



The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Baseline Criteria for High-Quality Birth to Five Curriculum

All birth to five programs currently operating in Virginia who do not have a VDOE- approved curriculum should review the [National Center for Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning \(NCECDTL\) high-quality indicators for Early Childhood curricula](#) (go to the website and select the type of curricula in use by your program-- Infant and Toddler, Preschool or Family Child Care) AND the following baseline criteria for high-quality early childhood curriculum **prior to** initiating a curriculum review by VDOE.

Review the *Overview of the Curriculum Review Process for VQB5* for more information on options and next steps.

The checklist below outlines the baseline criteria for a high-quality birth to five curriculum.

- ✓ Curriculum is aligned to [Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards: Birth-Five Learning Guidelines](#). This means my curriculum's learning goals and activities address all areas of learning and development outlined in the [standards document](#) as noted in the list below. *Curricula that are aligned to standards ensures children have the opportunity to access the content and skills that are outlined in the standards.*

ELDS Areas of Development

- Approaches to Play and Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy Development
- Health and Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
 - Science: The Natural and Physical World
 - Social Science: People, Community and Culture
 - Mathematics
 - Fine Arts (Movement and Dance, Music, Drama and Theatre Arts and Visual Arts)

Note: All areas of the [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework](#) are covered by virtue of alignment to the VA-ELDS.

- ✓ Curriculum is comprehensive and integrated. This means my curriculum is not just focused on literacy, math, or social emotional development, for example, and learning goals and activities are not presented in isolation. *A comprehensive and integrated curriculum helps children achieve learning goals and objectives across all content areas a child needs to explore in an early childhood care and education setting and recognizes the natural overlap of all learning domains.*
- ✓ Curriculum **does not** include copyrighted materials that I do not have permission to use (i.e., content from the internet or other sources that I do not have explicit permission from the author to use). *This means that all content within my curriculum was either created by me, or I have been given explicit permission by the author to use all resources and materials.*
- ✓ Curriculum is research based. This means current research and developmentally appropriate/best practices for supporting young children's learning and development are the

basis for all curriculum (domain-specific) content. *A research-based curriculum fosters domain-specific, developmentally appropriate teaching practices that are effective in supporting increased school readiness outcomes for all children.*

- ✓ Curriculum resources are inclusive. This means they reflect the full diversity of the cultures, race/ethnicities, gender, abilities, socioeconomic status, communities and/or languages spoken at home for all children. *Curricula that include inclusive resources supports the use of knowledge on all children's backgrounds to enrich the care and education experiences of every child.*
- ✓ Curriculum has specific details about how instruction should be individualized based on the interests, strengths and needs of all children. *A curriculum that outlines ways to individualize care and instruction supports Virginia's goal to maximize the potential of all children.* Consider whether guidance is offered on how to foster / support:
 - culturally responsive caregiving and teaching practice (respecting and appreciating the role of culture in children's learning and development)
 - children with an identified or suspected disability or with other special needs
 - children who are English learners/multilingual (speak one or more languages other than English)

Contact Cassandra.CaffeeMorelock@doe.virginia.gov if you have questions about this list of criteria and/or the VDOE curriculum review process.