



# *Quality Standards for Early Primary Settings*

The Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education is based on a vision for early care and education providers of children birth through age eight and their families. The purpose is to help assure that young children have access to high-quality and developmentally appropriate programs. Early primary teachers are a key group of early childhood educators. This section is intended to help early primary teachers use the Quality Standards for their programs.

## *Quality Standards in Early Primary Settings*

To implement the Quality Standards, early primary teachers would consider the various outcomes and indicators listed in the Quality Standards and adapt them for their own schools and classrooms. Self-assessment from the Quality Standards could serve as a portion of the K-3 needs assessment of the Quality Performance Accreditation activities in a school. Identification of areas of need on which a school may want to focus could be linked to the Quality Performance Accreditation school improvement plan. The Quality Performance Accreditation Strategic Directions are similar to the nine topic areas of the Quality Standards.

## *Implementing the Quality Standards Areas in Early Primary Settings*

*Family Involvement:* Identify ways all parents can be involved in their child's educational program. Encourage them to participate in site councils, school advisory councils, parent organizations, and community organizations with links to the schools. Become a resource for families by keeping up on children's issues, community activities, and programs of interest to children and families. Develop a way to communicate regularly with parents and convey the message that parental involvement and participation in their child's education is encouraged. Offer opportunities through the year for parents to learn and grow with their child. Such opportunities may be through field trips, special programs, or family nights.

*Community:* Become informed about community resources that may provide services to children and families. Collaborate with those agencies by informing parents, making referrals, and following up to be sure services are received and utilized. In conjunction with parents, assess the strengths and needs of the local community in regard to early childhood programs, child care, before- and after- school care, and other services. Make a special effort to connect with and support hard-to-reach families to facilitate their access to needed programs.

*Program Administration:* Reflect upon and record your personal philosophy of learning, along with a mission statement and policies for your class or program. Share these with families and colleagues and continue to review and modify them to reflect evolving knowledge and changing family and community needs. Have high expectations for all children and support each child in achieving these expectations in an appropriate way. Recognize each child's individual strengths and needs and provide appropriate materials and curricula that address diversity in culture and ability.

*Personnel:* Avail yourself of training opportunities that arise throughout the year. Join and participate in a professional organization related to your career goals. Advocate for adequate staff support to provide a quality program for your students. Provide training for staff and volunteers in your program so that your team can provide for the diverse needs of all children in the program. Advocate for time to plan and work collaboratively as a team with other staff, families, and volunteers. Develop a personal plan for your own professional development and assist staff under your supervision to develop a plan also.

*Learning Experiences:* Provide learning experiences congruent with your school and program's philosophy and mission statements. Learning experiences should be based on current knowledge of child development and education and be designed to achieve long-range goals in all areas of development. Materials and

activities should be developmentally, individually, and culturally appropriate. Learning experiences should be multi-sensory, hands-on, process-oriented, and well-balanced in regard to active and quiet, large and small motor activities, as well as group and individual work. Provide a consistent daily routine that promotes independence but is flexible enough to adapt planned or routine activities to the needs or interests of the children. Many K-3 teachers currently do all of these in planning and providing learning experiences for their students. In addition, if your classroom includes children with disabilities, collaborate with Student Support Services staff to provide learning experiences that are appropriate for each child. Become familiar with the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and devise ways that the child's goals and objectives can be met within the planned activities and curriculum of your classroom.

*Physical Setting and Safety:* Be sure the arrangement of your classroom provides the opportunity for all children to access all learning areas and to interact with adults and other children at appropriate times. If modifications are needed to the indoor or outdoor environments to accommodate a child with a disability, advocate for and work toward making those adaptations. Get training in CPR and first aid, and update it yearly. If your class includes a child with a special health care need, communicate with the child's family and school health personnel to be sure you understand the child's needs, treatment, or special accommodations that might be needed at school.

*Health and Nutrition:* Include information about health, nutrition, and safety in your curriculum. Model healthy habits for your students. Actively engage children in health-promoting behaviors. Communicate health promotion, prevention, and early identification measures to families. Encourage healthy snacks for birthday treats and holiday parties if these are provided by families. If a child in your class seems to be malnourished, observe the child, document your observations, talk with family, and make a referral for free or reduced cost lunch or for other services as appropriate.

*Child Assessment:* Teachers are typically assessing the learning of their students on a continuous basis. In addition, you may be recording grades and other

information, developing portfolios of children's work products, and administering assessment instruments and procedures adopted by your school. Children with disabilities should be included in all of these assessment procedures, unless the child's disability makes this impossible, even with adaptations. In such cases, the child's IEP should include information about how the child's progress will be assessed and how this progress will be reported with the district data for all students.

*Program Evaluation:* Become familiar with the School Improvement Plan for your school. Communicate with the parents and other constituents of your school and seek their input on ways to improve the educational services offered. As needs are identified with the program, seek to have them addressed and incorporated within the school improvement plan for Quality Performance Accreditation. Use the Self-Assessment tool in the Appendix of the Quality Standards or other self-assessment tools to ensure a high-quality, developmentally appropriate education for all young children.

#### Resources for Elementary Teachers:

- Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS)  
800-362-0390, ext. 1618  
620-421-6550, ext. 1618  
kskits.org
- Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC)  
800-362-0390, ext.1651  
620-421-6550, ext. 1651  
kskits.org/ecrc
- Kansas State Department of Education,  
Student Support Services  
800-203-9462  
785-296-2450  
120 SE Tenth, Topeka, KS 66612  
www.kansped.org
- Kansas State Department of Education,  
School Improvement and Accreditation Team  
785-296-9462  
120 SE Tenth, Topeka, KS 66612  
www.ksde.org

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