Curriculum Planning (Head Start)

**POLICY / APPROACH:**

Southern Oregon Head Start’s approach is based on universal child development principles that guide the ways in which we work with children, taking into consideration our families and communities. Children need active, hands-on experiences, nurturing relationships, and intentionally planned opportunities using the environment, everyday materials, daily routines, and child interests to foster learning. Teachers engage children in meaningful conversations about the work they are doing.

We develop our curriculum using the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. We establish school readiness goals using our child outcomes and information from local school districts. We use school readiness goals and My Teaching Strategies assessment data to plan for children transitioning into kindergarten. In preparing for School Readiness, we ensure our curriculum correlates to the state of Oregon Common Core Standards. Our base curriculum is Creative Curriculum along with the Second Step Curriculum. The activities from this curriculum correlate to My Teaching Strategies Objectives.

**HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:**

1302.32 Curricula   (a) (1) programs must implement developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood curricula.

**PROCEDURES:**

Curriculum Planning

The following materials and information assist in the curriculum planning process. When formulating your lesson plan, it is helpful to refer to the Resource of Activities embedded in the My Teaching Strategies system. For lesson plan support and curriculum fidelity Creative Curriculum volumes 1-5 and supplemental in-house resources have been referenced.

Family information and input is a required component of curriculum planning and implementation. The following procedures and information will be used to facilitate family engagement in each child’s education and curriculum planning:

1. Registration information about the child that includes the child's home language.
2. Initial Home Visits and Family Conferences.
3. Any other information from the child’s paper and / or electronic file.
4. Assessment information from My Teaching Strategies.

Each Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Education staff will participate in a weekly education planning, which includes the following:

1. Gather individual information on focal children (Individual child planning form) for the following week; outcome data, family goals, strengths, needs, and interests.
2. Meet with team for overall center planning.
3. Meet with team that shares classroom space to plan environment.
4. Teaching team refines current week’s lesson plan.
5. Teaching team plans for focal children and completes lesson plan for the week in My Teaching Strategies.

**Lesson Plans**

In following Creative Curriculum and Second Step, **large group activities** need to include:

1. Arrival activities
2. Opening circle
3. Second Step large group skills specified in Weekly Unit.
4. Transition activities
5. Music and movement
6. Relaxation
7. Closing circle
8. Intentional Teaching cards and/or Mighty Minutes

**Small group activities** need to include:

1. Language
2. Literacy
3. Mathematics
4. School readiness specific skills
5. Special activities
6. Intentional Teaching cards and/or Mighty Minutes
7. Strategy for inclement weather (see *Outside time Policy and Procedure*).

Weekly planning must include the scripted lessons from the Second Step Learning Program and will be evident on the lesson planning form by indicating the week number.
and title of the lesson. The Child Protection Unit also will be used according to the implementation sequence given by Second Step. These have been added to teacher dates and deadlines. All Second Step and Child Protection Unit activities will be followed as indicated to preserve the fidelity of the program.

The classroom has a tangible acknowledgement system in place and the children receive notes that list what positive act the child did that day related to the rules.

The Daily Schedule

The Daily Schedule is the structure around which you will build learning opportunities to challenge and comfort your children. The schedule needs to include the following:

Daily:
1. Health Check upon arrival
2. Hand washing – upon arrival, before meals, after using the restroom, and throughout the day as necessary (Handwashing is planned for in the daily schedule) but not listed on lesson plan
3. Tooth brushing must follow a meal.
4. Relaxation – Provide 10 minutes for part-day and 20 minutes of Rest for full-day (see Rest Procedure).
5. Sufficient time is allowed for cleanup of activities and resettling.
6. Minimum of 60 minutes of free choice / exploration time with separate clean-up time
7. Music, rhythm, and movement activities
8. Small group story time
9. Transitions – allow adequate time for smooth transitions between activities. Children should not always be required to transition as a group. Transitions are a vehicle for learning. Planned transition activities will be listed on the lesson plan, and are used to maximize learning time.
10. Breakfast or lunch within 30 minutes of arrival; allow 30 minutes for breakfast (AM and PM) and lunch; full-day snack is 15-20 minutes.
11. Offer activities that promote self-esteem and social competence.
12. Outdoor Play is 30 minutes with separate clean-up time; additional time requires specific planning. Full day options will need to plan for two Outdoor Play times per day.
13. Include opening and closing daily circle times that are appropriate in content, size, and length (5-15 minutes). Provide longer circles for children transitioning into kindergarten toward the end of the year.
14. Balance of child-directed and teacher-directed activities
15. Daily small group experiences – focused interactions with 10 children at most. These intentionally planned small group activities will allow children to experience a variety
of developmentally oriented, enriching activities, such as art, music, cognitive, small muscle, large muscle, and dance language.

16. Two focal children will be planned for daily, and will be documented on the focus child section of the lesson plan (see Individualization for Children Policy and Procedure). Each focus child should have three goals for the day, and the plan will include: The activity, when the activity will take place, and which Objective or School readiness goal the child is working towards. There will be eight focus children each week.

17. Address children’s goals from the Family Conference Forms, Guidance Plans and IFSP goals.

18. Ongoing English language communication to provide English practice for Dual Language learners.

19. Ongoing communication to other than English Home Language speakers, as available.

20. Debriefing with notes written on the debrief form in the lesson plan DAILY

Weekly:

1. At least one activity in the areas of Health, Safety, and Nutrition will be planned for each week. This includes at least one cooking activity each month.

2. Education Supervisors can be consulted for guidance in these areas.

3. Resources are available online or at the center.

Monthly:

1. Drills, as listed on the Center Emergency Drill Record – introduce these in small groups (at least the first two times).

2. Calendars of classroom activities are sent home to families.

3. Data review and planning

4. Ongoing consultation with School Readiness Goals to ensure appropriate activities are planned to meet our projected expectations.

Lesson plans will include consistent, predictable routines and transitions. The Classroom Behavior Matrix and Zone plan will be kept up to date with any changes in the classroom expectations. The Matrix and Zone plan will be designed to meet the needs of the classroom space, children and classroom staff.

Lesson Plans, including the environment plan and Individual Child Planning form, will be completed and submitted to your Education Department person BEFORE the start of class each week. Current lesson plans must be posted in an accessible place in the classroom for reference and notation of changes. Families are encouraged to view the lesson plan and give input to weekly planning.
At the end of the week, the Individual Child Planning Form will be attached to the weekly lesson plan (with debrief notes) and placed in a binder / folder with all other past plans.

Monitoring of Lesson Plans, individualization, and implementation will be conducted by the centers’ assigned Education Department person. This person will observe to ensure each area has been successfully thought out and planned for utilizing developmentally appropriate learning materials and experiences.

The Education Department person will observe utilizing the Education Monitoring Tool and will go over lesson plans providing feedback to maintain fidelity and quality of the program.

Classroom Environment

Refer to the resources Creative Curriculum and Designs for Living and Learning. These resources are at your center.

1. When choosing colors for classrooms, use calm, soothing colors. When in doubt, consult with the Education Department.
2. It also is important to be aware of the amount of stimulation, visual and auditory, in the classroom setting.
3. Your Head Teacher and Education Department representative also will be guiding and overseeing this process.

Each classroom will be reviewed by the classroom staff Education Department using the Creative Curriculum Environment Checklist before class begins and throughout the year.

Environment planning should include routines, rules, and expectations for each center. Use The Creative Curriculum books, Creative Curriculum checklist and success rubrics as a guide to setting up the classroom and selecting materials to stock the classroom space.

Daily Debrief and Evaluation Time

Set aside approximately 20 minutes every day to debrief; discuss the focal children, evaluate the day, the plan and the environment. Share relevant information from the child observations. Document the debriefing on the back of the weekly lesson plan. Confidential information about specific children will be documented in My Teaching Strategies and/or their child file.

Following are suggestions to guide the debriefing time and discussion noted on the back of the lesson plan:

1. How did the day feel?
2. Am I hurrying the children? Am I testing children? Why am I offering this experience? Are children given opportunities for choice, problem solving, success, creativity, independence, and open-ended activities?
3. Can waiting time / lining up be avoided?
4. What messages do I want to give to the children? To the families?
5. How is the environment supporting children?
6. What experiences / opportunities are being provided for children in the outdoor environment?
7. Is the conversation at mealtime engaging children and encouraging relationships and extending learning?
8. What follow-up may be needed?
9. What can our teaching team we celebrate, and what do we need to work on?

Resource Materials

1. THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM: For Preschool
2. THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM TEACHING GUIDES
3. THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM TOOLS: INTENTIONAL TEACHING CARDS, BOOK DISCUSSION CARDS, AND MIGHTY MINUTES.
4. SECOND STEP
5. SECOND STEP CHILD PROTECTION UNIT
6. CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE

The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

Domain – Social & Emotional Development
   a. Relationships with adults
   b. Relationships with other children
   c. Emotional Functioning
   d. Sense of Identity and Belonging

Domain – Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development
   a. Gross Motor
   b. Fine Motor
   c. Health, Safety and Nutrition

Domain – Approaches to Learning
   a. Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation
   b. Cognitive Self-Regulation (executive functioning)
   c. Initiative and Curiosity
   d. Creativity

Domain – Language and Literacy Development
   Language and Communication
a. Attending and Understanding  
b. Communicating and Speaking  
c. Vocabulary

**Literacy**  
a. Phonological Awareness  
b. Print and Alphabet Knowledge  
c. Comprehension and Text Structure  
d. Writing

**Domain-Cognition**  

**Mathematics Development**  
a. Counting and Cardinality  
b. Operations and Algebraic Thinking  
c. Measurement  
d. Geometry and Spatial Sense

**Scientific Reasoning**  
a. Scientific Inquiry  
b. Reasoning and Problem Solving
HEAD START EARLY LEARNING OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK 2015

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