

# TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

## PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

3.102

~~To bring about gains in children's learning, early childhood education and parent involvement programs in Tennessee should be of high quality and reflect the following principles in planning, design, and delivery:~~

### ~~Family and Community Focus:~~

~~The focus should be to assist families and the community in providing developmentally appropriate support and services for young children at home and in community settings. All program services must be designed to recognize the importance of parents to a child's continuing growth and development~~

### ~~Comprehensive Services:~~

~~The needs of the participating families will define the parameters of the core services provided. The core services available to all enrolled children and their families should be comprehensive and provided and delivered in a coordinated fashion between various agencies and program units.~~

### ~~Developmentally Appropriate:~~

~~All aspects of an early childhood education and parent involvement program must be developmentally appropriate in terms of any expectations of the children. Programs must focus on the age and the needs of the individual child and address all areas of a child's development including cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and communication. Program services must be delivered with an interactive and integrated approach.~~

### ~~Quality Standards for Program Performance:~~

~~All programs should exemplify developmentally appropriate practices and adhere to state operating standards. State standards are comparable to those recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the national Head Start program.~~

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**~~Parent Involvement and Family Services:~~**

~~All programs should focus on family services which involve the family as a whole. Programs should encourage the development of partnerships among the family, program, school(s), and the community. Parents should have the opportunity and training to participate effectively in program operations as well as program decision-making.~~

**~~Interagency Collaboration:~~**

~~All programs sponsored through the state's Early Childhood Education Plan should complement, not supplant, effective programs currently in operation through other federal, state, or local agencies. All local public school systems and related community agencies are encouraged to develop interagency agreements at the local level which focus on the delivery of essential services to all children and families eligible for enrollment in the early childhood education and parent involvement program.~~

**~~Staff Selection and Development:~~**

~~The selection and support of well-qualified staff is critical to the effective implementation of this program. Programs should establish staff selection, evaluation, and development standards recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association of Elementary Principals, and the national Head Start program.~~

**~~Assessment and Screening:~~**

~~Assessment of young children enrolled in an early childhood education and parent involvement program should involve anecdotal observations and screening instruments designed to support the delivery of an individualized, developmentally appropriate program. Assessments must not be used for program entry or exit purposes unless required by federal funding sources.~~

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**Early Childhood Unit:**

~~All programs should demonstrate a continuum of programs through the kindergarten and primary grades. The National Association of State Boards of Education recommends that early childhood units be formed within local school systems to ensure this continuum of services to children and families and to incorporate the concepts of nongraded, early childhood primary programs.~~

**Planning:**

~~All programs should have annual operational plans and long range strategic plans which demonstrate measurable goals and objectives and the coordination of community services for children and families.~~

**Evaluation and Accountability:**

~~Annual program and staff performance evaluations should be conducted by the local administrative agency. Feedback should be provided to administrators, program staff, and parents to assist in program planning and improvement. Information necessary for program monitoring and policy decision making should be reported annually to community agencies, the local school board and the state.~~

**Funding:**

~~State funding, when made available, must be coordinated with the proposed expansion of federal funding for Head Start programs to ensure that all eligible (as defined by income criteria) children and families in Tennessee are served. Numerous factors, in addition to family income may place children and families at risk of educational failure and in need of the early childhood education and parent involvement program. Local communities and school systems are encouraged to expand participation to other children and their families by utilizing additional funding sources or through fees paid by participating families.~~