and time periods allowed for teaching?				
A.2.a.	**Scope and Sequence: Alphabetic and Print Knowledge** ☐ Complexity ☐ Developmentally Appropriate ☐ Developmental Progression over program year		2	1	0
A.2.b.	**Scope and Sequence: Phonological Awareness** ☐ Complexity ☐ Developmentally Appropriate ☐ Developmental Progression over program year		2	1	0
A.2.c.	**Scope and Sequence: Vocabulary Development** ☐ Complexity ☐ Developmentally Appropriate ☐ Developmental Progression over program year		2	1	0

A.2.d.	Scope and Sequence: Mathematical Thinking ☐ Complexity ☐ Developmentally Appropriate ☐ Developmental Progression over program year		2	1	0

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE
A. CONTENT	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way.
	1: Adequate – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section.
	0: Unsatisfactory – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.

		Notes:	Rating Value:		
A.3.	**Language-Rich Programs** – curriculum materials should emphasize the teacher's role in providing opportunities to: ☐ Engage children in extended conversations ☐ Encourage children to tell and retell stories and describe events ☐ Discuss a wide range of topics ☐ Model use of new and unusual words ☐ Discuss word meanings ☐ Ask open-ended questions ☐ Give explicit guidance on vocabulary, syntax and pronunciation ☐ Challenge children to justify their thinking ☐ Focus on the expression of ideas ☐ Encourage frequent conversations ☐ Utilize advanced language ☐ Repeat and extend children's responses		2	1	0
A.4.	**Accuracy of Content** - Is the content presented accurately? ☐ Objectivity ☐ Representation ☐ Correctness		2	1	0

A.5.	**Relevance of Content** - Is the content up-to-date for the academic discipline and the context in which the content is presented? ☐ Dates of Editions ☐ Context		2	1	0

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE		
CONTENT	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.		
	Notes:	**Rating Value:**		
A.6.	**Authenticity of Content** – Does the content include problem-centered connections to life in a context that is meaningful to students? ☐ Life Connections ☐ Interdisciplinary treatment		2	1	0
A.7.	**Multicultural Representation** – Is the portrayal of gender, ethnicity, age, work situations, and various social groups been fair and unbiased? ☐ Multicultural Fairness ☐ Multicultural Advocacy		2	1	0
A.8.	**Humanity and Compassion** – Are people and animals portrayed with compassion, sympathy, and consideration of their needs and values? ☐ Inclusion of Compassion		2	1	0

CRITERIA		RATING VALUE			
B.	**PRESENTATION**	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way.			
		1: Adequate – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section.			
		0: Unsatisfactory – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.			
		Notes: Rating Value:			
B.1.	**Comprehensiveness of Teacher and Student Resources** • Comprehensive domains of learning • Specific learning goals • Well-designed learning activities • Intentional teaching • Culturally and linguistically responsive • Individualized/differentiated instruction • Ongoing assessment • Family involvement • Appropriate for program staff, children and families				
B.1.a	**Comprehensiveness of Teacher Resources** – Do resources address the targeted learning outcomes without requiring the teacher to prepare additional teaching materials for the class beyond those available in a typical preschool class? ☐ Components and materials are easy to use ☐ Teacher materials support lesson planning, teaching, and learning ☐ Suggestions for adapting instruction ☐ Guidelines and resources provided to implement and evaluate learning ☐ Resources provided to use in class activities		2	1	0

			2	1	0
B.1.b.	**Comprehensiveness of Student Resources** ☐ Are the student resources complete? ☐ Are directions easy to follow? ☐ Are there included review and practice opportunities to help children recall or apply previously taught knowledge and skills?		2	1	0
B.2.	**Alignment of Instructional Components** ☐ Do the components of the instructional package align with each other, as well as with the curriculum? ☐ Does the content and progression of the instructional activities correspond within instructional components across the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* domains and over the course of the year? ☐ Do the materials provided by the publisher integrated and interdependent with each other?		2	1	0
B.3.	**Organization of Curriculum** ☐ Access to Content ☐ Visual Features ☐ Visible Structure and Format ☐ Logical Organization		2	1	0
B.3.a	**Access to Content** ☐ Are there features to help search and locate information in texts?		2	1	0

B.3.b.	**Visible Features** ☐ Chunking text ☐ Visuals that are relevant, clear, vivid and simple enough for children to understand ☐ Quality of visuals – suitable for the intended child ☐ Left justified text ☐ Visuals that contain information in a form different from the text ☐ Graphs, charts, maps and other visual representation ☐ Colors size of print, spacing, quantity and types of visuals		2	1	0
B.3.c.	**Visual Structure and Format** ☐ At-a-glance features: visual features that signal organization of the content, typographic cues, divisions of content, diagrams, etc. ☐ Objectives or content outline ☐ Certain types of narrative sections to support organization		2	1	0
B.3.d.	**Logical Organization** ☐ Patterns of organization		2	1	0

B.4.	**Readability of Instructional Materials/** **Language Style –** ☐ Organized and coherent text ☐ Use of language and concepts familiar to the teacher ☐ Language that clarifies, simplifies and explains information ☐ Use of transitional words ☐ Use of phrases that create logical connections ☐ Use of words with concrete and specific images ☐ Active rather than passive voice ☐ Varied sentence structure – avoiding choppy sentences and unnecessary words ☐ Specific questions or directions to guide student attention to visuals or key information		2	1	0
B.5.	**Pacing of Content** ☐ Does the amount of content presented at one time or the pace at which it is presented of a size or rate that allows students to perceive and understand it?		2	1	0
B.6.	**Ease of Use of Materials**				
B.6.a.	**Use** ☐ Are the print and other media formats of the materials easy to use and replace?				
B.6.b.	**Durability** ☐ Will the materials be durable for multiple uses over time?				

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE			
C. LEARNING	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain. Notes: Rating Value:			
C.1.	**Motivational Strategies**				
C.1.b.	**Expectations** ☐ Do the materials positively influence the expectations of children? • Expectations of success • Task to stimulate curiosity • Meaningful task • Thought-provoking challenges • Appropriate challenges • Hands-on task • Varity	2	1	0
C.1.c.	**Feedback** ☐ Do the materials include informative and positive feedback on progress? • Frequent checks on progress-formal and informal • Explanatory feedback • Varied forms of assessments	2	1	0
C.2.	**Explicit Instruction** ☐ Are directions and explanations clear? • Purpose goals and expected outcomes • Concepts, rules information and terms • Models, examples, questions and feedback	2	1	0

C.3.	**Scaffolding Guidance and Support** Do the materials provide guidance and support to help students safely and successfully become more independent learners and thinkers?				
C.3.a.	**Scaffolding** ☐ Does the curriculum use appropriate scaffolding features to help children become more independent learners and thinkers? ☐ Does the curriculum present opportunities to practice existing skills while also scaffolding for more complex task? ☐ Organized Routines ☐ Advance organizers or models ☐ Step by step instructions ☐ Feedback that fosters and supports the learning of skills ☐ Simulations with features for realistic practice ☐ Opportunities for children to do research and to organize and communicate results.		2	1	0
C.3.b.	**Adaptability** – Does the guidance and support have adaptability for children's developmental differences and various learning styles? ☐ Structured and unstructured activities ☐ Independent and group work ☐ Teacher-directed and discovery learning ☐ Visual and narrative instructions ☐ Hands-on activities ☐ Open-ended activities ☐ Practice without extrinsic rewards ☐ Simple, complex, concrete and abstract examples ☐ Variable pacing or visual breaks ☐ hints and assistance ☐ allowing choices ☐ reorientation statements		2	1	0

CRITERIA		RATING VALUE			
		2: Exceeds – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way.			
		1: Adequate – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section.			
		0: Unsatisfactory – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.			
		Notes:	**Rating Value:**		
C.4.	**Active Participation of Children**				
C.4.a.	**Activities** ☐ Do the curriculum activities engage children physically and mentally, including organized activities and logical extensions of content, goals, and objectives?		2	1	0
C.4.b.	**Child Responses** ☐ Do projects and activities include opportunities for children to respond and actively participate? ☐ Respond orally or through drawing and emergent writing ☐ Create visual representation (block structures, emergent writing, puppet shows, dramatic play scenarios, drawings, two and three-dimensional artwork) ☐ Generate their own questions and examples ☐ Think of new situations for applying or extending what they learn ☐ Make predictions and complete discovery activities ☐ Add details to concepts from prior knowledge ☐ Form their own analogies and metaphors ☐ Practice lesson-related tasks, procedures, behaviors or skills		2	1	0

			2	1	0
	☐ Choose from a variety of activities. ☐ Share ideas and perspectives ☐ Engage in classifying and comparing				
C.5.	**Formal, Informal and Formative Assessment(s)/ Progress Monitoring Tool(s)**				
	Types of Assessments and resources: ☐ Does the curriculum provide any of the following types of assessment tools? ☐ Formal assessments ☐ Informal assessments ☐ Formative assessments ☐ Progress monitoring ☐ Does the curriculum provide tools and resources to determine student progress toward success? ☐ Are the resources purposeful and linked to strategies? ☐ Are the assessments/resources provided aligned to the standards? ☐ Are there instructional supports for teachers when utilizing collected data? ☐ Formal assessments ☐ Informal assessments ☐ Formative assessments ☐ Progress monitoring ☐ Additional resources ☐ Do the provided assessments cover		2	1	0
	Additional Resources ☐ Sample class record sheets ☐ Guidance for utilizing assessment data ☐ Strategies and next steps				

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE			
D. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.			
	Notes:	**Rating Value:**		
D.1.	**Initial Professional Development for Instructional Staff** ☐ Does the initial professional development provide adequate opportunities for teachers to learn new concepts and practice what they learn, including administration and interpretation of assessment(s)? ☐ Does the professional development provide instruction on the administration, interpretation and instructional implications of assessments that accompany the program?		2	1	0
D.2.	**Ongoing Professional Development for Instructional Staff** ☐ Does the ongoing professional development provided to support and a deeper level of knowledge of the curriculum, including how the curriculum enhances children's development and skills in the eight domains of the *Standards – 4 Years Old to Kindergarten?* ☐ Does the professional development target areas of instructional need based on student performance data?		2	1	0

			2	1	0
D.3.	**Initial Professional Development for Instructional Coaches** Does the professional development address the following areas? ☐ assessment administration ☐ interpretation of assessment data ☐ instructional implications ☐ fidelity checks ☐ targeted guidance for supporting instructors				
D.4.	**Ongoing Professional Development for Instructional Coaches** ☐ Does the professional development offer continued support of assessment results? ☐ Is the training available to directors and instructional coaches prior to the beginning of the VPK school year and summer program?				
D.5.	**Supporting High Quality, Consistent Teaching** ☐ Does the professional development support high quality, consistent teaching for instructors, directors and instructional coaches? ☐ Does the professional development provide specifics on differentiated instruction based on assessment data? ☐ Does the professional development provide instructional supports and resources?				
D.6.	**Access to Professional Development Opportunities** ☐ Does the program provide a single website for accessing professional development and schedules?				
D.7.	**Assessment Professional Development** ☐ How to administer ☐ How to use data ☐ Performance range chart ☐ Instructional implications				

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE
E. MATERIALS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.

		Notes:		Rating Value:		
E.1.	**Family Support Materials for the VPK Instructor** ☐ To what extent do the teacher/parent materials focus on family involvement and provide parent involvement opportunities (e.g., materials to send home, family workshop materials, access to online resources)?			2	1	0
E.2.	**Materials Available in Multiple Languages** ☐ To what extent are materials are available in multiple languages?			2	1	0

CRITERIA	RATING VALUE
F. RESEARCH BASE	**2: Exceeds** – The curriculum thoroughly addresses the criterion by **meeting all** the components listed for each section in an **extraordinary** way. **1: Adequate** – The curriculum **adequately** meets the criterion by **meeting all** of the components for each section. **0: Unsatisfactory** – The curriculum **does not adequately meet all** of the criterion for each domain.

		Notes:	Rating Value:		
F.1.	**Expertise for Content Development** ☐ To what extent do the authors, reviewers, and sources that contributed to the development of the materials have credentials that reflect expertise in the subject area, course, course category, grade level, pedagogy, education, teaching, or class instruction?		2	1	0

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