

## Inclusive Practices

Quality early care and education programs in Rhode Island are on a continuous improvement path that is informed by Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing regulations; Department of Education Basic Education Program (BEP) regulations; BrightStars Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Standards; and Department of Education Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standards for Approval. The graphics below illustrate the state’s quality continuum for center-based programs, family child care programs, and school-based programs. Larger versions of the graphics can be found in *Appendix A*.

This Tip Sheet describes how programs progress on that continuum in the area of ***inclusive practices***.

### Center-based Programs



### Family Child Care Programs



### School-based Programs



***Early childhood inclusion*** embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society.

The desired results of inclusive experiences for children, with and without disabilities, and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential.

The ***defining features*** that identify ***high-quality inclusive early childhood programs and services*** are ***access, participation, and supports***:

- Access means providing access to a wide range of learning opportunities, activities, settings, and environments.
- Participation refers to individualized accommodations and supports that allow children and families to participate fully in play and learning activities with peers and adults.
- Supports refer to the infrastructure of systems-level supports that undergird the efforts of individuals and organizations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> DEC/NAEYC. (2009). *Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute. Retrieved from [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)

## Tip Sheet: Inclusive Practices

In Rhode Island, all children and their families are valued and welcomed as full members of our communities. We respect and celebrate individual difference and strive to create a sense of belonging for each and every child. In early childhood, we understand that high-quality early care and education programs serve as the essential foundation for the development of all young children, including those with disabilities and developmental delays. We recognize that successful inclusion requires not only placement in a high-quality environment but intentional teaching practices designed to assist each child in reaching the goals of the *Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS)*. Effective, evidence-based instruction embedded within the daily classroom routine and individualized to meet each child's needs is critical for these goals. Rhode Island understands the importance of partnerships among schools, families, and specialists; and of partnerships that promote high expectations, maximize each child's potential, and lead to positive outcomes. We discourage the notion that children with disabilities need to be "ready" to be included, and we welcome our responsibility as educators to be ready to support *all* of our young learners.

In Rhode Island, we recognize *Rhode Island's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers and Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Educators (WKC)*s as the essential skills and knowledge for educators who work with young children. These WKC's define what early childhood educators need to know, understand, and be able to do to promote young children's healthy development and learning. Rhode Island is committed to supporting educators in reaching the competencies through formal study, experience, professional development, and technical assistance. Finally, Rhode Island recognizes federal and state laws and regulations governing the education of individuals with disabilities—including the requirement to support children within the least restrictive environment (LRE)—as well as more than 30 years of research demonstrating the benefits of inclusive education not only for young children with disabilities but for all children, families, and communities.



High-quality inclusive early childhood education can occur within a variety of public and private programs, including public schools, state-funded PreK, Head Start programs, family child care, and other early care and education programs. While the classroom teacher serves as the primary teacher for all students, the early childhood special educator or related service provider provides supplemental and specialized instruction for children who need it. It is important to recognize that special education is a service or set of services and not a place. The service provided by the special educator is individualized to meet each child's needs but likely

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includes consultation/coaching for the classroom teacher as well any necessary direct instruction embedded into classroom activities. Ensuring that early childhood programs have adequate time to communicate and collaborate with their early childhood special education/early intervention partners is critical to the success of the inclusive experiences.

**At the classroom level**, the indicators of high-quality inclusive practice—*access, participation, and supports*—are recognized in daily practice. Teachers understand and celebrate differences. They welcome all children, promote positive relationships and supportive learning environments, and recognize individual capacities and potential. Teachers partner with families and other professionals to design individualized instruction, monitor progress, and provide necessary supports. They organize the learning environment and materials to ensure they are accessible to all learners. Teachers provide all children with access to the universal curriculum, adapt activities, and embed instructional strategies so that all children are able to actively participate. In addition, teachers provide the necessary structure to support children with disabilities in communication, transitions between classroom activities, peer interactions, and play.

**At the program level**, high-quality early care and education programs welcome children and families of all abilities, and exclusionary practices of any kind are not permitted. Programs make adjustments and accommodations, and they collaborate with key partners to ensure the success of children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive classroom settings. They make staff available for routinely scheduled consultations, Individual Education Program (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) team meetings, and trainings that support both the children and their families. Practices that support children with disabilities are embedded into structural standards, the curriculum framework, child assessment, and family engagement.

High-quality early care and education programs share high expectations for each child to reach his or her full potential. These shared expectations lead to the selection of appropriate goals; and they support the efforts of families, practitioners, individuals, and organizations to advocate for high-quality inclusion. These programs develop a program philosophy that includes beliefs about inclusive education and ensures their educators operate under an aligning set of assumptions, values, and beliefs about the most effective ways to support young children with disabilities and their families. Each program's inclusive philosophy should shape practices aimed at ensuring that young children with disabilities and their families are full members of the early childhood community and that children have multiple opportunities to learn, develop, and form positive relationships. The principle of natural proportions—which is the inclusion of children with disabilities in proportion to their presence in the general population—guides the design of the programs.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> DEC/NAEYC. (2009). *Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute. Retrieved from [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)

## Rhode Island's Quality Continuum as It Relates to Inclusive Practices

**The Basic Education Plan:** The BEP ensures that school districts provide all of their students, including preschoolers, with the opportunity and skills necessary to access the systems of developmentally appropriate, targeted, and responsive academic supports and interventions for learning.

**DCYF Licensing:** At the foundational level, DCYF provides protection under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that early care and education programs provide children and adults with disabilities with an equal opportunity to participate in programs and services. DCYF also requires programs to work with their local school district to support young children with disabilities and developmental delays.

**BrightStars:** BrightStars supports the inclusion of children with disabilities and developmental delays in Standard 9: Inclusive Classroom Practices. Beginning at Level 3, programs must have a written program philosophy that supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive/integrated classroom settings. At Level 5, programs must provide evidence of staff release time that ensures staff members' availability to collaborate with IEP/IFSP teams by attending meetings, participating in relevant training, and/or sharing information.

**Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) CECE:** Early childhood programs that meet Rhode Island's highest quality standards demonstrate their commitment to high-quality inclusive early childhood education through practices that promote *access, participation, and supports*. Rather than separating practices for supporting children with disabilities from general practices, programs that meet RIDE CECE Standards for Approval intentionally embed relevant practices into their structural standards as well as program- and classroom-level curriculum, child assessment, and family engagement standards. CECE-approved programs welcome children and families of all abilities. They have a written philosophy statement that includes relevant policies and ensures that exclusionary practices of any kind are not allowed. Policies and practices must also demonstrate how the program supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive classroom settings.

## Rhode Island's Quality Continuum as It Relates to Inclusive Practice

This table describes increasing expectations in the area of inclusive practice as programs advance on the quality continuum. Evidence of increasing program quality begins with foundational DCYF licensing regulations/BEP requirements, moves progressively up through the BrightStars rating system, and culminates with the highest standards for inclusion articulated throughout the RIDE CECE Program Standards for Approval.

Regulations or Standards	Level	Progression of Inclusion Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum	Quality Indicators
BEP Regulations	Program/Classroom	BEP Regulations, 2009 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>G-13-2, Effective Instruction For All Students</li> <li>G-14-1, Academic Supports and Interventions for All Students</li> </ul>	In Development
DCYF Regulations	Program	ADA Compliance Regulation I.A.2.e  Partnerships with School Districts Regulation III.C.3.h  Maintaining Information Regulation VI.H.3.g	Review of outside inspections  Review of program policies and children's files  Review of program policies and children's files
	Classroom	Increased Ratios Regulation III.C.3.g	Review of program policies and observation of practice

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Regulations or Standards	Level	Progression of Inclusion Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum	Quality Indicators
BrightStars Standards	Program	<p>1-, 2-star rating: DCYF licensing compliance or BEP compliance</p> <p>3-, 4-, 5-star rating: Written program philosophy or Head Start compliance</p> <p>5-star rating: Staff release time</p>	<p>3-, 4-, 5-star programs: BrightStars ensures that the program has submitted a written program philosophy, which explains that the program accepts all children of all ability levels. The program shows that it supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive/integrated classroom settings.</p> <p>5-star programs: BrightStars ensures the program has a written policy in place that details release time for staff to collaborate with IEP/IFSP teams by attending meetings, participating in relevant training, and/or sharing information to support children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families.</p>
	Classroom	5-star rating: Staff release time	5-star programs: BrightStars ensures the program has a written policy in place that details release time for staff to collaborate with IEP/IFSP teams by attending meetings, participating in relevant training, and/or sharing information to support children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families.

Regulations or Standards	Level	Progression of Inclusion Expectations as Programs Advance through the Quality Continuum	Quality Indicators
RIDE CECE Program Standards for Approval	Program	Note in particular Standards 5.12 and 5.13. However, program-level expectations for inclusivity are embedded throughout the standards.	Program-level narratives and family and staff handbooks that include required policies and expectations for inclusivity.
	Classroom	Classroom-level expectations for inclusivity are embedded throughout Standards 6, 7, and 8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visit</li> <li>• ECERS<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• CLASS<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale

<sup>4</sup> Classroom Assessment Scoring System

## Resources to Extend Your Learning

- Center for Early Learning Professionals InfoLine: [www.center-elp.org](http://www.center-elp.org)
- Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004: <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home>
- Federal and Rhode Island Special Education Regulations: [www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/SpecialEducationRegulations.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/SpecialEducationRegulations.aspx)
- Rhode Island Early Intervention Program: [www.eohhs.ri.gov/Consumer/ConsumerInformation/Healthcare/PeoplewithSpecialNeedsandDisabilities/Children/EarlyIntervention.aspx](http://www.eohhs.ri.gov/Consumer/ConsumerInformation/Healthcare/PeoplewithSpecialNeedsandDisabilities/Children/EarlyIntervention.aspx)
- Rhode Island Early Childhood Special Education: [www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/EarlyChildhoodSpecialEducation.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/EarlyChildhoodSpecialEducation.aspx)
- Rhode Island Public School Early Childhood Special Education Coordinators: [www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/Early-Childhood/Special-Education/RI%20Public%20School%20Early%20Childhood%20Special%20Education%20Contacts%202014-2015.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/Early-Childhood/Special-Education/RI%20Public%20School%20Early%20Childhood%20Special%20Education%20Contacts%202014-2015.pdf)
- Brief Summary: Fact Sheet of Research on Preschool Inclusion: [www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/Brief%20Inclusion%20Fact%20Sheet%20.pdf](http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/Brief%20Inclusion%20Fact%20Sheet%20.pdf)
- Fact Sheet of Research on Preschool Inclusion: [www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/Inclusion%20Fact%20Sheet%202014.pdf](http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/Inclusion%20Fact%20Sheet%202014.pdf)
- Inclusion for Preschool Children with Disabilities: What We Know and What We Should Be Doing [www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/STRAIN%20PtrYC%20what%20we%20know%20%282%29.pdf](http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/STRAIN%20PtrYC%20what%20we%20know%20%282%29.pdf)
- IDEA Provisions Supporting Preschool Inclusion: [www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/IDEA%20Provisions%20Supporting%20Preschool%20Inclusion.pdf](http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/IDEA%20Provisions%20Supporting%20Preschool%20Inclusion.pdf)
- Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices: [www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices](http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices)
- Measuring the Quality of Inclusion: The Inclusive Classroom Profile: [npdci.fpg.unc.edu/measuring-quality-inclusion-inclusive-classroom-profile](http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/measuring-quality-inclusion-inclusive-classroom-profile)

## APPENDIX A

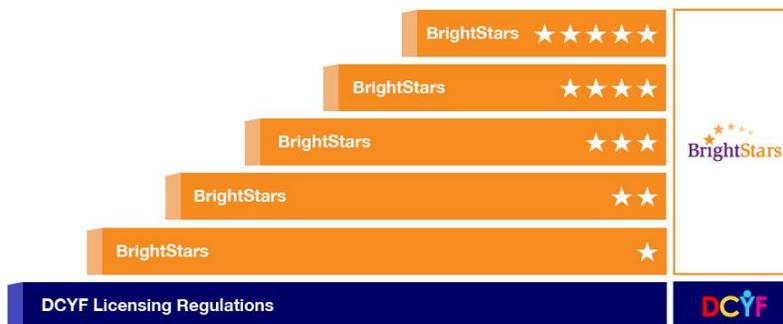
### Center-based Program Quality Continuum



### School-based Program Quality Continuum



### Family Child Care Program Quality Continuum



## APPENDIX B

### RIDE Basic Education Plan (BEP) Regulations, June 2009

#### Chapter 13: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

#### G-13-2. EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS

**G-13-2.1. Standards and Practices for Effective Instruction.** – (a) Each LEA shall implement a set of coherent, organized instructional strategies designed to ensure positive improvements in student learning. Organized strategies shall be based on current research and adjusted according to student progress monitoring and assessment data. These organized strategies shall focus on the needs of all students using strategies for differentiated instruction based on principles of learning, human growth and development; and shall ensure that explicit instruction of reading, writing, speaking and listening is integrated across content areas. The organized strategies shall include specific interventions for students who are not meeting proficiency standards or are at risk for non-promotion or dropping out of school. Similarly, strategies shall be in place to expand and extend learning for students who are proficient on grade level expectations. Each LEA shall develop and implement homework policies that are clear and developmentally appropriate for each grade level.

(b) The *Rhode Island Professional Teaching Standards (RIPTS)* and the *Rhode Island Standards for Educational Leadership* shall be used by the LEA to plan for professional development, provide feedback for improvement, and monitor the delivery of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all students.

(c) Each LEA shall articulate guidelines for effective instruction that will ensure that educators, including educational leaders, develop a sufficient understanding of content, pedagogy, and assessment practices so as to address student learning across grade levels as described in the *Rhode Island Professional Teaching Standards (RIPTS)* and the *Rhode Island Standards for Educational Leadership*. These guidelines shall identify the components and elements of effective instruction to include:

1. Questioning and discussion techniques that address depth of knowledge;
2. Active engagement in learning activities;
3. Different delivery methods to include, but not be limited to, teacher-directed instruction, inquiry-based problem solving, modeling and demonstration, and project-based learning and presentation;
4. Differentiated instruction to address the needs of all students;
5. Grouping of students that allows for individual, small-group, and whole class structures;
6. Reflecting and self assessment regarding learning;
7. Multiple opportunities for cross content learning;
8. Applying concepts and understanding in new contexts;

9. Using an array of learning environments that extend application of knowledge and skills beyond the classroom; and
10. Accessing an array of texts, technology, and materials to support learning.

(d) Each LEA shall design a schedule of instructional time across grades PK-12 that ensures that all students and teachers have multiple opportunities and supports to access the learning goals in the comprehensive program of study.

(e) Each LEA shall have a cohesive system of high quality professional development (see section 15-2.2) that addresses the state and national standards in the content areas, the district designed curriculum, the research-based instructional strategies and practices that focus on all students, assessment practices for monitoring student progress, and implementation of selected programs, texts, and materials with fidelity.

(f) Each LEA shall provide common planning time within and across grades and content areas so that educators address student learning needs, monitor progress, and identify effective instructional practices.

**G-13-2.2. Resources and Materials Aligned to Curriculum.** – (a) Each LEA shall provide the necessary programs, texts, and materials that ensure that students are supported fully in acquiring the knowledge and skills specified in a comprehensive program of study. Programs, texts, and materials shall be in sufficient quantity to ensure that students can engage in and complete all curriculum activities.

(b) Each LEA shall ensure that the selection of programs, texts, and materials are:

1. Aligned to the GLEs and GSEs and LEA curriculum design;
2. Research-based and current;
3. Selected with input from educators representing all grade levels and courses; and
4. Universally designed to ensure access for all students.

## Chapter 14: Safe, Healthy, and Supportive Learning Environment

**G-14-1. ACADEMIC SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS.** – (a) Each LEA shall ensure that all students have the opportunity and skills necessary to access the systems of developmentally appropriate, targeted, and responsive academic supports and interventions for learning that they need to become college, work, and career ready. These supports and interventions enable the LEA to address the following functions: *Foster Safe and Supportive Environments for Students and Staff, Engage Families and the Community, and Use Information for Planning and Accountability.*

(b) Each LEA shall provide supplemental academic supports and interventions that are evidence-based in the areas of literacy, numeracy, science, social studies, history, and speech and English language acquisition. Such

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supplemental academic supports and interventions shall be provided to students in K-12 when students are determined, through an LEA systematic problem-solving approach, to be at risk of not successfully achieving proficiency on state assessments and/or Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements.

(c) The academic supports and interventions of each LEA shall:

- Coordinate with and supplement instruction in the guaranteed and viable comprehensive program of study;
- Provide sufficient instructional time to enable all students to achieve proficiency in the GLEs or GSEs or alternate GSEs in any area required for graduation, as well as to meet LEA-established standards for promotion;
- Apply uniform entrance and exit criteria;
- Address cultural and linguistic needs of students; and
- Include student progress monitoring through the LEA systematic problem-solving approach.

(d) For each student receiving or discontinuing an academic support or intervention, the LEA shall provide written notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) that must:

- Describe the academic support or intervention being delivered or discontinued;
- Describe the systematic problem-solving approach used to identify the student's need for support or intervention;
- Describe the exit criteria for the support or intervention; and
- Be provided in the parent's native language.

(e) Each LEA shall provide for students who are homebound, hospitalized, or capable of only intermittent school attendance for medical reasons , a sufficient degree of academic support, including tutoring if necessary, to allow for regular academic progress in the student's program of study. These supports shall commence when the LEA becomes aware that the student's sustained or intermittent absence will result in a significant regression in academic progress.

**G-14-1.1. Supports and Interventions through Systematic Problem Solving.** – (a) Each LEA shall provide student-centered, data-driven supports and interventions utilizing a problem-solving process, building on the foundation of a guaranteed and viable comprehensive program of study. This process shall be comprehensive and systematic and focused at the individual student level in order to provide access to supports and interventions as may be necessary at the classroom, school, and district levels to ensure that each student is provided with supports and interventions designed to enable that student to achieve academic success. The LEA shall provide a full continuum of universal, targeted, and intensive supports that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, research-based, and designed to respond to student needs in compliance with the specific requirements for support services described herein.

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(b) Each LEA shall develop school and district level data-based, decision-making teams. These teams shall review comprehensive assessment data to develop, evaluate and modify academic instruction and support services. Descriptions of such teams shall include the purpose of each team, team composition, and the frequency with which each team meets.

(c) The LEA's problem-solving approach to determine appropriate levels of support and intervention must include identification of student-based issues (specifying both target and actual performance), identification of supports and interventions developed to address those issues, measurements designed to evaluate responsiveness, and the identification of responsible LEA staff.

**G-14-1.2. Personalized Learning Environment.** -- Each LEA shall ensure that schools will implement strategies for creating personalized environments to optimize learning. Each LEA shall:

- Establish PK-12 protocols for communication and record sharing that will facilitate successful transition from grade to grade, school to school, district to district, and high school to postsecondary opportunities;
- Establish structures by which every student is assigned a responsible adult, in addition to a school counselor (where applicable), who is knowledgeable about that student's academic, career, and social and personal goals; and
- Establish protocols for the development, implementation and student-based monitoring of Individual Learning Plans.

**G-14-1.3. Comprehensive Guidance.** -- Each LEA shall establish and maintain a Comprehensive School Counseling Guidance (CSC) Program, including guidance and counseling services, available to all students in grades K-12. Each LEA shall ensure that the CSC Guidance program shall:

- Be developed and delivered in accordance with the *Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Programs*;
- Support each student in meeting the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards in the academic, career, and personal and social domains;
- Be a coordinated effort among the professional counseling staff and the rest of the educational community; and
- Include services to be provided to students at each developmental stage and specify how the services will be provided to all students.

**G-14-1.4. Multiple Opportunities for Achieving and Exceeding Proficiency Standards.** -- Each LEA shall provide all students with multiple learning opportunities that support meeting proficiency. Each LEA shall:

- Establish pathways that represent a set of courses and other programs within its guaranteed and viable comprehensive course of study and that provide students with the means to meet their academic and

career goals. These pathways shall include Advanced Placement (AP) courses, career and technical programs, dual enrollment, and opportunities for extended applied learning (e.g., internships, job shadowing, and community service learning);

- Establish processes to ensure that all pathways maintain high expectations for all students and provide all students with the same level of academic rigor;
- Establish, or provide access to, before and after school programs that provide additional supports and interventions for attaining proficiency; and
- Establish alternate programs for graduation for youth at-risk, including those students entering LEAs as latecomers. These alternate programs will require a comprehensive and coordinated effort between the LEA and community agencies and must include strategies differing from traditional programs in their use of material, instructional approaches, or concentration of time on skills. Alternate programs may include, but are not limited to, on-line or correspondence courses, day and evening academies, workforce training programs, and adult education.

## APPENDIX C

### DCYF Child Care Program Regulations for Licensure, November 2013

#### SECTION THREE – LICENSING STANDARDS

##### I. PHYSICAL SPACE AND SAFETY

###### A. Physical Facilities

1. The indoor and outdoor facilities foster the children's growth and development through a variety of opportunities for safe exploration and learning.
2. Prior to licensing, physical facilities:
  - a. comply with building, fire, health and sanitation codes;
  - b. provide evidence that the program and water source are lead free or lead safe;
  - c. provide evidence that the program is asbestos free or asbestos safe;
  - d. have an acceptable score on a radon test within the last three years; and
  - e. can accommodate children and adults with disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).
3. Plans for the erection of new buildings or playgrounds or for the renovation or modification of existing buildings or playgrounds are submitted to the Department for review prior to the start of construction.
4. The program's exterior doors are locked.
  - a. The program's designated main entrance has a doorbell, buzzer, keypad, swipe card or other comparable means to control entry.
  - b. Unlocked doors are monitored at all times by a staff person.
5. Stairways used by children have a second railing placed at the appropriate height for the children's use.

##### III. ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING

###### C. Staff/Child Ratio and Maximum Group Size

1. Programs maintain the following staff to child ratios and maximum group requirements:

AGE	STAFF   CHILD RATIO	MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE
6 weeks to 18 months	1 to 4	8
18 months to 3 years	1 to 6	12
3 years	1 to 9	18
4 years	1 to 10	20
5 years	1 to 12	24

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2. The only exception allowed to the above staff/child ratio is during naptime, where there can be one staff per group of napping children. There are no exceptions to the above requirements for infants (six weeks to eighteen months).
3. Additional considerations:
  - a. Maximum group size is determined by the number of children cared for by a caregiver or group of caregivers in a classroom or designated area.
  - b. Physical barriers divide groups and completely separate the children.
  - c. Groups may be combined for special activities such as outdoor play, meals, sleeping or field trips.
  - d. Staff/child ratios are increased to one to four for swimming and other potentially dangerous activities.
  - e. When staff members are functioning in administrative supervisory or support services roles, they do not count in the staff/child ratio.
  - f. Programs serving mixed age groupings meet the staff/child ratio and group size requirements for the younger age grouping.
  - g. Programs may implement more stringent staff-child ratios if providing inclusive settings for children with disabilities and developmental delays, in consideration of the IEPs or IFSPs for students and/or other special learning, health or social and emotional needs of the children in each classroom.
  - h. If the child has an IEP or IFSP, the program works with the school district to support the child's IEP/IFSP.

### VI. ADMINISTRATION

- H. An appropriate system of record-keeping is established; hard copy and/or electronic files are maintained and space is provided within the program for the files to be maintained.
  1. Provision is made for the protection of files and reports as well as for ensuring confidentiality.
  2. An individual file is maintained for each staff. This file contains:
    - a. personal data sheet or application containing the staff's name, age, home address, phone, education and work experience;
    - b. job description;
    - c. fingerprinting documentation, results of criminal record check and clearance of agency activity;
    - d. notarized employment history and criminal record affidavits;
    - e. documentation of employment history verification;
    - f. health documents;
    - g. attendance record;

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- h. staff performance evaluations;
  - i. documentation of qualifications;
  - j. staff training plan and documentation of participation in staff training; and
  - k. statement at time of leaving employment.
3. A file is maintained on each child. Parents/guardians have access to their child's file, which is kept current and includes:
- a. an application form completed by the parent/guardian containing the child's name, birth date, parent/guardian's name, current address and phone number and work or school address and phone number;
  - b. date of enrollment;
  - c. health record, which includes immunization data and physician's record of pre-admission examination;
  - d. pertinent social information on the child;
  - e. written authorization from the parent/guardian for emergency medical treatment;
  - f. written reports of injuries, accidents or illness occurring while the child is in the program and the treatment given;
  - g. information pertaining to the child's progress, growth and development, including IEP information, as relevant;
  - h. written authorization from the parent/guardian for the child to participate in and be transported for field trips and other special activities that are not part of the program's daily program; and
  - i. names of individuals to whom the child may be released.

## APPENDIX D

BrightStars – Child Care Center and Preschool Quality Framework, November 2013

### Domain 5: Early Learning & Development

#### Standard 9: Inclusive Classroom Practices

The program **supports the inclusion** of children with disabilities and developmental delays.

Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
<b>Licensing Compliance</b> Community-based Programs  _____ <b>OR</b> _____ <b>BEP Compliance</b> Public Schools	<b>Licensing Compliance</b> Community-based Programs  _____ <b>OR</b> _____ <b>BEP Compliance</b> Public Schools	<b>Written Program Philosophy</b> The program supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive/ integrate classroom settings  _____ <b>OR</b> _____ Compliance with Head Start Performance Standards	<b>Written Program Philosophy</b>  _____ <b>OR</b> _____ Compliance with Head Start Performance Standards	<b>Written Program Philosophy</b>  _____ <b>OR</b> _____ Compliance with Head Start Performance Standards  _____ <b>+</b> _____ <b>Staff Release Time</b> Programs make staff available to collaborate with IEP/IFSP teams by attending meetings, participating in relevant training, and/or sharing information (e.g., child assessment results) to support children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families

## Domain 5: Early Learning & Development

### Standard 7: Inclusive Classroom Practices

The program **supports the inclusion** of children with disabilities and developmental delays.

Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Licensing Compliance	Licensing Compliance	<b>Written Program Philosophy</b> The program supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive/integrate classroom settings	Written Program Philosophy	<b>Written Program Philosophy</b> <hr/> + <hr/> <b>Staff Release Time</b> Educators are available to collaborate with IEP/IFSP teams by attending meetings, participating in relevant training, and/or sharing information (e.g., child assessment results) to support children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families

## APPENDIX E

### RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education (CECE) Program Standards for Approval of Preschool and Kindergarten Programs, 2013

The following CECE Standards (5.12 and 5.13) define required policies and practices that support inclusivity and prohibit exclusion. Additional expectations for inclusivity are embedded throughout the CECE Standards for Approval, including Standard 2 (Health, Safety and Nutrition), Standard 3 (Enrollment and Staffing), Standard 6 (Curriculum), Standard 7 (Assessment), and Standard 8 (Family Engagement).

#### Standards 5.12 – 5.13

- 5.12 The program shall welcome children and families of all abilities, modify the program, make reasonable accommodations, and collaborate with key partners to **support all children**. The program shall have a written plan which describes the process for supporting all children including, but not limited to, those with developmental delays and disabilities, mental health diagnosis and behavioral challenges.
- 5.13 The program shall have a **written philosophy statement** describing the educational beliefs and practices which inform the implementation of a Comprehensive Early Childhood education program, including:
- Philosophies, beliefs, and theories of central aspects of child development and learning child development, learning, child assessment and family engagement that inform the program’s practices;
  - How the community served is reflected;
  - How all children are welcomed into the program and exclusionary practices of any kind are not allowed (principle of “zero reject”);
  - How the program supports children and families of all abilities, modifies the program, makes reasonable accommodations, and collaborates with key partners to support children with developmental delays and disabilities in inclusive/integrated classroom settings;
  - How each child’s individual interests, individual learning goals, and individual learning styles are supported, including English language learners as well as children with developmental disabilities and delays in inclusive settings;
  - How the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool and/or the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten are used to inform program practices, as well as the additional components of quality curriculum; context, process, teaching and facilitating;
  - The programs commitment to using assessment practices that reflect research and best practices;

## Tip Sheet: Inclusive Practices

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- Purposes for collecting child assessment;
- The program's commitment to engaging families in the education of their child;
- The program's commitment to ongoing program improvement; and
- The program's commitment to supporting staff and welcoming volunteers.