

Understanding Alaska's Early Education Program Standards and 0.5 ADM Approval: Teaching and Learning Environment Family Engagement

February 8, 2024

Jayne McFarland, Education Specialist II
Division of Innovation and Education Excellence



Norms

Chat:

- Use the chat for technical difficulties.
- Links to resources will be posted here.

Verbal Questions:

- Will be addressed at designated times throughout the presentation.

Q&A:

- Write questions in the Q&A.
- This allows us to track questions and build a bank of FAQ.





The Early Learning Team

Division of Innovation and Education Excellence

Early Learning Administrator

Becky Moren (becky.moren@alaska.gov)

Pre-Elementary Assessments / Head Start

Supanika Ordonez (Supanika.ordonez@alaska.gov)

DWEEP Grant / DWEEP-ADM Application

Jayne McFarland (jayne.mcfarland@alaska.gov)

Pre-Elementary Grant / Pre-Elementary Approval / 619

Kristen Spencer (kristen.spencer@alaska.gov)

earlylearning@alaska.gov



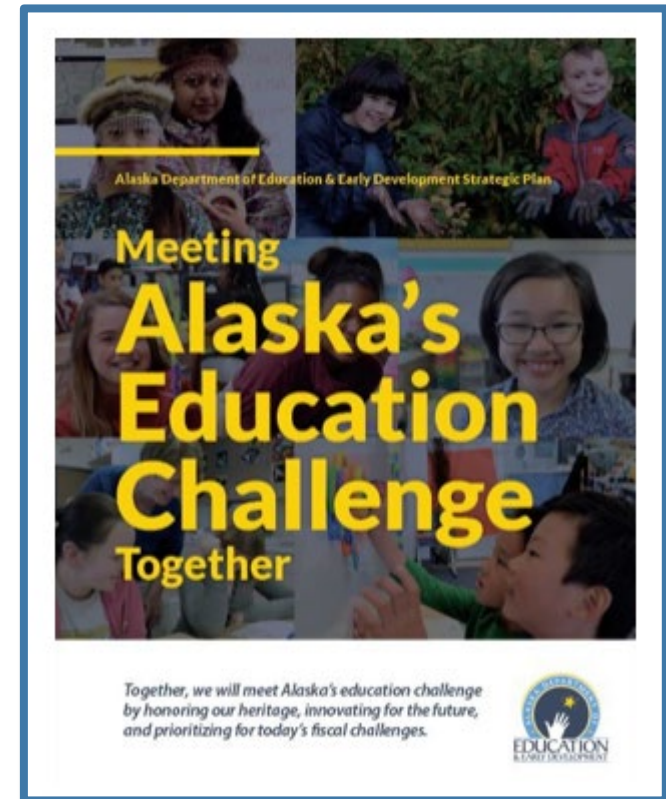
Mission, Vision, and Purpose

Mission	Vision	Purpose
An excellent education for every student every day.	All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them. - Alaska Statute 14.03.015	DEED exists to provide information, resources, and leadership to support an excellent education for every student every day.

Strategic Priorities: Alaska's Education Challenge

Five Shared Priorities:

1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.



education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge

Purpose and Objectives

Purpose

Discuss Alaska's Early Education Program Standards to familiarize the requirements of the 2024-2025 District-Wide Early Education Program Approval and 0.5 ADM Funding application (DWEEP-ADM) and to plan for documentation of high-quality early education programming.

Objectives

- Participants will be familiar with all nine sections of Alaska's Early Education Program Standards.
- Participants will have a framework for collecting documentation necessary for the DWEEP-ADM application.

Agenda

- General Information & Updates
- Key Points of the Standards
- Section I:
Teaching and the Learning Environment
- Section VI:
Family Engagement





Alaska Reads

[#akreads](#)

House Bill 114, Chapter 40, SLA 2022
Passed May, 2022

Alaska Early Education Program Standards

Established to recognize high quality early education programs in school districts.

Effective July 1, 2023

Grant Program

Established to provide resources to districts that are not adequately served by current early learning programs.

Now Accepting Applications

0.5 ADM Funding

Allocated for programs that already meet the AK Early Education Program Standards.

Now Accepting Applications

Alaska Early Education Program Standards

**I. Teaching and
Learning
Environment
February**

**II. Social and
Emotional
Support
December**

**III. Curricula
November**

**IV. Screening and
Developmental
Evaluation
January**

**V. Assessment
October**

**VI. Family
Engagement
February**

**VII. Dual
Language
Learners
November**

**VIII. Coaching
December**

**IX. Continuous
Quality
Improvement
October**





Application for District-Wide Early Education Program Grant

(DWEEP Grant)

Purpose:

Provide funding for the development or improvement of a district-wide early education program.

Grant Cycle: 3 years

2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027

Technical Assistance:

[Webinar recording](#)

Due Date:

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Notice of Intent to Award:

March 18, 2024

[DWEEP Grant Application Form](#)



Early Education Standards Workbook

Purpose:

- Provide a user-friendly method for viewing and referring to the standards.
- Provide an organizational tool as Districts develop High Quality programming.
- Provide an organizational tool as Districts collect documentation of their early education program.

<https://education.alaska.gov/forms/05-24-023.xlsx>



A	B	C
1	I. Teaching and the Learning Environment	
2	Team/Department/Person Responsible:	
3	Narrative:	Documentation:
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		



	A	B	C	D
1	VI. Family Engagement			
2	Team/Department/Person Responsible:			
3		Narrative:	Documentation:	
4	(VI.a) The program structures education and child development services to recognize a parent or guardian's role as their child's first, most important, and lifelong educators. The program includes and engages parents or guardians in their child's education. Family culture and values are reflected in the classroom environment and curriculum.			
5	(VI.b.i) The program builds responsive, respectful relationships with families			
6	(VI.b.ii) The program learns about a child and family's cultural background, traditional values, and heritage language, and integrates this background into the curriculum.			
7	(VI.b.iii) The program uses cultural values and traditional knowledge to plan the classroom environment.			
8	(VI.b.iv) The program provides curriculum that integrates traditional knowledge and that is organized around relevant place-based themes.			
9	(VI.c) The program offers opportunities for a child's parent, guardian, or other family member to be involved in the program's education services.			
10	(VI.d.i) The program implements policies to ensure the program's settings are open to a parent or guardian during program hours and family members have opportunities to volunteer and share their knowledge with the class or during group activities.			
11	(VI.d.ii) The program implements policies to ensure teachers and parents regularly communicate with the intent that the child's family is well-informed about the child's routines, activities, and behavior in the program.			
12	(VI.d.iii) The program implements policies to ensure teachers and parents discuss the purposes of, and the results from, screenings and assessments and discuss the child's progress.			
13	(VI.d.iii.1) The program held a Meet and Greet event held before the first day of class for a school year.			





FY25 Application for District-Wide Early Education Program Approval AND 0.5 ADM/Formula Funding (DWEEP-ADM Application)

Submit Intent to Apply at:

<https://education.alaska.gov/dweep-adm-intent>

Technical Assistance Webinars:

February 13, 12:00 p.m.

February 21, 10:00 a.m.

Registration required. Click the links to register.

For more information go to
education.alaska.gov/earlylearning or email
earlylearning@alaska.gov



Summary Statement

Early education programs must **provide high-quality early education** and child development services, including for children with disabilities, that promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth for later success in school. An early education program must embed responsive and effective **teacher-child interactions**. All programs must implement an **evidence-based curriculum**, and **screening and assessment** procedures that support individualization and growth in the areas of development described in the **State of Alaska Early Learning Guidelines** (incorporated by reference in 4 AAC 60.170) and support **family engagement** in children's learning and development. A program must deliver **developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate** approaches to learning science, physical skills, and creative arts that include **language, literacy, mathematics, and social and emotional development**.



Key Points:

Teacher-child interactions

Family engagement

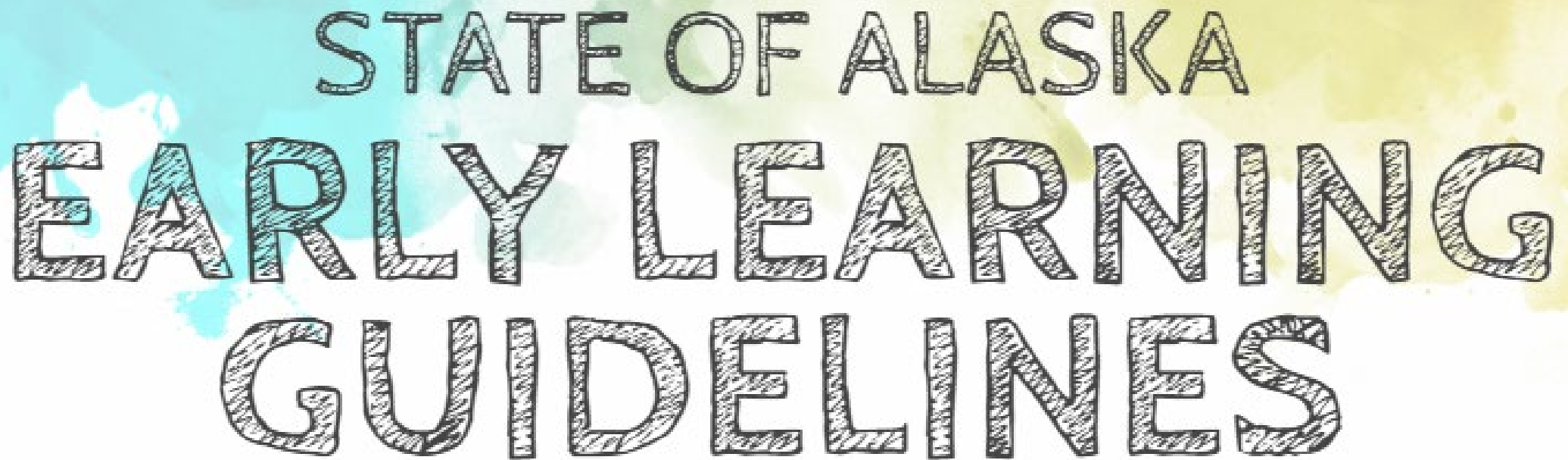
Evidence-based methods

- Developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate
- Curriculum, assessment and screening

Five developmental domains

- Physical well-being and development
- Social and emotional development
- Approaches to learning
- General knowledge and cognition
- Communication, language and literacy

Create systems and procedures



STATE OF ALASKA EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES

www.alaskaelg.org

- Updated 2019
- Target ages 0 to 60+ months
- 5 developmental domains
- Includes goals and suggested activities

Section I: Teaching and the Learning Environment



Preamble to Section I

An early education program must ensure teachers and other relevant staff provide **responsive care, effective teaching**, and an **organized learning environment** that promotes healthy development and children's skill growth **aligned with the State of Alaska Early Learning Guidelines, including for children with disabilities.**

HINT: The Summary and Preamble may be helpful when developing a program's philosophy statement.

Physical Space

Requirements

- Indoor and outdoor spaces
- Accessible for children with disabilities
- Accommodations provided for children with disabilities as needed
- Developmentally appropriate equipment, materials, supplies, and spaces
 - Consider size, safety, cognitive level, interests

Examples of Evidence

- Photos of all learning spaces
- Photos of adaptive equipment
- Record of purchase of materials or equipment
- Classroom assessment scores. For example:
 - ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale)
 - TPOT (Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool).

REQUIREMENT: Redact all personally identifiable student data from application materials.

Students

Requirements

- Program regularly serves 4- and 5-year-olds
- A child may not be excluded from the program on the basis on disability.

(See Standards Section IV, Evaluation)

Examples of Evidence

- Attendance records
- Program materials defining the ages or birthday cut-offs of students
- Program materials describing acceptance policy

HINT: Combined age classrooms are acceptable
Examples: 3- to 5-year-old classroom. Hybrid Pre-elementary-Kindergarten Combination.

NOTE: 3-year-olds may not be reported in the 0.5 ADM count.



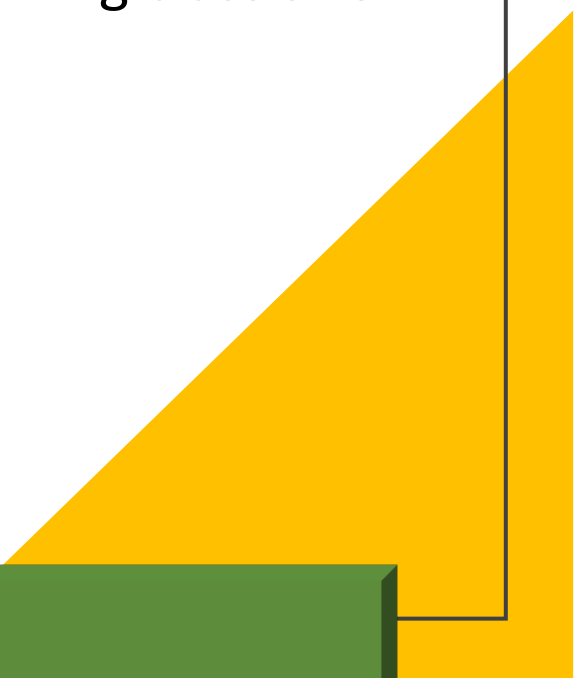
Sessions

Requirements

- Teacher to student ratio
 - If one session per day: Maximum of 20 students to two adults
 - If two sessions per day: Maximum of 17 students to two adults
- Frequency
 - Five days per week
 - At least two hours per day

Examples of Evidence

- Attendance records
- Program materials defining class size
- Publicly posted hours



REQUIREMENT: There must be two adults in the classroom.
Two teachers OR a teacher and a teaching assistant.



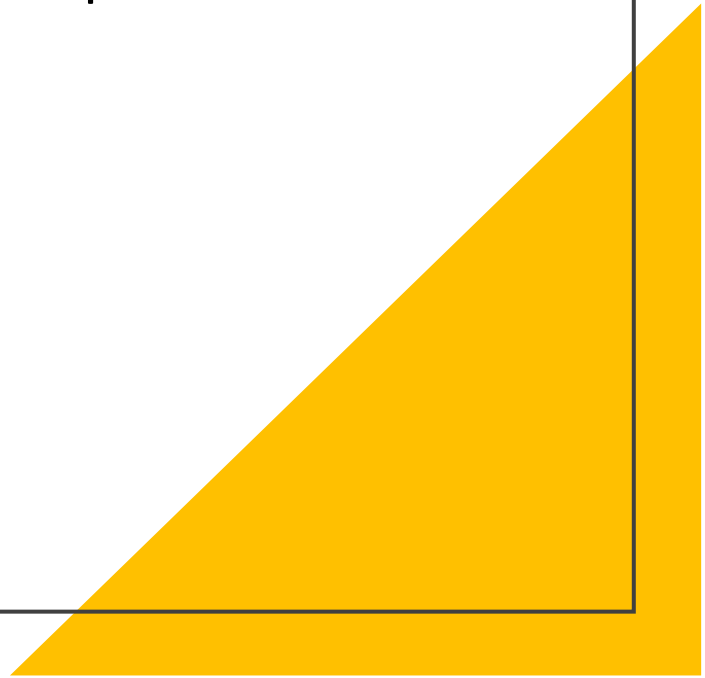
Organization

Requirements

- Developmentally appropriate
 - Schedules
 - Lesson Plans

Examples of Evidence

- Daily/weekly schedules
- Daily/weekly lesson plans





Variety of Experiences

Requirements

- Indoor AND outdoor activities
- Child-initiated AND teacher-directed activities
- Quiet AND active learning activities
- Individual, small group AND large group activities

Examples of Evidence

- Daily/weekly schedules
- Daily/weekly lesson plans
- Photos of all learning spaces

HINT: A district's comprehensive curriculum should offer a wide variety of experiences.



Experiences continued

Requirements

- Learning
 - Preschool Science of Reading activities are required daily (see Standards Section III, Curriculum)
- Motor experiences
 - Intentional movement integrated into curricular activities and daily routines
 - Physical activity may NOT be used as a reward or punishment

Examples of Evidence

- Daily/weekly schedules
- Daily/weekly lesson plans
- Link to a curriculum activity guide
- Policy statement

REQUIREMENT: Opportunities for choice, play, exploration, and experimentation among learning, sensory, and motor experiences.

Routines

Requirements

Snack and/or mealtime

Create a routine that

- Fosters communication and conversation
- Facilitates staff-child interactions

How: Encouraged to use family style meals

Transitions between activities

Create routines that

- Target developmental skills.
- Target learning concepts.

How: songs, chants, student jobs, rituals, visual organizers/reminders

Examples of Evidence

- List of transition activities: songs, routines, etc
- Photos of transition activities: visual schedules, visual organizers
- Written procedures



HINT: Make every part of the day a learning experience.

Section VI: Family Engagement



Recognize the importance of family

Requirements

- Opportunities for family members to be involved
- Volunteer opportunities
- Open door policy during program hours

Examples of Evidence

- Family events: fliers, invitations, calendars, photos
- Volunteers: fliers, sign up sheets, procedure documents, training documents
- Open door: procedure documents, Preschool handbook

Work to build relationship with families

Requirements

- Seek to learn about families
 - Cultural backgrounds
 - Traditional values
 - Heritage language
- Integrate this knowledge into the
 - Classroom environment
 - Curriculum
- Communicate regularly about
 - Classroom routines, activities and behavior

Examples of Evidence

- Intake questionnaires
- Questionnaire templates used on home visits
- Classroom photos
- Lesson plans: place-based thematic units, activities specific to community
- Newsletters, correspondence
- Evidence of using communication apps. For example: parent letter explaining the app

Partner with families: *HOLD EDUCATIONAL DISCUSSIONS*

Requirements

Topics:

- Purpose and results of
 - screening
 - assessment
- Curricula and instructional materials
- Progress

Opportunities:

- Meet and Greet BEFORE the first day of class
- Offer two home visits, minimum
 - One BEFORE the first day of class
- Offer two Family-Teacher conferences, minimum

Examples of Evidence

Topics:

- Planning sheet or agenda template
- Policy documents or Parent Handbook
- Informational fliers
- Progress report template

Opportunities:

- Annual calendar
- Invitations, sign up sheet, advertisement, newsletters
- Policy documents or Parent Handbook

HINT: One home visit may be held in conjunction with family-teacher conferences

Develop policy to ensure sustainability

Requirements

- *“A program must implement policies to ensure”:*
 - Settings are open to family during program hours
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Regular communication between teachers and parents
 - Opportunities for educational discussions

Evidence

Evidence will take the form of written policy statements presented in a preschool handbook or other public document(s)

DEFINITION:

Policy: The set of established expectations for specific behavior and norms within a school. A District’s internal procedures will determine if board approval is required for a policy.



Resources

- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. (2023, July 1). Alaska Early Education Program Standards. Retrieved from [education.alaska.gov/akreads/AK Reads EEP-Standards-SBOA-APPROVED.pdf \(alaska.gov\)](https://education.alaska.gov/akreads/AK_Reads_EEP-Standards-SBOA-APPROVED.pdf)
- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Early Learning Programs Page. education.alaska.gov/earlylearning
- Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2023, September 5). The Importance of Schedules and routines. Retrieved from eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/importance-schedules-routines
- Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2023, October 30). Schedules and Routines in-service suite. [Schedules and Routines | ECLKC \(hhs.gov\)](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/importance-schedules-routines)

Webinar Series: Understanding Alaska's Early Education Program Standards and 0.5 ADM Approval



Recorded October 26

Assessment
Continuous Quality Improvement

Recorded November 9

Dual Language Learners
Curriculum

Recorded December 14

Social and Emotional Support
Coaching

Recorded January 11

Screening and Developmental Evaluation

Recorded February 8

Family Engagement
Teaching and Learning Environment

Intended audience: All Districts with an Early Education Program.

Purpose: Build quality early education programs.

Understand District-Wide Early Education Program Approval (0.5 ADM).

Posted: Recordings and Slides are posted on [AK Reads Webinar Schedules](#) by date.

Contact Jayne.mcfarland@alaska.gov for more information.

Contact Information

Jayne McFarland, Education Specialist II

jayne.mcfarland@alaska.gov

(907) 269-7974

