



Professional Learning Module
Integrating Learning Throughout the Preschool Day

The Integrated Classroom Curriculum

A quality preschool classroom includes the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: Birth to Kindergarten (2017)* as the foundation for guiding the classroom curriculum. The standards and benchmarks reflect the knowledge and skills that a child on a developmental progression should know and be able to do at the end of an age-related timeframe. The standards are designed to support early learning educators in planning experiences for children.

It is recognized that there are many different ways to help children learn new skills and concepts. Preschool programs have the flexibility to choose the curriculum to be used in their classrooms. Most of these curricula will share some common characteristics in providing early literacy, language and mathematical skills. However, an effective educator will also include a variety of elements to support children's interest and natural desire to explore, discover and act on the world around them.

In order to provide Florida's early learners with a high-quality, developmentally appropriate integrated curriculum, several elements should be considered carefully.

Thoughtful consideration for the learning environment with learning opportunities for children to engage in critical and creative thinking.

When children are given many daily experiences and opportunities to interact with classmates, they begin to develop social skills in negotiating, turn-taking, and cooperative play. Early learners are very curious and inquisitive by nature. The curriculum used in a preschool classroom should include active learning experiences that are child-initiated, as well as those planned and initiated by the teacher.



Developmentally and culturally appropriate materials that provide for a range of abilities.

The curriculum should be developmentally appropriate, meaning that it is appropriate for preschool children and can be modified for individual children who have skills at either end of a developmental continuum (individually appropriate). Also, the teacher should take into account a child's personal knowledge, often related to culture (culturally appropriate), and then use this information to build on a child's strengths and skills when planning the curriculum.

Active learning experiences that are child-initiated, as well as those planned and initiated by the teacher.

Teachers have a very distinct responsibility to observe, facilitate and scaffold the activities of the classroom. It is not developmentally appropriate for early learners to spend extended amounts of time in teacher-directed activities. Of course, children's attention spans will grow over the year and they will be maximally engaged by an enthusiastic, invigorating teacher. As a part of active learning, children should be engaged in many hands-on experiences throughout the day. Hands-on experiences help children make meaning of the knowledge and skills learned in context. Children should not learn about concepts through paper and pencil activities, work sheets, or coloring pages.

Intentional planning for whole group, small group and learning centers for children to experience learning as a meaningful whole throughout the day.

Throughout the course of the day, the curriculum should include instruction in varying formats, such as large group, small group, learning centers, during daily routines and transitions. Integrating content that connects concepts and skills throughout the day will support children's learning success in all areas of growth and development. The increased exposure to concepts and skills through multiple opportunities to practice and reinforce skills will lead to better outcomes for children.

One-on-one interactions with children each day to scaffold children's activities and provide feedback and support.

Children need one-on-one interactions with classroom teachers and classmates each day. Through one-on-one interactions with children, teachers scaffold children's activities and can provide feedback and support. Additionally, they build rapport through trusting relationships.



Monitoring children's progress through ongoing assessment and observation.

Assessment is a method for collecting information about something you want to measure to determine if children are achieving expected learning outcomes. Educators assess their children both formally and informally. Educators use these assessments to monitor children's progress and plan for instruction. It is important to ensure that all children are on a continuous path of improvement and on target for meeting expected growth and development outcomes.