Early Childhood Curriculum

NAEYC

Curriculum is the organized framework that delineates the following:

- The **content** that children are to learn
- The **processes** through which children achieve the identified curricular goals
- What **teachers** do to help children achieve these goals
- The **context** in which teaching and learning occur

Head Start

Curriculum means a written plan that includes: **goals** for children’s development and learning; **experiences** through which they will achieve these goals; **what staff and parents do** to help children achieve these goals; and, the **materials** needed to support the implementation of the curriculum

**Joint Position Statement on Curriculum (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE) (2003):**
Policymakers, the early childhood profession, and other stakeholders in young children’s lives have a shared responsibility to implement a curriculum that is:

- Thoughtfully planned
- Challenging
- Engaging
- Developmentally appropriate
- Culturally and linguistically responsive
- Comprehensive across all developmental domains
- Likely to promote positive outcomes for all young children

**Characteristics of a High Quality Intentional Curriculum (NCCP)**

- Is research-based
- Emphasized teachers actively engaging with children
- Includes attention to social and regulatory skills
- Is responsive to cultural diversity and English language learners
- Is not teacher-proof
- Requires new ways to measure classroom quality, teacher effectiveness, and student progress.

**Important words about early childhood curriculum from national educational organizations** (S. Bredekamp, R.A. Knuth, L.G. Kunesh, and D.D. Shulman NCREL, Oak Brook, 1992):

- Active, hands-on learning
- Conceptual learning that leads to understanding along with acquisition of basic skills
- Meaningful, relevant learning experiences
- Interactive teaching and cooperative learning
- A broad range of relevant content, integrated across traditional subject matter divisions