



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 2, 2024

To: Curriculum Publishers and Authors

From: Cary A. Booker, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Early Childhood Services

Preschool Curriculum Review

The New Jersey Department of Education (Department), Division of Early Childhood Services (DECS) will conduct a review process to approve curricula that are aligned with the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

The Department will convene a curriculum review committee to evaluate curricula to be aligned for use. The committee's role is to review applications and make recommendations to the DECS. The DECS will review those recommendations and develop a proposed list of aligned curricula for the Commissioner's review and final approval. DECS will convey the Commissioner's decision in writing to each applicant. The curriculum review committee will consist of representatives from higher education (special education and early childhood education), Early Childhood Education Administrators, Preschool Instructional Coaches, Infant & Toddler specialists, and Grow NJ Kids representatives. A member of the DECS's Office of Preschool Education will serve as liaison to the committee.

Process and Instructions

If you have a curriculum you would like reviewed, please read the guidelines below and submit the following materials:

1. The completed application cover sheet;
2. A complete description of how the curriculum meets the criteria described below (please follow the page limit guidelines);
3. A completed crosswalk of the proposed curriculum with the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards;
4. A complete copy of the proposed curriculum; and
5. Participation in a mandatory webinar on February 21, 2024 from 1:00-2:00p.m. (EST).

To ensure your submission is considered for the review process, please ensure that all materials are received no later than March 21, 2024. If you wish to have your materials returned, kindly provide appropriate packaging and postage. Otherwise, the materials will be donated to the Department Learning Resource Center. Notification of the review outcome will be sent in late spring 2024. Please send your materials to the following address:

New Jersey Department of Education
Division of Early Childhood Education
100 Riverview Plaza
PO Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

For additional information, please contact Kimberly Friddell, Director of Preschool Education at Kimberly.friddell@doe.nj.gov or 609-376-9077.

Criteria for Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

All organizations applying to provide an aligned curriculum must meet the criteria below. Supporting documentation can be submitted to support the application. Please describe how the curriculum satisfies the following requirements (5 page limit):

1) Effective Curriculum Indicators

The curriculum materials must align with the NJ State Preschool Standards. The curriculum experiences should be comprehensive, covering all learning domains and appropriate for the age and developmental level of children. The activities should be both child-directed and teacher/caregiver-directed, and play-based, engaging, and presenting concrete and relevant concepts based on children's real-life experiences. The materials and experiences should be flexible, promoting each child's development and learning both indoors and outdoors, and providing opportunities for children to make choices, explore, and develop independence. The curriculum should support the learning and development of children from diverse backgrounds and address how adults can provide culturally sensitive experiences for children and families with different developmental abilities, cultures, languages, and socio-economic status. The curriculum must also articulate a research base for the approach and demonstrate how the curriculum utilizes this research to make decisions about experiences provided for children. Additionally, the curriculum may include empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness, collected through sound research methodology.

2) Comprehensive Content and Instructional Concepts

The curriculum should offer clear guidance to teachers and caregivers to implement it in the classroom. It should include sample lesson plans, instructional guidance, and suggestions for the physical set-up and layout of the classroom environment. The curriculum should also provide detailed information on specific materials required for implementation, including authentic and noncommercial materials, along with their costs. It must be designed in such a way that it makes connections through themes, studies, or projects. Furthermore, it must be appropriate for all classroom staff, regardless of their credentials and experience level.

3) Educator Support

The curriculum must include a performance-based assessment that aligns with it. Additionally, guidance should be provided on how teachers can evaluate children using both formative and summative assessments, including the recommended assessment tool by the developer. The curriculum should also provide guidance to teachers' classrooms, implementation including sample lesson plans and suggestions for classroom setup. There should also be a clear description of the training program available for implementing the curriculum, including any specific requirements regarding training before implementation.

4) Student Support

Explain how the curriculum has a developmental progression that supports students with special needs, multilingual learners, and students from different cultures.

5) Home/School Connection

Explain how the curriculum supports strong teacher-family relationships and provides parent/guardian guidance for supporting students at home.

Inclusive of Infants, Toddlers and Two-Year-Olds

For those submitting a curriculum inclusive of infants, toddlers, and two-year old's, please describe how the curriculum addresses the following five domains (no more than three (3) pages):

Domain I: Social-Emotional Development

- Self-regulation
- Relationships with peers and adults

Domain II: Approaches to Learning

- Curiosity/persistence
- Creativity
- Imitation

Domain III: Literacy/Language Development and Communication

- Listening and understanding
- Communication and speaking
- Emergent Literacy
- Exploration and discovery

Domain IV: Problem Solving

- Imitation and symbolic play

Domain V: Health, Safety, Physical and Motor Development

- Gross motor development
- Fine motor development
- Physical health and wellbeing

Resources:

[New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards](#)

[New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards](#)