

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) Preschool Curriculum Model Approval Process

I. Curriculum Overview

Curriculum encompasses the full range of the child's experience at school. The term *curriculum model* refers to an educational system that combines theory with practice. A curriculum model has a theory and knowledge base that reflects a philosophical orientation and is supported by child development research and educational evaluation. Curriculum models include the skills, knowledge and concepts to be supported, and the plans for learning experiences through which progress occurs. The practical application of a curriculum model includes guidelines on how to:

- Set up the physical environment;
- Make decisions about learning objectives as well as specific methods to accomplish objectives;
- Structure activities that are responsive to a variety of ability levels and populations, such as dual language learners and children with Individualized Education Plans;
- Interact with children and their families; and
- Support staff members in their initial training and ongoing implementation of the program.

Partners in GSRP, Michigan's state-funded preschool program, implement a comprehensive, child-focused, constructivist curriculum model as is widely espoused for preschool and supported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.¹ In a constructivist curriculum model, there is a balance of child-initiated activities and adult-guided active learning. Teachers intentionally interact with children to build on their understandings and enhance learning. Play and peer-to-peer interaction are vital to provide children with opportunities to engage in abstract thinking, develop self-regulation skills, problem-solving and oral language skills.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) does not identify one 'best' curriculum model, but rather supports preschool curriculum models that meet specific criteria. Approved curriculum models must align with the [Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten \(ECSQ-PK\)](#), ensuring horizontal alignment among preschool standards, practice and assessment, as well as ensuring vertical alignment within Michigan's early childhood and education system and with kindergarten through twelfth grade standards.

II. Process for Preschool Curriculum Approval

Because the [ECSQ-PK](#) were revised in 2013 and previously approved curriculum models have undergone significant revisions in recent years, the MDE Office of Great Start (OGS)/ Preschool and Out-of-School Time Learning (POSTL) has determined that a review process for center-based curriculum models designed for use with three- and four-year-old children for consideration as approved GSRP curriculum be conducted. The GSRP curriculum approval process originates from the ECSQ-PK and includes: Preschool Curriculum Approval Process, Evaluation Criteria Information, Intent to Submit, Curriculum Rubric and an Evaluation Report. Each curriculum model submitted will be reviewed by stakeholders identified by OGS/POSTL. Individuals evaluating the curriculum model will be trained on the Curriculum Model Rubric to score each curriculum model in the areas of: Valid Research, Evaluation Results, Professional Development and Developmentally Appropriate.

The preschool curriculum approval process will begin in 2016 with a review of additional models for which OGS/POSTL has received recent requests for consideration for approval of use.

To assist planning the stakeholder review, curriculum publishers are requested to indicate intent to submit by email no later than **October 26, 2016**. The Intent to Submit form, which is not binding, will identify the curriculum model to be submitted for consideration.

Curriculum publishers may submit a full curriculum model, including curriculum resources, for review. OGS/POSTL strongly recommends that all curriculum publishers consider the scoring rubric and criteria carefully prior to submitting the curriculum for review. OGS/POSTL will begin accepting curriculum models for review on Monday, November 7, 2016. Submissions must be provided no later than 12:00 noon EST on Monday, December 5, 2016.

Curriculum models received within the reported timeframe will be reviewed and scored by April 15, 2016. The submitting entity will receive a summary memorandum, a copy of the Curriculum Rubric and the Evaluation Report. All materials reviewed and approved will be listed as approved for use in any state-funded preschool program.

OGS/POSTL has not established a reoccurring cycle for the curriculum approval process. Approved curricula will remain on the list until the ECSQ-PK are revised, approved curriculum models undergo major revisions and/or OGS conducts another formal call for curriculum approvals.

Questions regarding this process should be directed to Blanche Deren at mde-gsrp@michigan.gov. Please use this Subject Line: Preschool Curriculum Review Committee.

¹ Bredekamp, S., and Copple, C. (Eds.). (1997). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

III. Instructions for Submitting a Preschool Curriculum Model

1. Email the **Intent to Submit** form by October 26, 2016 to Blanche Deren at mde-gsrp@michigan.gov. Please use this Subject Line: Preschool Curriculum Review Committee.
2. OGS will begin accepting curriculum models for review on Monday, November 7, 2016. Submissions must be provided no later than 12:00 noon EST on Monday, December 5, 2016. Submit four sets of your complete curriculum model (originals). Include all materials you would send a program that purchases the curriculum. If the curriculum model includes posters, children's books, puzzles and other classroom materials, send a representative sample with each curriculum model.
3. Enclose in each curriculum package identification information:
 - a. Organization that publishes or produces the curriculum materials.
 - b. Contact person, address and telephone number.
 - c. A list of every item included in the curriculum package.
 - d. For multi-box shipments, the total number of boxes and a list of items in each box.
 - e. Supplemental information may be provided. Supplemental information must be directly related to a review item and must be clearly labeled as 'supplemental' to distinguish it from the curriculum materials typically available to programs that purchase the curriculum.
 - f. Specific instructions on how materials will be retrieved, if desired, after the review is complete. Materials may be picked up or shipped from MDE. If materials will be returned, pack the curriculum in reusable boxes, mark the outside of shipping cartons "to be returned," and include pre-paid UPS or other mailing labels. *MDE will retain two copies of each curriculum approved by OGS/POSTL.*
4. Mail the completed Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Rubric and curriculum packages to:

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Great Start/ Preschool and Out-of-School Time Learning
Attention: Preschool Curriculum Review Committee
608 West Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933
5. If there are questions about the process, use contact information found in item one.

In the event that materials are misplaced during the review process, the Curriculum Review Committee and the MDE OGS will not be liable for return or payment.