For Preschool 3 YEARS OLD TO KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT AGE

Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

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Preface

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) provide reasonable expectations for children's growth, development, and learning in the preschool years. When used as part of the curriculum, the IELDS provide guidance to teachers in early childhood programs to create and sustain developmentally appropriate experiences for young children that will strengthen their intellectual dispositions and support their continuing success as learners and students. The age-appropriate benchmarks in the IELDS enable educators to reflect upon and evaluate the experiences they provide for all preschool children.

There are cautions to consider when implementing the IELDS. They are meant to be used to enhance planning for preschool children, to enrich play-based curricular practices, and to support the growth of each child to his or her fullest potential. They are not meant to push down curriculum and expectations from higher grades. The IELDS are research-based, so they identify expectations that are just right for preschool children.

As teachers in early childhood programs implement the IELDS, they can be guided by Dr. Lilian Katz, internationally known early childhood leader, expert, and professor emeritus at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her reminder to expand our thinking beyond just the IELDS themselves and also consider "standards of experiences" is an important message for all.

Dr. Katz writes:

> *As we think about standards, I suggest we ask ourselves:* ***"What are the standards of experience that we want all of our children to have?"*** *Below is a very preliminary list of some important "standards of experiences" that should be provided for all young children in all programs.*
>
> *Young children should frequently have the following experiences:*
>
> - *Being intellectually engaged, absorbed, challenged.*
> - *Having confidence in their own intellectual powers and their own questions.*
> - *Being engaged in extended interactions (e.g., conversations, discussions, exchanges of views, arguments, planning).*
> - *Being involved in sustained investigations of aspects of their own environment worthy of their interest, knowledge, understanding.*
> - *Taking initiative in a range of activities and accepting responsibility for what is accomplished.*
> - *Knowing the satisfaction that can come from overcoming obstacles and setbacks and solving problems.*
> - *Helping others to find out things and to understand them better.*

- *Making suggestions to others and expressing appreciation of others' efforts and accomplishments.*
- *Applying their developing basic literacy and numeracy skills in purposeful ways.*
- *Feelings of belonging to a group of their peers.*

The list is derived from general consideration of the kinds of experiences that all children should have much of the time in our educational settings. It is based on philosophical commitments as well as the best available empirical evidence about young children's learning and development.

If the focus of program evaluation and assessment is on "outcomes" such as those indicated by test scores, then evaluators and assessors would very likely emphasize the "drill and practice" of phonemics, or rhyming, or various kinds of counting, or introductory arithmetic. While in and of themselves such experiences are not necessarily harmful to young children, they overlook the kinds of experiences that are most likely to strengthen and support young children's intellectual dispositions and their innate thirst for better, fuller, and deeper understanding of their own experiences. A curriculum or teaching method focused on academic goals emphasizes the acquisition of bits of knowledge and overlooks the centrality of understanding *as an educational goal.* ***After all, literacy and numeracy skills are not ends in themselves but basic tools that can and should be applied in the quest for understanding.*** *In other words, children should be helped to acquire academic skills in the service of their intellectual dispositions and not at their expense.*

Dr. Lilian Katz, professor emeritus
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
November 2012

Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to introduce to you the revised Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards 2013 (IELDS), formerly known as the Illinois Early Learning Standards. The purpose of the updated IELDS is to assist the Illinois early childhood community in providing high-quality programs and services for children age 3 years to kindergarten enrollment (as defined in Section 10-20-2012 of the School Code).

The standards are organized to parallel content in the Illinois State Goals for Learning (see 23 Illinois Administrative Code 1. Appendix D found on the Illinois State Board of Education Web site, **www.isbe.net**). The revised standards also demonstrate alignment to the Illinois Kindergarten Standards and the Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten. The Kindergarten Common Core Language Standards are found at **www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf** and the Kindergarten Common Core Mathematics are found at **www.corestandards.org/Math/Content/K/introduction**.

The original Illinois Early Learning Standards document, published in 2002, was developed by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) with assistance from the Chicago Public Schools, DeKalb Community Unit School District, Indian Prairie School District, and Rockford Public School District.

The development of the revised IELDS includes additional assistance from the Erikson Institute in Chicago as well as eight content-area experts who are nationally and internationally known leaders in the field of early childhood education.

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards are broad statements that provide teachers with reasonable expectations for children's development in the preschool years. Based on the broad Illinois State Goals and Standards (see Illinois Administrative Code, Section 235, Appendix A), this resource includes Preschool Benchmarks and Performance Descriptors for most Learning Standards. It is critical to remember that while these standards represent an alignment with the K-12 standards, the IELDS are not a "push-down" of the curriculum; rather, they are a developmentally appropriate set of goals and objectives for young children. Early learners must develop basic skills, understandings, and attitudes toward learning before they can be successful in the K-12 curriculum.

The challenge when describing children's development in various domains is to accurately convey the degree to which development and learning are interconnected across and within domains. An integrated approach to curriculum recognizes that content areas of instruction are naturally interrelated, as they are in real life experiences. Curriculum should reflect a conceptual organization that helps all children make good sense of their experiences.

The revised IELDS were reviewed and critiqued by early childhood professionals from public and private schools, Head Start, colleges, and community-based early care and learning programs. Recommendations from these stakeholders and users were considered and incorporated into the revisions. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) acknowledges and is grateful for the very thoughtful and knowledgeable comments that have helped shape these standards.

Sincerely,

Cindy Zumwalt
Division Administrator
Early Childhood Education
Illinois State Board of Education

Development
of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (2013) are a revised version of the original Illinois Early Learning Standards published in 2002. They have been updated to align with the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Children Birth to Age 3, with the Illinois Kindergarten Standards, and with the Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten.

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) were developed in collaboration with key Illinois stakeholders in the preschool education field. Early childhood leaders, educators, practitioners, and policy experts came together to ensure the creation of an accessible, user-friendly document, presenting *evidence-based* and up-to-date information on preschool development for *parents and family members, teachers, early childhood professionals, and policy makers*. The goal is to ensure a document that aligns with and integrates into the complex system of services for children in multiple preschool settings in the state and fulfills the ultimate goals of improving program quality and strengthening the current systems. The IELDS are designed to be used with children from ages 3 to 5 or those in the two years before their kindergarten year. The term *preschool* is used rather than *prekindergarten* to recognize the inclusion of these two years instead of only addressing the one year before kindergarten. In addition, the term *teacher* is used to refer to any adult who works with preschool children in any early childhood setting.

From January to May 2013, a statewide field test of the IELDS was conducted. More than 300 participants reviewed and implemented the standards in their preschool environments and provided feedback through focus group webinars. The field test participants included teachers and administrators from state funded Preschool for All programs, Head Start, center-based child care, family child care, special education, faith-based preschools, and park district programs. The comments and recommendations from the field test were reviewed by a work group and, when appropriate, incorporated into this final document. This collaborative approach in finalizing the IELDS allowed for important decisions to be made by a diverse range of professionals representing different areas of the field.

Purposes
of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

As with the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Children Birth to Age 3, there are multiple purposes for the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. The IELDS:

1. **Create a foundational understanding** for families and teachers of what children from 3 through 5 years of age are expected to know and do across multiple developmental domains.

2. **Improve the quality of care and learning** through more intentional and appropriate practices to support development from 3 through 5 years of age.

3. **Provide support for a qualified workforce.**

4. **Enhance the state's early childhood services** by aligning preschool standards with existing guidelines or standards for younger and older children.

5. **Serve as a resource** for those involved in developing and implementing policies for children from 3 through 5 years of age.

Uses
of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards are designed to provide a cohesive analysis of children's development with common expectations and common language. They are broad statements that provide teachers with useful information and direction that are needed as part of the daily early childhood environment. Preschool educators can refer to the IELDS when determining appropriate expectations for preschoolers, when planning for individual children's needs, when implementing a *play-based curriculum*, and when using *authentic observational assessment procedures*.

There are appropriate and inappropriate uses of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. The IELDS are not intended to be a *curriculum* or *assessment tool* and are not an exhaustive resource or checklist for children's development.

Terminology
in the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

The primary goal of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) is to provide a comprehensive resource of reasonable expectations for the development of children in the preschool years (ages 3 to 5) for all teachers across the state of Illinois. All domains or areas of development are included so the focus is on the whole child.

Throughout the IELDS, terms are used to name the various components of the standards and to describe the ways that preschool children show what they know and can do related to specific benchmarks in each domain. It is important that teachers using the IELDS become familiar with this terminology so they can understand the standards and use them in ways that are best for children. In this way, no matter in what community or part of the state a teacher is working with young children, s/he will be looking at the standards with the same understanding and application as teachers elsewhere. This consistency of understanding makes application of the standards much more reliable from teacher to teacher.

The following terms describe the major components or are used in the Introduction, Development, Purposes, and Guiding Principles sections of the IELDS. In addition, action words that are used throughout the preschool benchmarks (across all domains) are defined.

Major Components of the IELDS

Common Core State Standards Alignment

In the learning areas/domains of Language Arts and Mathematics, the IELDS Preschool Benchmarks have been aligned with the kindergarten standards in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative for Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade. These standards were developed in a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in partnership with Achieve (NAEYC, 2012, p. 2). They are referred to as “the Common Core” and have been adopted by 45 states, including Illinois.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

These are recommended practices adopted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children for the care and education of young children from birth through age 8 (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Such practices address three key concerns:

1. What is known about child development and learning specific to different age groups from birth through age 8?
2. What is known about each child as an individual?
3. What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which children live?

When a Learning Standard in the IELDS is determined to be "not applicable," it is because it does not match what is known about what's appropriate for preschool-age children.

Goal

Provides an overview of or general statement about learning in the learning area/domain. Many of the goals in the IELDS are consistent and aligned for all grade levels from preschool through high school in the state of Illinois, but some goals in the IELDS are only appropriate for the preschool level.

Learning Areas/Domains

Reflect universal aspects of child development or subject areas for education from preschool through high school. There are eight learning areas/domains in the IELDS. Most are consistent and aligned for all grade levels from preschool through high school. In the state of Illinois, these subject areas are Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Development and Health, The Arts, English Language Learner Home Language Development, and Social/Emotional Development.

Learning Standard

Defines what students/children should know and be able to do. Like the state goals, many learning standards in the IELDS are aligned for all grade levels, preschool through high school. However, not all learning standards are considered developmentally appropriate for the preschool years and are identified as "Not applicable." In some instances, the learning standards have been revised so they are appropriate only for the preschool level.

Performance Descriptors

Give examples that describe small steps of progress that children may demonstrate as they work toward preschool benchmarks. They are not intended to replace the IELDS nor are they all-inclusive. They are a resource for voluntary use at the local level to enable teachers to better recognize age-appropriate guidelines and expectations for preschool children. There are three levels of performance descriptors in the IELDS: Exploring (the first level where a child is just beginning to show some of the aspects of the benchmark), Developing (the second level where the child is beginning to show more understanding or related skills), and Building (the description of how a child demonstrates the benchmark as it is written). A child does not have to master or perform every descriptor to show mastery of the preschool benchmark. And, a child may demonstrate his or her capabilities related to a specific preschool benchmark in a different way than described in the performance descriptors.

Preschool Benchmarks

Provide teachers with specific ways that preschool children demonstrate learning standards. The benchmarks are unique to preschool children. Learning standards deemed "not applicable" do not have identified preschool benchmarks.

Terms Used in the Introduction, Development, Purposes, and Guiding Principles Sections of the IELDS

Adaptation or Accommodation
A change in the implementation of a curricular strategy that best meets the needs of a child.

Appropriate Curriculum
Curricular practices that match the age group of the children as well as adapt to meet individual needs and respect cultural differences.

Assessment Tool
The IELDS is not an assessment tool. There are many commercially developed research-based checklists and locally designed materials that teachers can use in observational assessment practices to determine how each child is learning and growing across multiple domains. It is important for teachers to make sure that the assessment tool they are using is aligned with the IELDS.

Authentic Observational Assessment Procedures
Assessments based on teachers observing children in everyday activities including play, daily routines, and large- and small-group times. Teachers determine best ways to document their observations and relate them back to the developmental expectations or the IELDS.

Challenging Areas
The capabilities or skills that are more difficult for a child or that s/he has to work hard on in order to accomplish them.

Challenging Experiences
Experiences that are at the edge of a child's capabilities but not overly frustrating or overwhelming.

Checklist for Children's Development
The IELDS is not a checklist for children's development. It is a resource for preschool teachers in the state of Illinois to define reasonable, agreed-upon expectations for preschool children. Teachers may use research-based checklists that have been aligned to the IELDS for assessment purposes.

Child-Initiated Activities
Activities that a child independently chooses to do and determines how to proceed.

Child's Individuality
The unique characteristics about a child, such as personality, learning style, health issues, family and cultural background, interests, strengths, and challenges.

Construct Understanding
As children play and explore, they figure out how things work and come to conclusions for themselves that they continue to test and refine.

Curriculum
"Curriculum is everything that goes on in a program from the moment a child arrives until she leaves. Teachers plan, implement, observe, reflect, and make adjustments based on individual children's needs and the needs of the group. Curriculum is an ongoing process that requires teachers to think about child development, to observe how the children in their classroom are learning and growing, and to make hundreds of decisions about the best ways to help them reach their full potential." (Gronlund, 2013, p. 31)

Developmental Delay or Disability
A significant lag in a child's development identified by specialists through formal assessment procedures.

Dynamic Interaction of Areas of Development
Development in one domain influences development in other domains. As children demonstrate what they know and can do, they show their skills and capabilities in integrated ways rather than in isolation.

Evidence-based
Educational practices based on research that supports their effectiveness.

Exhaustive Resource
The IELDS is not an exhaustive resource. The document does not capture every single aspect of child development in the preschool years. Rather, it identifies the significant benchmarks in multiple domains that the state of Illinois has deemed appropriate for preschool teachers to incorporate into the curriculum for young children.

Growth Patterns
Identified trends in children's development of skills and capabilities in various domains and in accomplishment of benchmarks.

High Expectations
Expectations that are appropriate for leading the development of young children and help teachers determine goals for planning.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)
A legal document that identifies the delay or disability that qualifies a child for special education services, the type of services to be provided, the goals for such services, and any accommodations needed to assist a child.

Intentional Practices
Teaching with purpose, with goals in mind for the group of children as well as for each individual child, and being planful in implementing those goals in a variety of ways in a preschool program.

Parents or Family Members
The primary caregivers of the child in his or her home setting.

Play
Opportunities for children to explore, investigate, and discover things about their world and themselves. Play requires an interesting, well-organized environment and ample time for children to get deeply engaged. Teachers act as facilitators and coaches as children play.

Play-based Curriculum
Curricular practices that incorporate a significant portion of the day for children to play with materials and with other children while teachers facilitate and guide the play so it is beneficial and full of learning opportunities for the children. A planned and organized environment is an important part of play-based curriculum with interesting and engaging materials and clear purposes for their use (e.g., dress-up clothes for dramatic play, blocks for building, art materials for creating).

Prekindergarten
A program that serves children in the year before their kindergarten year.

Preschool
A program that serves children from ages 3 to 5 or in the two years before their kindergarten year.

Proficiency or Mastery
Being very good at or accomplishing the skills or application of skills identified in a benchmark.

Programmatic Goals
The overall goals a preschool has for the children who attend (e.g., to love learning, to get along with others, to gain preschool skills in all domains).

Range of Skills and Competencies
The levels or strengths and weaknesses of children's performance in various domains.

Reasonable Expectations
Expectations that are appropriate for the age of the children. The IELDS standards and benchmarks were designed and reviewed by nationally recognized content experts.

Scaffolding or Assistance
The help or support a teacher (or a peer) gives to a child as s/he engages in a challenging experience that is not quite in his or her range of competency.

Strengths
The capabilities or skills that are easy for a child or that s/he does very well.

Teacher-initiated Activities
Activities that the teacher has chosen, designed, or invited children's participation in and/or leads.

Teachers, Early Childhood Professionals
Any adult who works with preschool children in any type of early childhood program or setting.

Work Collaboratively with Families
To join in partnership with families determining mutual goals that are in the child's best interests.

Action Words Used Throughout the Preschool Benchmarks

Begin to
To take initial steps or actions or demonstrate something inconsistently.

Compare
To examine or consider something (an object, a person, an idea, etc.) for similarities and differences.

Demonstrate
To show through actions and/or words understanding of a concept or ability to perform a skill.

Describe
To tell about something in words (an object, a person, an experience, etc.).

Develop
To become more capable at a skill, to add more detail to a verbally expressed idea, to create something with a beginning point and add to it.

Differentiate
To determine what is not the same through actions and/or words.

Discuss
To talk with others.

Engage
To become involved in or take part in an activity of some sort.

Exhibit
To demonstrate understanding or capability to others through words and/or actions.

Explore or Experiment With
To interact with a set of materials or items to discover their characteristics and possibilities, to try things out through trial and error, or to test a particular hypothesis.

Express
To communicate with others through facial expressions, gestures, words, and/or actions.

Identify
To verbally name, label, or, in some cases, to point to or act upon showing understanding of an expressed question to distinguish certain items.

Name
To verbally identify or label.

Participate
To join others in an activity, conversation, or discussion.

Recite
To say something that has a set pattern, such as the alphabet or the counting order of numbers.

Recognize
To show understanding of distinctive items, such as numerals, letters, or shapes by naming, identifying, grouping, touching, and/or pointing to them.

Show
To demonstrate understanding of a concept or ability to perform a skill through actions and/or words.

Understand
To comprehend the meaning of a concept or term and use words or actions accordingly to demonstrate such comprehension.

Guiding Principles

Early learning and development are multidimensional. Developmental domains are highly interrelated.

Development in one domain influences development in other domains. For example, a child's language skills affect his or her ability to engage in social interactions. Therefore, developmental domains cannot be considered in isolation from each other. The ***dynamic interaction of all areas of development*** must be considered. Standards and preschool benchmarks listed for each domain could also be cited in different domains.

Young children are capable and competent.

All children are potentially capable of positive developmental outcomes. Regardless of children's backgrounds and experiences, teachers are intentional in matching goals and experiences to children's learning and development ***and*** in providing ***challenging experiences*** to promote each child's progress and interest. There should be ***high expectations*** for all young children so that teachers help them to reach their fullest potential.

Children are individuals who develop at different rates.

Each child is unique. Each grows and develops skills and competencies at his or her own pace. Teachers get to know each child well and differentiate their curricular planning to recognize the rate of development for each child in each domain. Some children may have an identified ***developmental delay or disability*** that may require teachers to adapt the expectations set out in the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and to make accommodations in experiences. Goals set for children who have an ***Individualized Education Plan (IEP)*** reflect these ***adaptations and accommodations*** so that individual children can be supported as they work toward particular preschool benchmarks.

Children will exhibit a range of skills and competencies in any domain of development.

All children within an age group should not be expected to arrive at each preschool benchmark at the same time or to show ***mastery*** to the same degree. Children may show strengths in some domains and be more challenged in others. Teachers recognize each child's individuality and plan curricular strategies that support the child as a learner by building on his or her strengths and providing ***scaffolding and support*** in more ***challenging areas***. There is no expectation that every child will master every preschool benchmark. Teachers work with children to meet them where they are and help them continue to make small steps of progress toward each preschool benchmark. There also is recognition that some children may go beyond mastery of the preschool expectations. Teachers plan for challenging experiences for these children to help them continue to grow, develop, and learn.

Knowledge of how children grow and develop—together with expectations that are consistent with growth patterns—are essential to develop, implement, and maximize the benefits of educational experiences for children.

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards provide ***reasonable expectations*** for preschool children (ages 3 to 5). They give teachers a common language—defining what they can expect preschool children to know and be able to do within the context of child growth and development. With this knowledge, teachers can make sound decisions about ***appropriate curriculum*** for the group and for individual children.

Young children learn through active exploration of their environment in child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities.

Early childhood teachers recognize that children's ***play*** is a highly supportive context for development and learning. The early childhood environment should provide opportunities for children to explore materials, engage in activities, and interact with peers and adults to ***construct understanding*** of the world around them. There should, therefore, be a balance of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities to maximize learning. Teachers act as guides and facilitators most of the time, carefully planning the environment and helping children explore and play in productive, meaningful ways. They incorporate the preschool benchmarks into all play areas, daily routines, and teacher-led activities.

Families are the primary caregivers and educators of young children.

Teachers communicate in a variety of ongoing ways with families to inform them of ***programmatic goals***, experiences that are best provided for preschool children, and expectations for their performance by the end of the preschool years. Teachers and families ***work collaboratively*** to ensure that children are provided optimal learning experiences.

Adapted from Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks for Children in Preschool Programs (1999).

How to Navigate

1. **Learning Area/Domain** is listed at the top of each page. There are eight learning areas comprising eight sections of the document. The "English Language Learner Home Language Development" learning area has replaced the "Foreign Language" learning area. Each learning area has a brief introduction.

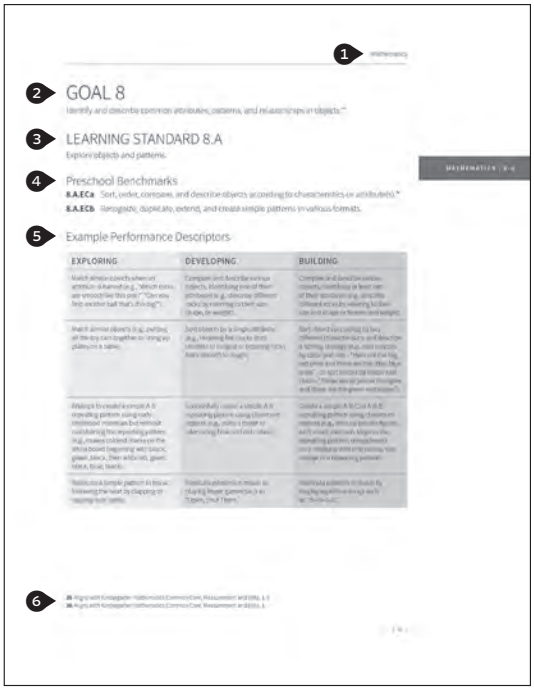
2. **Goal** provides an overview of the subject or learning area. Goals are the most general statements about learning. Some of the goals are consistent and aligned for all grade levels, prekindergarten through high school. Others are more specific to the preschool years.

3. **Learning Standards** are aligned under each goal and define what students/children should know, understand, and be able to do. Like the goals, the learning standard remains the same for most of the document for all grade levels, prekindergarten through high school, while some are more specific to the preschool years.

4. **Preschool Benchmarks** provide teachers with specific ways that preschool children demonstrate learning standards. Learning standards deemed "not applicable" do not have preschool benchmarks.

5. **Example Performance Descriptors** give examples that describe small steps of progress that children may demonstrate as they work toward preschool benchmarks. There are three levels of performance descriptors: Exploring, Developing, and Building. A child does not have to master or perform every descriptor to show mastery of the preschool benchmark.

6. **Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Alignment** in the Language Arts and Mathematics domains shows the CCSS kindergarten standards that the IELDS goals, standards, and benchmarks build toward.



For Preschool 3 YEARS OLD TO KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT AGE

Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

Language Arts

In her family child care home, Rosalie cares for children of multiple ages with different language capabilities. She knows that conversations with all of the children are important to develop their listening skills, their vocabulary, and their ability to express themselves. So, she talks with them often and listens carefully to how they communicate. For her preschool children, she listens as they tell her about things that happened at home the night before or plans their family has for a trip to Grandma's house or a visit to the park. She asks questions to encourage them to expand on their descriptions and tell her more, and she invites them to ask questions of each other. She finds books related to their interests and reads them to the children, then encourages them to look at the books on their own, noticing the pictures and describing what they see or retelling the stories in their own words. She provides writing materials for her 3- to 4-year-olds in a variety of play areas (yet safely away from the fingers and mouths of her mobile infants and young toddlers). She loves it when a child brings her a grocery list full of scribbles or a letter telling her, "It says 'I love you.'" She reads the scribbles and marks with the child, validating his or her efforts to communicate through writing. And, she communicates with her families to let them know just what to expect of their preschoolers as they learn more about how language works.

The domain of Language Arts includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing**

Preschool children's language skills are some of the best predictors of reading success in first and second grade. Their use of language to listen and speak, as well as their understanding of reading and writing, will be critical to their academic success in the early elementary grades. Effective language and literacy instruction for young children go hand in hand. Young children are learning how to communicate what they want their listeners to know, how to play with language, how to interact with books, how to understand and tell stories, and how to begin to write as a form of communication. Language arts instruction for preschool children involves helping children gain the skills they need to function socially and in their daily lives. While teachers plan for engaging language and literacy experiences, they are also flexible, with room for spontaneity as children joyfully express themselves, explore books and stories, experiment with writing, and listen and learn together.

Preschool teachers pay attention to each child's capabilities in language arts, recognizing that while there are developmental sequences, each child will demonstrate her capabilities in her own ways and at her own pace. Therefore, teachers are ever ready to provide individualized assistance and support to the child when needed. In fact, many of the preschool benchmarks in the Language Arts domain are written with the expectation that children will receive such assistance from their teacher. Preschool teachers recognize that mastery of listening, speaking, reading, or writing is not something to expect of preschoolers; rather, skills and understandings are emerging and need teacher support to develop.

Effective preschool teachers help young children develop both their expressive and receptive language. Teachers model the correct use of grammar and the pragmatics of communicating with

others. They help children learn to speak clearly and correctly, to carry on conversations, and to ask questions. They are attentive to the child's home language (if it is not English) and turn to the English Language Learner Home Language Development domain of the IELDS to best address the child's overall language needs.

Meaningful and interesting experiences are provided in preschool classrooms that introduce new vocabulary words to children and help expand their abilities to express themselves. "There is a direct correlation between vocabulary development and academic success, so students' acquisition of new words should be emphasized from the start" (Resnick & Sow, 2009, p. 73).

Preschool children need
- many opportunities to hear and use a variety of new and interesting words,
- encouragement to express themselves in more than a single sentence, and
- time to tell stories and give explanations that involve the use of several sentences.

Preschool teachers also help children learn to listen. Adult language modeling is important! Teachers model how to use language to request information, how to appropriately acknowledge the communication and conversation attempts of others, and how to provide appropriate answers and responses to others' requests for information. To develop language, preschool children need to be immersed in an environment rich in language. They need opportunities to engage in frequent conversations—to talk and listen with responsive adults and with their peers.

Helping children attend to the sounds of language is another important part of language development. Preschool teachers plan engaging ways to develop phonological and phonemic awareness, important precursors to phonics. Phonological awareness is the general ability to attend to the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that every spoken word can be conceived as a sequence of individual sounds. Preschool teachers plan activities that develop skills such as noticing words that sound alike, rhyming, and counting syllables in words. Many activities used to develop phonemic awareness can also be used to introduce letters of the alphabet, help children recognize the relationship between spoken and written words, and build the understanding that sounds are represented by letters that are combined to form words. Singing songs, chanting rhymes and poems, and playing with the sounds of words, syllables, and letters are beginning steps toward phonemic awareness.

One of the best ways to help children naturally develop phonemic awareness and other emergent reading skills is through the use of children's books. Many books lend themselves to playing with the sounds of language. They are rich with rhymes, alliteration, and predictable patterns such as *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* (Martin, 1989). Children love playing with language through listening to and repeating rhymes, inventing nonsense words, and saying silly sentences.

In order for children to view reading as a skill they desire, they need to hear the language of print in all its forms and be exposed to a variety of texts. They need to laugh at books such as *Clifford the Big Red Dog* (Bridwell, 1995), learn interesting facts about animals in informational picture books such as *What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?* (Jenkins & Page, 2003), and enjoy reciting rhymes in stories such as "Little Miss Muffet" and other examples of alliterative and rhyming verse. Preschool teachers offer book-sharing experiences with individual children and in small and large groups. They discuss books with children, helping them to learn more about authors and illustrators and building their reading comprehension by identifying key events and talking about characters and settings. In such discussions, they help children make personal connections with books,

comparing and contrasting stories or informational texts to their own lives. They set up a library area and provide books in other play areas so children can look at books alone and with others and can use them to enhance their play (e.g., looking at a book about buildings when building with blocks).

Understanding concepts of books and print is critical to the development of subsequent reading abilities. For example, young children need to know the orientation of the book (that books are read from front to back and from left to right) and how to turn the pages with care. With more exposure, they begin to see that pictures and words convey meaning and that letters are combined to form words that are separated by spaces. High-quality preschool environments offer children plenty of good books and time for reading and discussing them with adults and peers. In addition, preschool teachers recognize that each child experiments with different aspects of the reading process. Very few preschool children are able to identify unfamiliar words. Instead, they imitate what they have seen their family members and teachers do. For example, they hold a book and retell a story from the pictures. The story they tell may be closely related to the content of the book or it may not. Some preschool children figure out that the print on the page is important and consistent and may follow along by tracing over words with their fingers. It is important that preschool teachers accept and celebrate these legitimate stages in emergent reading and recognize that "picture reading" is an appropriate form of "real reading" for preschool children.

Encouraging children's emergent writing efforts is one way to provide young children with opportunities to apply their growing knowledge of print concepts, alphabet letters, and sounds. Preschool teachers surround children with print and call attention to letters and words in the environment. They also make a special effort to help children learn to recognize their names and to develop the prerequisite understandings and fine-motor skills necessary for writing them. They provide plenty of meaningful writing opportunities so that children experiment with their writing skills. And again, they celebrate whatever efforts each child makes to express him or herself through writing. They let preschool children know that their scribbles, their pretend letters, and their invented spellings are okay. In fact, these beginning attempts are important milestones in the literacy journey.

All children need to feel confident about their growing understandings and abilities in using and understanding language and in emergent reading and writing. In other words, they need to be in a preschool program where the climate is conducive to exploring language, print, and books; where they feel accepted and encouraged to express themselves and to take risks in their initial attempts at reading, writing, and spelling; and where they feel both challenged and supported as they strive to increase their skills and abilities.

GOAL 1

Demonstrate increasing competence in oral communication (listening and speaking).

LEARNING STANDARD 1.A

Demonstrate understanding through age-appropriate responses.[1]

Preschool Benchmarks

1.A.ECa Follow simple one-, two- and three-step directions.

1.A.ECb Respond appropriately to questions from others.

1.A.ECc Provide comments relevant to the context.

1.A.ECd Identify emotions from facial expressions and body language.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Perform one-step directions stated orally (e.g., "Throw your paper towel in the trash can.").	Perform two-step directions stated orally (e.g., "Get your coats on and line up to go outside.").	Perform three-step directions stated orally (e.g., "Put your paper in your cubby, wash your hands, and come sit on the rug.").
Answer simple questions stated orally with a simple reply (e.g., "yes," "no").	Respond to simple questions stated orally with appropriate actions (e.g., "Did you remember to wash your hands?" and the child goes to the sink and washes hands).	Respond to simple questions stated orally with appropriate actions and comments (e.g., "Did you remember to wash your hands?" and the child says "Oh, I forgot!" and goes to the sink and washes hands).
Make one comment that is related to the topic of the conversation or discussion (e.g., "I have a dog, too.").	Make more than one comment related to the topic of the conversation or discussion (e.g., "I have a dog, too. His name is Champ.").	Make comments and ask questions that are related to the topic of the conversation or discussion (e.g., "I have a dog, too. His name is Champ. What's your dog's name?").
Look at a person's face or body language and ask how s/he feels (e.g., "What's wrong with her, teacher? Did she get hurt?").	Look at a person's face to determine how they feel (e.g., "She looks mad.").	Look at a person's body language to determine how they are feeling (e.g., "He's sitting there all by himself. I think he's sad, teacher.").

1 Aligns with the Kindergarten Common Core, Speaking and Listening 2-3.

LEARNING STANDARD 1.B

Communicate effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.[2]

Preschool Benchmarks

1.B.ECa Use language for a variety of purposes.

1.B.ECb With teacher assistance, participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners (e.g., peers and adults in both small and large groups) about age-appropriate topics and texts.

1.B.ECc Continue a conversation through two or more exchanges.

1.B.ECd Engage in agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening, making eye contact, taking turns speaking).

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Ask for help when needed.	Use language to interact socially with others during various times of the day (e.g., group time, center time, outdoor play, meal time).	Use language to influence the behavior of others (e.g., "That hurt when you pushed into me.").
With teacher assistance, tell something to peers and adults in small- and whole-group situations about age-appropriate topics (e.g., Teacher: "Can you tell us what your idea is?" Child to group in block area: "I want to build a big boat.")	With teacher assistance, converse with peers and adults (with one back-and-forth exchange) in small- and whole-group situations about age-appropriate topics (e.g., Child to another child: "My Grandma lives in Florida. Where does your Grandma live?" Other child: "In Chicago." First child: "Do you go see her there?").	With teacher assistance, converse with peers and adults (with more than one back-and-forth exchange) in small- and whole-group situations about age-appropriate topics (e.g., Teacher: "How many of you played in the snow yesterday?" Child: "I did. I went sledding." Another child: "Me too! I saw you there." First child: "I was with my Dad and sister. Who were you with?" Second child: "My Mom. My Dad was at work. I got really cold." First child: "Me too!").
Use one appropriate conversational skill, such as listening to others, making appropriate eye contact, or taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion (e.g., in the library, yells to friend, "Hey, wanna read this book together? It's my favorite." When friend joins him, he looks at his friend but does all of the talking.).	Use two appropriate conversational skills, such as listening to others, making appropriate eye contact, or taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion (e.g., while pretending to cook in the dramatic play area, child says, "Pretend we're the sisters." Other child says, "I don't want to be a sister. I want to be the Mom." Other child replies without looking at her, "But you have to be the sister. We don't have a Mom." The other child leaves the area.).	Use more than two appropriate conversational skills, such as listening to others, making appropriate eye contact, and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion (e.g., at snack time, talking about seeing the latest "Cars" movie and looking at each other, listening, and taking turns speaking).

2 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Speaking and Listening 1-1a, 1-1b.

LEARNING STANDARD 1.C

Use language to convey information and ideas.[3]

Preschool Benchmarks

1.C.ECa Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with teacher assistance, provide additional detail.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, tell about a favorite toy or other object during a show-and-tell experience or when talking to a teacher at arrival time (e.g., "It's my new stuffed turtle. See, his head goes in and out.").	With teacher assistance, tell about a family experience at home or a special family event (e.g., "It was my baby sister's birthday. We had a cake, and she smooshed it all over her face.").	Share information about a personal experience and, with teacher assistance, provide additional detail (Child: "I'm going to my aunt's house for a barbecue. I hope we have hot dogs." Teacher: "What else do you think you'll have?" Child: "Maybe chips. And popsicles." Teacher: "Do you like popsicles? What flavor?" Child: "I like the orange ones.").

3 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Speaking and Listening 4 and 6.

LEARNING STANDARD 1.D

Speak using conventions of Standard English.[4]

Preschool Benchmarks

1.D.ECa With teacher assistance, use complete sentences in speaking with peers and adults in individual and group situations.

1.D.ECb Speak using age-appropriate conventions of Standard English grammar and usage.

1.D.ECc Understand and use question words in speaking.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, speak in simple sentences that are usually, though not always, grammatically correct.	With teacher assistance, speak in sentences that use regular plural nouns by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes) in speaking.	With teacher assistance, speak in sentences that use an increasing number of pronouns (e.g., she, he, her, him, their, his, our, myself, yourself, herself, mine, me, you), though not always appropriately.
Use negatives (no, not) appropriately.	Add /ed/ to words to indicate past tense (e.g., walk, walked; rain, rained), though not always appropriately, and begin to use past tense negatives (wasn't, weren't), though not always appropriately.	Use irregular verbs (e.g., ate, sang, swam) and nouns (mice, geese), though not always appropriately.
Use one or two of the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with) in speaking.	Use three or four of the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with) in speaking.	Use more than four of the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with) in speaking.
Answer and ask questions that begin with "who" or "what".	Answer and ask questions that begin with "where" or "when".	Answer and ask questions that begin with "who", "what", "where", "when", "why", and "how".

4 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Speaking and Listening 6, Language 1a -2d.

LEARNING STANDARD 1.E

Use increasingly complex phrases, sentences, and vocabulary.[5]

Preschool Benchmarks

1.E.ECa With teacher assistance, begin to use increasingly complex sentences.

1.E.ECb Exhibit curiosity and interest in learning new words heard in conversations and books.

1.E.ECc With teacher assistance, use new words acquired through conversations and book-sharing experiences.

1.E.ECd With teacher assistance, explore word relationships to understand the concepts represented by common categories of words (e.g., food, clothing, vehicles).

1.E.ECe With teacher assistance, use adjectives to describe people, places, and things.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, make sentences more complex by adding modifiers or auxiliary verbs (e.g., "I want the sparkly one." "He was running.").	With teacher assistance, combine two short sentences (e.g., "I have a dog. He can jump.") into one longer sentence ("I have a dog, and he can jump.").	With teacher assistance, use complex sentences to express more complicated relationships (e.g., "When my Mom comes, I'm going to Target.").
With teacher assistance, repeat new words that have been heard aloud (e.g., Child: "What kind of dinosaur is it again?" Teacher: "Tyrannosaurus rex." Child: "Oh yeah, Tyrannosaurus rex.").	Ask questions about unfamiliar words (e.g., "What does ___ mean?").	With teacher assistance, attempt to use new words that have been heard aloud in one's own speaking (e.g., "I saw a gigantic bug outside.").
With teacher assistance, sort objects into categories (e.g., clothing, toys, food) to gain an understanding of the underlying concepts.	With teacher assistance, begin to label sorted categories of objects (e.g., "I put all of the blue blocks together.").	With teacher assistance, label and describe categories of objects (e.g., "These are all the fruits. You can eat them.").
With teacher assistance, use descriptive words to explain how a familiar person, place, or thing looks (e.g., describing a pet or a favorite food).	With teacher assistance, use descriptive words to explain how a familiar person, place, or thing looks and feels (e.g., describing a pet or a favorite food).	With teacher assistance, use descriptive words to explain how a familiar person, place, or thing looks and feels, as well as describing how it sounds, smells, and/or tastes (e.g., describing a pet or a favorite food).

5 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Listening 4, 4a, and 5, Language 4b, 5a-5d, 6.

GOAL 2

Demonstrate understanding and enjoyment of literature.

LEARNING STANDARD 2.A

Demonstrate interest in stories and books.[6]

Preschool Benchmarks

2.A.ECa Engage in book-sharing experiences with purpose and understanding.

2.A.ECb Look at books independently, pretending to read.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Show interest in reading or in written text by enjoying listening to books read aloud.	Show interest in reading or in written text by asking to be read to.	Show interest in reading or in written text by asking the meaning of something that's written.
Make a comment while looking at the pictures in a book.	Describe what they see while looking at the pictures in a book.	Tell a story while looking at the pictures in a book.
Incorporate books into dramatic play, such as reading to a baby doll or stuffed animal.	Incorporate books and other written materials into dramatic play, such as reading from a real or pretend menu.	Incorporate books and other written materials into dramatic play on a regular basis.

6 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Literature 10, Reading Foundational Skills 4.

LEARNING STANDARD 2.B

Recognize key ideas and details in stories.[7]

Preschool Benchmarks

2.B.ECa With teacher assistance, ask and answer questions about books read aloud.

2.B.ECb With teacher assistance, retell familiar stories with three or more key events.

2.B.ECc With teacher assistance, identify main character(s) of the story.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, ask and answer simple questions about a story related to a particular character, action, or picture in the storybook.	With teacher assistance, ask and answer simple questions about a story by describing what happened.	With teacher assistance, ask and answer simple questions about a story by telling how a particular character might feel or predicting what might happen next.
With teacher assistance, use props (e.g., pictures, puppets, flannel pieces) to retell a well-known story with one or two correct details.	With teacher assistance, use props (e.g., pictures, puppets, flannel pieces) to retell a well-known story with more than two correct details.	With teacher assistance, use props (e.g., pictures, puppets, flannel pieces) to retell a well-known story with most of the correct details in the flow of the story.
With teacher assistance, recall something about one main character in the story (e.g., it's a dog; he's red).	With teacher assistance, recall something about more than one main character in the story.	With teacher assistance, recall most of the main character(s) in the story and tell something about them.

7 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Literature 1-4, Reading Informational Text 1-2, 4.

LEARNING STANDARD 2.C

Recognize concepts of books.[8]

Preschool Benchmarks

2.C.ECa Interact with a variety of types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems, rhymes, songs).

2.C.ECb Identify the front and back covers of books and display the correct orientation of books and page-turning skills.

2.C.ECc With teacher assistance, describe the role of an author and illustrator.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Enjoy listening to and pretending to read different types of texts (e.g., picture books and predictable books with repetitive patterns).	Enjoy listening to and pretending to read different types of texts (e.g., simple storybooks).	Enjoy listening to and pretending to read different types of texts (e.g., more complex and lengthy storybooks or books with poems, rhymes, and/or songs).
Hold books with front cover facing up.	Turn pages correctly, moving from front of book to the back.	Look at page on the left then page on the right.
With teacher assistance, begin to show interest when told about the role of an author or illustrator (e.g., sees similarities in Eric Carle books).	With teacher assistance, respond appropriately to questions such as "What do we call the name of the person who writes the book?"	With teacher assistance, respond appropriately to questions such as "What do we call the name of the person who writes the book and the person who draws the pictures?"

8 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Literature 5-6, Reading Informational Text 5-6.

LEARNING STANDARD 2.D

Establish personal connections with books.[9]

Preschool Benchmarks

2.D.ECa With teacher assistance, discuss illustrations in books and make personal connections to the pictures and story.

2.D.ECb With teacher assistance, compare and contrast two stories relating to the same topic.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, talk about the pictures in a book (e.g., describe what they see on each page, tell how the characters look).	With teacher assistance, make personal comments about how the pictures are like something in their lives.	With teacher assistance, make personal comments about how the story is like something in their lives.
With teacher assistance, discuss how the pictures in two books are alike and/or different (e.g., noticing that photographs of real animals are used in one book and drawings are used in another).	With teacher assistance, discuss how the characters in two books are alike and/or different.	With teacher assistance, discuss how the plot, storyline, or actions in two books are alike and/or different.

9 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Informational Text 7, 9-10, Reading Literature 7, 9.

GOAL 3

Demonstrate interest in and understanding of informational text.

LEARNING STANDARD 3.A

Recognize key ideas and details in nonfiction text.[10]

Preschool Benchmarks

3.A.ECa With teacher assistance, ask and answer questions about details in a nonfiction book.

3.A.ECb With teacher assistance, retell detail(s) about main topic in a nonfiction book.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, look at the pictures or text in a nonfiction book.	With teacher assistance, ask and answer simple questions about the pictures or text in a nonfiction book.	With teacher assistance, look at pictures in an informational book to find an answer to a question (e.g., looking to see what a tadpole looks like and how it is different from a frog).
With teacher assistance, identify one important fact in a nonfiction book heard read aloud.	With teacher assistance, identify more than one important fact from a nonfiction book heard read aloud.	With teacher assistance, recall important facts from a nonfiction book heard read aloud.

LEARNING STANDARD 3.B

Recognize features of nonfiction books.[11]

Preschool Benchmarks

3.B.ECa With teacher assistance, identify basic similarities and differences in pictures and information found in two texts on the same topic.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, talk about how the pictures in two books about the same topic are alike and different (e.g., noticing that photographs are used in one book and drawings in another book on the same topic).	With teacher assistance, talk about how the facts in two books about the same topic are alike and different (e.g., in two books about construction vehicles, notice that one includes two kinds of dump trucks).	With teacher assistance, talk about how the pictures and facts in two books about the same topic are alike and different (e.g., in two books about birds, notice that they both have many birds with red beaks and show different kinds of nests).

10 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Informational Text 1-3.
11 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Informational Text 7-9.

GOAL 4

Demonstrate increasing awareness of and competence in emergent reading skills and abilities.

LEARNING STANDARD 4.A

Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.[12]

Preschool Benchmarks

4.A.ECa Recognize the differences between print and pictures.

4.A.ECb Begin to follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.

4.A.ECc Recognize the one-to-one relationship between spoken and written words.

4.A.ECd Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.

4.A.ECe Recognize that letters are grouped to form words.

4.A.ECf Differentiate letters from numerals.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Identify that labels and signs in the classroom are words.	Ask to have words read (e.g., "What does this say?").	Seek out print to gather information (e.g., check the attendance chart to see who is at school today; check the job chart to see whose turn it is to feed the fish).
During shared reading experiences, practice tracking from page to page with the group.	During shared reading experiences, practice tracking print from top to bottom of the page.	During shared reading experiences, practice tracking print from left to right and top to bottom of the page.
Point to one word (e.g., "Can you show me just one word?).	Correctly identify that two words are presented.	Count number of words on a page or in a line of print in a book containing just a few words on the page (e.g., "How many words are on this page? Can you count them?").
Point to a single letter (e.g., "Can you show me just one letter?").	Count number of letters in own name (e.g., "How many letters are in your name? Can you count them?").	Count number of letters in one or more friends' or family members' names (e.g., "How many letters are in this name? Can you count them?").
Distinguish one letter from one numeral.	Distinguish two or three letters from two or three numerals.	Sort more than three letters and numerals into separate groups.

12 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Foundational Skills 1-1c.

LEARNING STANDARD 4.B

Demonstrate an emerging knowledge and understanding of the alphabet.[13]

Preschool Benchmarks

4.B.ECa With teacher assistance, recite the alphabet.

4.B.ECb Recognize and name some upper/lowercase letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name.

4.B.ECc With teacher assistance, match some upper/lowercase letters of the alphabet.

4.B.ECd With teacher assistance, begin to form some letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, sing or chant part of the alphabet with others.	With teacher assistance, sing or chant part of the alphabet alone or with others.	With teacher assistance, sing, chant, or recite the alphabet alone or with others.
Point to and name some letters in own name.	Point to and name most letters in own name.	Point to and name letters in own name and some other upper/ lowercase letters.
With teacher assistance, engage in letter sorting and matching activities (e.g., find two magnetic letters that look exactly the same).	With teacher assistance, engage in letter sorting and matching activities (e.g., from a small container of letters, locate all the m's).	With teacher assistance, engage in letter sorting and matching activities (e.g., locate letters that are and are not in own name).
With teacher assistance, use a small group of letters that represent both upper and lower case (e.g., Ss, Mm, Oo, Pp) to match one upper- and lowercase letter (may be from own name).	With teacher assistance, use a small group of letters that represent both upper and lower case (e.g., Ss, Mm, Oo, Pp) to match two to three upper- and lowercase letters.	With teacher assistance, use a small group of letters that represent both upper and lower case (e.g., Ss, Mm, Oo, Pp) to match more than three upper- and lowercase letters.

13 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Foundational Skills 1d.

LEARNING STANDARD 4.C

Demonstrate an emerging understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).[14]

Preschool Benchmarks

4.C.ECa Recognize that sentences are made up of separate words.

4.C.ECb With teacher assistance, recognize and match words that rhyme.

4.C.ECc Demonstrate ability to segment and blend syllables in words (e.g., "trac/tor, tractor").

4.C.ECd With teacher assistance, isolate and pronounce the initial sounds in words.

4.C.ECe With teacher assistance, blend sounds (phonemes) in one-syllable words (e.g., /c/ /a/ /t/ = cat).

4.C.ECf With teacher assistance, begin to segment sounds (phonemes) in one-syllable words (e.g., cat = /c/ /a/ /t/).

4.C.ECg With teacher assistance, begin to manipulate sounds (phonemes) in words (e.g., changing cat to hat to mat).

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Recognize words forming sentences as s/he dictates to the teacher.	Show awareness of words in a sentence (e.g., clap each word in a sentence).	Indicate the number of words in a sentence (e.g., count each word in a sentence).
With teacher assistance, recite finger plays, chants, rhymes, and poems containing rhyming words.	With teacher assistance, provide rhyming words in songs, poems, or books with a rhyming pattern (e.g., "Jack and Jill went up the _____.").	With teacher assistance, identify rhymes in songs, poems, or books (e.g., "Hey, that sounds like 'whale' – 'pail', 'whale'.").
Provide second syllable for common words when teacher provides the first syllable (e.g., "I am holding a pen___." Child says "cil" to make the word "pencil".).	Show awareness of syllables in a word (e.g., clap each syllable in a word).	Indicate the number of syllables in a word (e.g., count or clap each syllable in a word).
With teacher assistance, respond when called by first sound of his/her name (e.g., "Whose name begins with 'BBBB'?").	With teacher assistance, substitute beginning sound of a word to say a new word or nonsense word (e.g., cat, hat, mat, sat; Heather, weather, meather, seather).	With teacher assistance, identify the first letter in a word or name that s/he is attempting to write (e.g., "What sound does cat begin with?" "KKKK" "Yes, a K does make that sound. So, does a C.")
With teacher assistance, respond when teacher stretches the sounds of his/her name.	With teacher assistance, state word when teacher stretches the sounds (e.g., "Whose turn is it to line up after you? Ssssss-aaaaaammmm." Child says "Sam.")	With teacher assistance, stretch out sounds in words with teacher (e.g., "Let's stretch the sounds to help us write the word 'can'.").

14 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Foundational Skills 1d.

LEARNING STANDARD 4.D

Demonstrate emergent phonics and word-analysis skills.[15]

Preschool Benchmarks

4.D.ECa Recognize own name and common signs and labels in the environment.

4.D.ECb With teacher assistance, demonstrate understanding of the one-to-one correspondence of letters and sounds.

4.D.ECc With teacher assistance, begin to use knowledge of letters and sounds to spell words phonetically.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Identify own first name (e.g., point to own name on cubby and say, "That says Jason!" or find name card at sign-in time).	Recognize environmental print and one or two classmates' names (e.g., road signs from a restaurant or a local store).	Identify labels (e.g., the words posted to identify various centers, objects, and materials) and more than two classmates' names in the classroom.
With teacher assistance, respond to prompts about the sound associated with a specific letter, especially the first letter of his/her name (e.g., "Your name starts with the letter 'm'. Can you remember the sound that this letter makes?").	With teacher assistance, identify the sound of the beginning letter of a word (e.g., "What letter makes the sound you hear at the beginning of the word 'snake'?").	With teacher assistance, identify examples of alliteration (e.g., saying that the words "big blue bouncing ball" all begin with the /b/ sound).
With teacher assistance, identify individual sounds by saying names of classmates that begin with the sound that is made by a specific letter.	With teacher assistance, identify individual sounds through activities such as naming words that begin with the sound that is made by a specific letter.	With teacher assistance, spell words phonetically, using known letter sounds (e.g., "s" for snake, "kt" for cat).

15 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Reading Foundational Skills 3a-3c.

GOAL 5

Demonstrate increasing awareness of and competence in emergent writing skills and abilities.

LEARNING STANDARD 5.A

Demonstrate growing interest and abilities in writing.[16]

Preschool Benchmarks

5.A.ECa Experiment with writing tools and materials.

5.A.ECb Use scribbles, letterlike forms, or letters/words to represent written language.

5.A.ECc With teacher assistance, write own first name using appropriate upper/lowercase letters.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Choose one type of writing material to engage in making marks or scribbles identified as a name.	Choose one or two types of writing materials (e.g., markers, pencils) to engage in making letterlike forms identified as a name.	Use a variety of writing materials (e.g., markers, pencils, crayons, chalk) to attempt to write own name and/or the names of friends and family members.
Make marks or scribbles and identify as writing in play activities, such as developing a grocery list during dramatic play or a sign for a block construction.	Make letterlike forms and identify as writing in play activities, such as developing a grocery list during dramatic play or a sign for a block construction.	Make letters or words in play activities, such as developing a grocery list during dramatic play or a sign for a block construction.
With teacher assistance, make marks or scribbles to represent own name on sign-up charts, drawings, and other pieces of work.	With teacher assistance, make letterlike forms to represent own name on sign-up charts, drawings, and other pieces of work.	With teacher assistance, write increasingly recognizable letters of own name on sign-up charts, drawings, and other pieces of work.
If available, show interest in letters on an electronic keyboard (e.g., computer, iPad).	If available, show interest in letters in own name on an electronic keyboard (e.g., computer, iPad).	If available, and with teacher assistance, locate and type letters in own name on an electronic keyboard (e.g., computer, iPad).

16 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Language 1a.

LEARNING STANDARD 5.B

Use writing to represent ideas and information.[17]

Preschool Benchmarks

5.B.ECa With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to express an opinion about a book or topic.

5.B.ECb With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

5.B.ECc With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to narrate a single event and provide a reaction to what happened.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Contribute personal opinions to be included in group-dictated pieces of writing (e.g., "My favorite food is _____," "I like _____ because _____.").	Contribute factual information to be included in group-dictated pieces of writing (e.g., brainstorm characteristics of a familiar type of animal, food, or vehicle; recall and share true information about a familiar topic).	Contribute to group-dictated stories about a shared experience (e.g., tell about something that happened on a field trip; describe how the dramatic play area was changed into a pet store and new ways the child was able to use that area of the room).
With teacher assistance, draw a picture about a personal event that took place and dictate to the teacher to share information and feelings about it.	With teacher assistance, draw a picture about a personal event that took place and use scribbles and/or letterlike forms to share information and feelings about it.	With teacher assistance, draw a picture about a personal event that took place and use scribbles, letterlike forms, letters, and/or words to share information and feelings about it.
With teacher assistance, participate in making decisions for a group-dictated piece of writing created electronically (e.g., on a computer, iPad, or Smart Board).	With teacher assistance, participate in making decisions for a group-dictated piece of writing in which photographs will be taken to use for illustrations.	With support from the teacher, use electronic means (e.g., a computer, iPad, or Smart Board) to create a piece of writing.

17 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Writing 1-3, 5-6, Speaking and Listening 5.

LEARNING STANDARD 5.C

Use writing to research and share knowledge.[18]

Preschool Benchmarks

5.C.ECa Participate in group projects or units of study designed to learn about a topic of interest.

5.C.ECb With teacher assistance, recall factual information and share that information through drawing, dictation, or writing.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Join in an activity to learn about a topic of interest to the group.	Join in multiple activities to learn about a topic of interest to the group.	Join in multiple activities to learn about a topic of interest to the group and contribute documentation to the study (whether it be drawings, photos, or writing).
With teacher assistance, share through dictation factual information gained from hands-on experiences or written sources.	With teacher assistance, share through drawing factual information gained from hands-on experiences or written sources.	With teacher assistance, share through writing (whether scribbles, letterlike shapes, letters, or words) factual information gained from hands-on experiences or written sources.

18 Aligns with Kindergarten Common Core, Writing 7-8.

Mathematics

Math is a big part of every day in Ms. O'Brien's Preschool for All classroom. She knows that understanding quantity for preschoolers goes far beyond reciting counting words, and she provides many opportunities for children to count in meaningful situations. Each day, the group counts how many children are present and how many are absent, how many steps from the door of their classroom to the playground, and how many plates and napkins are needed to set a table for snacks. They say the counting words in both English and Spanish. She provides many manipulatives that encourage children to use one-to-one correspondence as they sort, categorize, order, and build to create groups of objects and to connect numbers to quantities of objects. Shapes are everywhere in her preschool classroom, and Ms. O'Brien takes advantage of every opportunity she can to name the shapes for the children in both English and Spanish and to encourage them to explore, manipulate, and build with them. The children have also learned to love taking surveys. Ms. O'Brien has created clipboards with Yes/No graphs on them for children to interview each other about favorites. She loves to hear a child ask another, "¿Te gusta helado de chocolate?" ("Do you like chocolate ice cream?") and see him note the answer under the Yes or No column. She makes sure to follow up on the results of his survey and have him present it to the class at large group time. Ms. O'Brien finds it easy to include math goals from the IELDS on her lesson plan for her play areas, daily routines, and group experiences because math is everywhere!

The domain of Mathematics includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Sense of Numbers, Identification of Relationships in Objects, Concepts of Geometry, and Analysis of Data Information**

Young children are natural mathematicians, fascinated by what is "bigger," wanting "more" of their favorite things, and very concerned with whether the distribution of those things is "fair." These kinds of observations of the world are mathematical at their core because they are about quantity and size. Preschool children's experiences of the world are equally affected by ideas about spatial relationships and shape. They explore the concepts of geometry whether they are maneuvering through the living room, building a block tower, or choosing a puzzle piece. Such daily experiences are packed with mathematical concepts that fascinate and challenge young thinkers and can eventually prompt analytical thought, growing precision, and abstraction.

The major mathematical task of early childhood is to coordinate these natural interests and understandings with the beginnings of a useful knowledge of conventional math concepts and skills. Unfortunately, for many children, meaningful mathematical thinking is displaced too early by an emphasis on math "facts" (such as 2 + 2 = 4) and math "procedures" about what to do when. Too many young children learn how to say the counting words up to 20 without being able to successfully count out a set of five objects. While the procedures—such as the order of the count words—must be learned, it is crucial that they be meaningfully connected to things children

understand and care about, such as "how many" children can fit at the play dough table or "how many" slices of apple they can have at lunch.

To effectively build on young children's innate interests in quantity and space and move their thinking in conventional mathematical directions, the most important thing teachers can do is talk with them, helping them "see" the math in the world. When adults provide rich language to mathematical experiences, such as "thicker" or "longer" rather than simply "bigger," children understand that there are many different types of attributes that can be compared and measured. When teachers ask, "How do you know the door looks like a rectangle?" they support children's budding conception of geometric rules, such as a rectangle having four sides. When teachers count with one-to-one correspondence to find out "how many children are in the group today," they demonstrate the use of whole numbers in a way that is very real to children and matters to them. These sorts of interactions, based on experiences that are a natural part of children's everyday lives, are the best way to ensure the development of beginning mathematical understandings that inspire children to keep learning.

The mathematics standards in the IELDS are more detailed and developmentally informed than those in the previous version, reflecting our growing understanding of how children's mathematical thinking develops during early childhood. We hope they will provide a useful guide to the kinds of mathematics experiences preschool children ought to have prior to their kindergarten year.

GOAL 6

Demonstrate and apply a knowledge and sense of numbers, including numeration and operations.[19]

LEARNING STANDARD 6.A

Demonstrate beginning understanding of numbers, number names, and numerals.[20]

Preschool Benchmarks

6.A.ECa Count with understanding and recognize "how many" in small sets up to 5.[21]

6.A.ECb Use subitizing (the rapid and accurate judgment of how many items there are without counting) to identify the number of objects in sets of 4 or less.[22]

6.A.ECc Understand and appropriately use informal or everyday terms that mean zero, such as "none" or "nothing".[23]

6.A.ECd Connect numbers to quantities they represent using physical models and informal representations.[24]

19 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 1-7, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, 1-6.
20 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 1-7.
21 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 4-5.
22 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 4-5.
23 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 3.
24 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 3-4.

6.A.ECe Differentiate numerals from letters and recognize some single-digit written numerals.[25]

6.A.ECf Verbally recite numbers from 1 to 10.[26]

6.A.ECg Be able to say the number after another in the series up to 9 when given a "running start," as in "What comes after one, two, three, four…?".

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Recognize how many there are in a set of 1 or 2 without counting them (e.g., one car or two blue crayons).	Recognize how many there are in a set of 3 without counting them (e.g., three yellow beads).	Recognize how many there are in sets of 4 and 5 when presented in a nonlinear, organized fashion (like a die face).
Point to or move objects around as though to organize without necessarily counting out loud.	Point to or move objects when counting out loud without effectively tracking items counted (may skip items or count items more than once).	Point to or move each object to make sure sure each is counted once and only once when counting in sets up to 5.
Demonstrate an understanding of zero by making a comment such as "Now I don't have any more" when finished with a snack of four crackers.	Demonstrate understanding of none by looking into an empty container and commenting that there is "nothing in there."	Respond to a question about quantity, such as "How many red bears are left?" when none are left by saying: "None."
Confuse numerals and letters, saying number names occasionally when pointing to letters.	Say number names when pointing to numerals (but not letters), even if they don't match.	Correctly identify the numerals 1, 2, and 3.
Say some counting words when "counting."	Recite counting words from 1-10, with 2-4 errors (e.g., skip numbers, mix up order) but also some number names in words in consecutive order (e.g., "one, two, five, four, six, seven, nine, ten").	Recite counting words in order from 1-10 (with an occasional error).
Fill in the next number when the teacher says, "one, two…"	Fill in the next number when the teacher says, "one, two, three…"	Fill in the next number when the teacher says, "three, four, five…" (not starting at "one").

25 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 3 & 7.
26 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 1.

LEARNING STANDARD 6.B

Add and subtract to create new numbers and begin to construct sets.

Preschool Benchmarks

6.B.ECa Recognize that numbers (or sets of objects) can be combined or separated to make another number.[27]

6.B.ECb Show understanding of how to count out and construct sets of objects of a given number up to 5.[28]

6.B.ECc Identify the new number created when small sets (up to 5) are combined or separated.[29]

6.B.ECd Informally solve simple mathematical problems presented in a meaningful context.[30]

6.B.ECe Fairly share a set of up to 10 items between two children.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Combine items to create a new number (e.g., combine two blocks with a friend's two blocks and say, "Now we have four.")	Separate items from a set (e.g., with a set of three cups, takes one away and says, "Now we have two.")	Recognize that combining sets always results in "more" and separating sets always results in "less."
Count out two objects correctly (e.g., count two crackers on plate at snack time).	Count out three and four objects correctly (e.g., count four blocks in a block tower).	Count out five objects correctly (e.g., count five children in a small group).
Solve simple math problems (e.g., know that if one child is added to the group that makes one more).	Solve simple math problems (e.g., know that if one chair is taken away from the table that makes less).	Solve simple math problems (e.g., know that if one orange is taken away from a group of five, there are four oranges left).
Divide a set of two to four objects between self and a friend evenly.	Divide a set of six to nine objects between self and a friend evenly.	Divide a set of 10 crackers between self and a friend evenly.

27 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, 1-5.
28 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, 1-2.
29 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, 1-4.
30 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, 4-5.

LEARNING STANDARD 6.C

Begin to make reasonable estimates of numbers.

Preschool Benchmarks

6.C.ECa Estimate number of objects in a small set.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Make reasonable estimates of small quantities of objects (e.g., guess "four" when asked how many peach slices are in the bowl).	Tell whether a set is more or less than 5.	Presented with a set of 7 or 8, estimate a number in the range of 5 to 12.

LEARNING STANDARD 6.D

Compare quantities using appropriate vocabulary terms.[31]

Preschool Benchmarks

6.D.ECa Compare two collections to see if they are equal or determine which is more, using a procedure of the child's choice.

6.D.ECb Describe comparisons with appropriate vocabulary, such as "more", "less", "greater than", "fewer", "equal to", or "same as".

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Match sets of things that go together, item to item (e.g., match one napkin to each of the place settings at the table).	Through words or gestures, identify which set has more.	Through words or gestures, identify whether sets have more, less, or an equal amount.
Use the terms "more" or "same as" (e.g., acknowledge that one child has more pegs and another has the same number).	Use the terms "less", "not as many", or "fewer" (e.g., acknowledge that one child has less play dough than others do).	Use a variety of appropriate vocabulary to make comparisons of quantity (e.g., "more", "less", "greater than", "fewer", "equal to", or "same as").

31 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Counting and Cardinality, 6.

GOAL 7

Explore measurement of objects and quantities.[32]

LEARNING STANDARD 7.A

Measure objects and quantities using direct comparison methods and nonstandard units.

Preschool Benchmarks

7.A.ECa Compare, order, and describe objects according to a single attribute.[33]

7.A.ECb Use nonstandard units to measure attributes such as length and capacity.

7.A.ECc Use vocabulary that describes and compares length, height, weight, capacity, and size.[34]

7.A.ECd Begin to construct a sense of time through participation in daily activities.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Compare magnitudes of one object to another (e.g., line up two strings of beads to determine which is longer; stand next to peer to see who is taller).	Order multiple objects to compare magnitudes (i.e., arrange blocks from tallest to shortest).	Order multiple objects to compare magnitudes and describe comparisons (i.e., arrange blocks from tallest to shortest and describe).
Use nonstandard means to measure items (e.g., using a piece of string or a long block as a measurement tool).	Use nonstandard units to measure items (e.g., use hands or small blocks to measure the length of a table).	Use nonstandard units to measure items and identify the quantity of units (e.g., may not be correct but attempt to count the number of hands or small blocks in the length of the table).
Use appropriate vocabulary when making measurements, such as "small", "big".	Use appropriate vocabulary when making measurements, such as "small", "big", "short", "tall".	Use a wider appropriate vocabulary when making measurements, such as "small", "big", "short", "tall", "empty", "full", "heavy", and "light".
Ask about the sequence of the daily schedule (e.g., "When will we have snack?" "When are my Mom and Dad coming?").	Know the sequence of the daily schedule and guess the progression of the schedule throughout the day but not with accuracy (e.g., guess incorrectly that snack is after circle time yet knows that Mom or Dad will come after outside time).	Know the sequence of the daily schedule and begin to accurately gauge time by progression of the schedule throughout the day (e.g., know that naptime comes after lunch or that outside time comes after snack).

32 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Measurement and Data, 1-3.
33 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Measurement and Data, 2.
34 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Measurement and Data, 1.

LEARNING STANDARD 7.B

Begin to make estimates of measurements.

Preschool Benchmarks

7.B.ECa Practice estimating in everyday play and everyday measurement problems.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Make predictions and estimations during play without much accuracy (e.g., estimate how many scoops of sand it will take to fill a small bucket at the sand table — "I think 100!").	Make more accurate predictions and estimations during play without checking by counting (e.g., estimate how many pebbles will fill the balance scale cup, "I think 10" but without counting to check).	Make more accurate predictions and estimations during play and check them by counting (e.g., "I think it will take five scoops of sand to fill this cup – 1,2,3,4,5,6 – oh, I was almost right!").
Estimate to solve a task without much accuracy (e.g., when setting table for snack, estimate how many napkins are needed. "I think 50.").	Estimate to solve a task with more accuracy but without checking by counting (e.g., during block play, estimate how many blocks are needed to make the road being constructed reach the wall, "I think six" – but without counting to check).	Estimate to solve a task with more accuracy and check by counting (e.g., during block play, estimate how many blocks are needed to make the road being constructed reach the wall, then count to see how many it took).

LEARNING STANDARD 7.C

Explore tools used for measurement.

Preschool Benchmarks

7.C.ECa With teacher assistance, explore use of measuring tools that use standard units to measure objects and quantities that are meaningful to the child.

7.C.ECb Know that different attributes, such as length, weight, and time, are measured using different kinds of units, such as feet, pounds, and seconds.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Incorporate teacher-introduced standard measuring tools into play without attention to quantity.	With teacher assistance, use standard measuring tools without expressing interest in quantity (e.g., teacher suggests they see how many rulers high the shelf is; child helps with measuring).	Ask teacher to help with using standard measuring tools and figuring out quantities (e.g., use a measuring tape and ask how long the two blocks are).
Learn the vocabulary words "thermometer" and "clock".	With teacher assistance, explore measuring hot and cold with thermometers.	With teacher assistance, learn that clocks measure time.
With teacher assistance, use a balance scale to compare weights of objects in the classroom.	With teacher assistance, use a scale that provides numerical weight to compare weights of objects in the classroom.	With teacher assistance, use a variety of similar tools for measurement of weight (e.g., use *both* balance scales and scales that provide a numerical weight to explore objects in the classroom).

GOAL 8

Identify and describe common attributes, patterns, and relationships in objects.[35]

LEARNING STANDARD 8.A

Explore objects and patterns.

Preschool Benchmarks

8.A.ECa Sort, order, compare, and describe objects according to characteristics or attribute(s).[36]

8.A.ECb Recognize, duplicate, extend, and create simple patterns in various formats.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Match similar objects when an attribute is named (e.g., "Which rocks are smooth like this one?" "Can you find another ball that's this big?").	Compare and describe various objects, identifying one of their attributes (e.g., describe different rocks by referring to their size, shape, or weight).	Compare and describe various objects, identifying at least two of their attributes (e.g., describe different rocks by referring to their size and shape or texture and weight).
Match similar objects (e.g., putting all the toy cars together or lining up plates on a table).	Sort objects by a single attribute (e.g., ordering fire trucks from shortest to longest or ordering rocks from smooth to rough).	Sort objects according to two different characteristics and describe a sorting strategy (e.g., sort crayons by color and size, "Here are the big red ones and there are the little blue ones", or sort blocks by shape and color, "These are all yellow triangles and these are the green rectangles").
Attempt to create a simple A-B repeating pattern using early childhood materials but without maintaining the repeating pattern (e.g., makes colored marks on the white board beginning with black, green, black, then adds red, green, black, blue, black).	Successfully create a simple A-B repeating pattern using classroom objects (e.g., build a tower of alternating blue and red cubes).	Create a simple A-B-C or A-B-B repeating pattern using classroom objects (e.g., lines up people figures with small, medium, large as the repeating pattern; strings beads on a necklace with one yellow, two orange in a repeating pattern).
Replicate a simple pattern in music following the beat by clapping or tapping foot lightly.	Replicate patterns in music by playing finger games such as "Open, Shut Them."	Replicate patterns in music by singing repetitive songs such as "B-I-N-G-O."

35 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Measurement and Data, 1-3.
36 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Measurement and Data, 1.

LEARNING STANDARD 8.B

Describe and document patterns using symbols.

Preschool Benchmarks

8.B.ECa With adult assistance, represent a simple repeating pattern by verbally describing it or by modeling it with objects or actions.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With adult assistance, describe a pattern in words (e.g., "tall, short, tall, short, tall, short" or "red, blue, yellow, red, blue, yellow, red, blue, yellow").	When presented with a visual "red-blue, red-blue, red-blue" repeating pattern and told "do a clap for red and a tap for blue," produce clap-tap, clap-tap, clap-tap with adult assistance.	When presented with a visual "circle-square, circle-square, circle-square" repeating pattern and told "do a green bear for circles and a yellow bear for squares," produce green bear-yellow bear, green bear-yellow bear, green bear-yellow bear pattern with adult assistance.

GOAL 9

Explore concepts of geometry and spatial relations.[37]

LEARNING STANDARD 9.A

Recognize, name, and match common shapes.

Preschool Benchmarks

9.A.ECa Recognize and name common two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe some of their attributes (e.g., number of sides, straight or curved lines).[38]

9.A.ECb Sort collections of two- and three-dimensional shapes by type (e.g., triangles, rectangles, circles, cubes, spheres, pyramids).[39]

9.A.ECc Identify and name some of the faces (flat sides) of common three-dimensional shapes using two-dimensional shape names.[40]

9.A.ECd Combine two-dimensional shapes to create new shapes.[41]

9.A.ECe Think about/imagine how altering the spatial orientation of a shape will change how it looks (e.g., turning it upside down).[42]

37 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 1-6.
38 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 1-2.
39 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 3-6.
40 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 2-5.
41 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 5-6.
42 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 4-6.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Identify the shape of various two-dimensional items in the early childhood environment (e.g., state that the clock is shaped like a circle or that the table top is a rectangle).	Identify the shape of various two-dimensional items in the classroom and describe their attributes (e.g., state that a square block has four sides and a triangle block has three sides).	Identify the shape of various two- and three-dimensional items in the early childhood environment and describe their attributes (e.g., "I used all these 'rolling blocks' (cylinders) to hold up my bridge.").
Match triangles to triangles, squares to squares, circles to circles, and rectangles to rectangles.	Match triangles to triangles, squares to squares, circles to circles, and rectangles to rectangles even when size (or proportion) differs among examples.	Match cubes, spheres, and pyramids, even when size differs among examples.
Match the face (flat side) of one common three-dimensional shape to another (e.g., match the face of one cube to another or one cylinder to another).	Describe the face (flat side) of one common three-dimensional shape (cube or cylinder) using two-dimensional shape names (square or circle).	Describe the faces (flat sides) of more than one common three-dimensional shape, such as cubes and cylinders, using two-dimensional shape names, such as squares and circles.
Use one common two-dimensional shape to create simple representations of things in the real world (e.g., line up several rectangle blocks to make a "road").	Use more than one common two-dimensional shape to create representations of things in the real world (e.g., place small square blocks on the "road" to be the "cars").	Use common two-dimensional shapes to create more complex representations of things in the real world (e.g., place triangles around a circle to make a "flower").
Rotate and flip shapes, such as blocks and puzzle pieces, to make them "fit."	Rotate and flip a shape to create something different (e.g., place the rectangle on its short or long side).	Discuss with teacher how rotating and flipping a shape will create something different (e.g., Teacher: "What do you think will happen if you turn the triangle upside down? Let's try it." Child: "It stands up by itself!").

LEARNING STANDARD 9.B

Demonstrate an understanding of location and ordinal position, using appropriate vocabulary.[43]

Preschool Benchmarks

9.B.ECa Show understanding of location and ordinal position.

9.B.ECb Use appropriate vocabulary for identifying location and ordinal position.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Respond appropriately to request to place an object somewhere in space in relation to other objects (e.g., put doll in front of pillow; place shoes under table).	Respond to questions about location of an object (e.g., respond correctly to questions such as "Which colored block is on top?").	Respond to questions about ordinal position of an object (e.g., respond correctly to questions such as "Who is first in line?" or "Which car came in third?").
Attempt to use vocabulary for location during play activities, not always correctly (e.g., when asked, say the doll is under the pillow when she is in front).	Use appropriate vocabulary for location during play activities (e.g., in conversations, use terms such as "near" and "far", "over"and "under").	Use appropriate vocabulary for ordinal position during play activities (e.g., in conversations, use terms such as "first" and "last", "second" and "third").

43 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Geometry, 1.

GOAL 10

Begin to make predictions and collect data information.[44]

LEARNING STANDARD 10.A

Generate questions and processes for answering them.

Preschool Benchmarks

10.A.ECa With teacher assistance, come up with meaningful questions that can be answered through gathering information.

10.A.ECb Gather data about themselves and their surroundings to answer meaningful questions.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
With teacher assistance, identify a "yes" or "no" question to ask a peer and report verbally to teacher.	With teacher assistance, identify a "yes" or "no" question to ask multiple peers, recording on a "yes" or "no" chart or clipboard.	With teacher assistance, formulate questions of personal interest (make a list of things to find out about, such as favorite cookies or how children get to school each day) and conduct surveys on charts or clipboards.
Notice a change in the environment and comment (e.g., "We need more paintbrushes at the easel.").	Discuss one aspect of their environment and then collect relevant information with teacher assistance as needed (e.g., discuss whether trees have buds yet and go outside to check).	Discuss more than one aspect of their environment and then collect relevant information with teacher assistance as needed (e.g., discuss what kinds of insects live on the school playground and then go outside to investigate).

44 Aligns with Kindergarten Mathematics Common Core, Measurement and Data, 3.

LEARNING STANDARD 10.B

Organize and describe data and information.

Preschool Benchmarks

10.B.ECa Organize, represent, and analyze information using concrete objects, pictures, and graphs, with teacher support.

10.B.ECb Make predictions about the outcome prior to collecting information, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Organize materials with teacher support to prepare for graphing (e.g., sort leaves by color, sort fruit by type).	Participate in creating a data display using concrete objects or pictures with teacher support (e.g., organize children's favorite fruit in rows to demonstrate whether more children prefer apples or oranges).	Compare numerical information derived from graphs to find answers to questions with teacher support as needed (e.g., use information depicted on a chart or graph to describe which classroom games are most popular).
With teacher support, begin to predict the outcome of an activity (e.g., predict there are more boys than girls at the snack table).	With teacher support, provide a reasonable prediction or guess for the outcome of an activity (e.g., predict that the class collected more yellow than red leaves on the nature walk before sorting and counting them).	With teacher support, predict with more accuracy the outcome of a counting or comparison activity (e.g., predict how many more chairs, when three are already there, are needed for the small group table so that six children can all have a seat).

LEARNING STANDARD 10.C

Determine, describe, and apply the probabilities of events.

Preschool Benchmarks

10.C.ECa Describe likelihood of events with appropriate vocabulary, such as "possible", "impossible", "always", and "never".

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Attempt to use vocabulary to describe likelihood, but not always with accuracy (e.g., "My birthday is always on Saturday.").	Use vocabulary terms "always" and "never" in reasonable ways to describe the likelihood of an event (e.g., "Spring always comes after winter" or "We will never have an elephant as a class pet").	Use vocabulary terms "possible" and "impossible" to describe the likelihood of an event (e.g., "It's impossible to walk on the ceiling" or "It's possible to sit on the chair").

Science

In Drew's integrated preschool special education classroom, he makes sure that all of the children are challenged at just the right level for their capabilities. He has found that science explorations are a wonderful way for him to individualize experiences so that each child gains from the investigation. He can incorporate the IEP goals for his students with special needs and, at the same time, meet the needs of the peer models in his class. Recently, the children in Drew's class noticed changes in the mulch on the playground after heavy rains for several days. They saw shallow trenches that had been created by the flow of water. Drew talked with them about the rain and the power of water and suggested they do some water explorations themselves. They were all interested! In the classroom, he set up his sensory table with mulch and dirt and encouraged children to explore what happened when they poured water from different containers onto the mulch. Over several days, they experimented with small and large cups, watering cans, and large pitchers—with every child pouring water and watching the reaction. Children with more language capabilities described what they saw while others used a word here or there or pointed and gestured. Jason, a child with special needs, repeatedly said "Water" as he poured from the different containers. Susannah, his constant friend, said, "You're pouring the water, huh, Jason? See, it's making a puddle in the dirt." Jason reached into the puddle and splashed with his fingertips. Drew said, "It's wet, isn't it, Jason? And, look. Now your fingertips are brown." Jason studied his fingers and grinned, then went to the sink and washed his hands. Throughout the investigation, Drew took photos of the children at the sensory table and charted the results of the experiments with them. They noted that the large pitcher had created the most changes in the mulch and dirt and drew pictures of the results, some with scribbles and some with more representation. Drew created a display with the photos and drawings to show families about the investigation.

The domain of Science includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Demonstrating Curiosity about the World and Beginning to Use the Practices of Science and Engineering, Exploring Life, Physical and Earth Sciences, and Connecting and Understanding Science and Engineering**

Preschool children have an innate drive to explore and make sense of the world around them. Teachers can set the stage for children to become curious and confident young scientists by sharing in their interest and excitement and providing opportunities for them to engage in the practices of science.

Teachers help children develop the dispositions of a scientist through active engagement in the practices of science. These dispositions include curiosity, persistence, motivation to answer questions and solve problems, and interest in real discovery. As preschool teachers work with children to help them answer questions such as what makes a shadow, they are involving them

in the use of science practices. When they support them in the work of solving a problem such as how to connect a wagon to a tricycle so one friend can pull another, they are helping them learn about practices of engineering design. The science standards integrate science and engineering practices, along with technology and mathematics, to help children learn more about their world.

Children who participate in active investigations to learn about their environment and experiences are engaging in the real work of scientists. They are asking questions, investigating, and trying out their ideas to find answers. They begin to construct new ways of thinking by talking about their experiences with other children and interested adults. Just as adult scientists do, preschool children can make careful observations, collect and record data, and share their findings with others. For example, they may create a simple chart to keep track of which objects roll down a ramp and which objects slide.

Preschoolers engage in engineering design when they solve the problem of a ramp that keeps falling down by building it differently. They may use the science practice of modeling as they work with a friend to create drawings of their ideas for making a big ramp outside. With an interested adult, they may reflect on their experiences and think of new possibilities to try. This process of actively exploring and investigating, communicating and thinking about what they have discovered, and trying additional ideas lays the foundation for a solid, experiential understanding of important core ideas of science and the practices of science and engineering. In addition, children use skills such as observation and problem solving—integrated with ideas from art, mathematics, and language development—to deepen their understanding of science.

When teachers provide opportunities for children to sit quietly and watch the movements of a snail or to assess the weather and decide if a jacket is needed, they are helping children develop curiosity, the skills of observation, and other practices of science. When teachers encourage a group of children to keep trying as they attempt to move a big log to a shadier spot, they are helping children develop persistence as well as skills in problem solving and cooperation—the practices of engineering. When caring adults respond thoughtfully to children's questions and encourage them to investigate possible answers or solve problems, they are helping them develop initiative and creativity—the dispositions of scientists and engineers. When teachers challenge children with open-ended science investigations, they allow children across the range of developmental levels typically present in preschool classrooms to share in the excitement of learning. Most importantly, when adults support children in active scientific inquiry, everyone shares in the wonder and delight of discovery.[45]

GOAL 11

Demonstrate curiosity about the world and begin to use the practices of science and engineering to answer questions and solve problems.

LEARNING STANDARD 11.A

Develop beginning skills in the use of science and engineering practices, such as observing, asking questions, solving problems, and drawing conclusions.

45 The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Illinois Learning Standards for Science (K-12) were consulted in revising the IELDS Science standards.

Preschool Benchmarks

11.A.ECa Express wonder and curiosity about their world by asking questions, solving problems, and designing things.

11.A.ECb Develop and use models to represent their ideas, observations, and explanations through approaches such as drawing, building, or modeling with clay.

11.A.ECc Plan and carry out simple investigations.

11.A.ECd Collect, describe, compare, and record information from observations and investigations.

11.A.ECe Use mathematical and computational thinking.

11.A.ECf Make meaning from experience and information by describing, talking, and thinking about what happened during an investigation.

11.A.ECg Generate explanations and communicate ideas and/or conclusions about their investigations.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Show curiosity and interest in the world around them and ask why questions (e.g., "Why is the sidewalk shiny from the rain?" "How come it smells so good in here?" when muffins are baking).	Participate in a discussion about why things happen (e.g., describe why some objects roll and others do not).	Pose what, why, and how questions about the world around them (e.g., ask why some objects move when placed near a magnet, what made the hole in the acorn, or where do ants live).
Represent through actions or materials the physical characteristics of a natural object (e.g., crawl like a worm, mix colors of paint to show the colors of leaves changing on a tree, make an acorn out of clay).	Draw the physical characteristics of something observed (e.g., record the growth of a sprouting seed through drawings).	Draw the physical characteristics of something observed and describe the characteristics with words (e.g., record the growth of a sprouting seed through drawings and describe the changes observed).
Use the senses to investigate and make comparisons (e.g., compare textures of objects using the sense of touch).	Investigate simple cause and effect or other scientific principles such as magnetism and gravity through play activities (e.g., observe that a toy car rolls slower when a ramp is lowered or that block towers consistently fall downward).	With teacher assistance, conduct an investigation, predicting and testing results (e.g., mixing colors into cup of water, predicting changes with each new color added, then testing results).
Use materials to design solutions to problems (e.g., after trial and error, realize which blocks work best to create a stable bridge for toy cars to roll across).	Use simple charts to collect data (e.g., test a collection of objects to see which bounce and record the results).	Use simple graphs to collect data (e.g., organize all of the autumn leaves collected outdoors into a color graph).

GOAL 12

Explore concepts and information about the physical, earth, and life sciences.

LEARNING STANDARD 12.A

Understand that living things grow and change.

Preschool Benchmarks

12.A.ECa Observe, investigate, describe, and categorize living things.

12.A.ECb Show an awareness of changes that occur in oneself and the environment.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Identify and describe the different structures of familiar mammals (e.g., explain that dogs and cats have eyes and ears).	Identify and describe the different structures of familiar plants and a greater range of animals (e.g., explain that plants have leaves, stems, and roots and that fish have fins and gills).	Identify things as living or nonliving based on characteristics such as breathing, movement, and growth.
Observe similarities and differences when viewing pictures of self, beginning in infancy.	Observe living things to see how they change over time (e.g., compare a variety of plants to observe how quickly they grow and change over time).	Understand that living things grow and change. Can use drawings or other forms of representation to describe changes familiar to them (e.g., record changes in a nearby tree through the seasons).

LEARNING STANDARD 12.B

Understand that living things rely on the environment and/or others to live and grow.

Preschool Benchmarks

12.B.ECa Describe and compare basic needs of living things.

12.B.ECb Show respect for living things.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Compare human basic needs to those of other living things.	Compare what different animals need to live and grow.	Observe, describe, and compare the habitats of various plants and animals.
Show awareness of the need to care for living things (e.g., water plants, feed pets, put food out for birds).	Take responsibility for caring for living things (e.g., water plants, feed pets, put food out for birds).	Describe and compare how changes in the seasons and weather affect plants and animals.

LEARNING STANDARD 12.C

Explore the physical properties of objects.

Preschool Benchmarks

12.C.ECa Identify, describe, and compare the physical properties of objects.

12.C.ECb Experiment with changes in matter when combined with other substances.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Match objects according to physical properties, such as color, texture, or shape.	Sort objects according to physical properties, such as color, texture, or shape.	Explore and describe the properties of different objects using the senses of touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing.
Explore and discuss simple chemical reactions with teacher assistance (e.g., mix substances such as baking soda and water and describe what happens).	Explore changes in matter with teacher assistance (e.g., make gelatin to show that matter changes from a liquid to a solid or melt ice to show how solids change to a liquid).	Recognize that some changes in matter are reversible and some are not (e.g., water can be changed to ice and become water again; flour used to make play dough cannot be returned to its original state).

LEARNING STANDARD 12.D

Explore concepts of force and motion.

Preschool Benchmarks

12.D.ECa Describe the effects of forces in nature.

12.D.ECb Explore the effect of force on objects in and outside the early childhood environment.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Describe and compare the effects of common forces, such as pushing and pulling.	Explore the effects of simple forces in nature, such as wind, gravity, and magnetism.	Describe the effects of simple forces in nature, such as wind, gravity, and magnetism.
Explore and describe the motion of toys and objects (e.g., compare how cars roll on ramps when placed at different angles).	Recognize and describe the effect of actions on objects (e.g., explain what happens if one blows on a pinwheel or kicks a ball).	Explore the impact of their own use of force and motion on objects (e.g., can control the distance a ball travels by using a gentle or hard kick).

LEARNING STANDARD 12.E

Explore concepts and information related to the Earth, including ways to take care of our planet.

Preschool Benchmarks

12.E.ECa Observe and describe characteristics of earth, water, and air.

12.E.ECb Participate in discussions about simple ways to take care of the environment.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Investigate and identify physical properties and characteristics of water as a solid and liquid.	Explore and compare the size, shape, weight, and texture of minerals and rocks (e.g., sort rocks by rough/smooth or small/large).	Investigate and discuss similarities and differences in samples of soil, such as a clay, sand, potting soil, and dirt from the playground (e.g., sift or add water to sand and compare).
Show some awareness of reusing and recycling materials.	Participate in reusing and recycling materials.	Identify ways to protect the environment (e.g., participate in discussions about conservation strategies such as turning off lights, turning off water faucets, and not littering).

LEARNING STANDARD 12.F

Explore changes related to the weather and seasons.

Preschool Benchmarks

12.F.ECa Observe and discuss changes in weather and seasons using common vocabulary.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Describe changes in weather.	Participate in discussions about the differences in the seasons.	Discuss which seasons are more appropriate for certain activities (e.g., explain that leaves are raked in the fall, that sledding takes place in winter).
Describe and create representations of clouds.	Explore the effects of the sun on objects (e.g., feel the difference in temperature in objects placed in sunlight and shade).	Participate in activities that require one to understand differences between the seasons (e.g., match appropriate clothes to the right season).

GOAL 13

Understand important connections and understandings in science and engineering.

LEARNING STANDARD 13.A

Understand rules to follow when investigating and exploring.

Preschool Benchmarks

13.A.ECa Begin to understand basic safety practices one must follow when exploring and engaging in science and engineering investigations.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Participate in discussion about safety when using the senses to explore things (e.g., talk with peers about not building blocks over their shoulders because they could fall and hit their heads).	Participate in discussions about safety before acting when using the senses to explore things (e.g., understand the need be cautious when touching things that may be hot, such as light bulbs, and not to lick or taste unknown substances).	Ask teacher about safety before acting when using the senses to explore things (e.g., "Is it okay if I touch this, teacher?" "I need safety goggles for the workbench, huh, teacher?").

LEARNING STANDARD 13.B

Use tools and technology to assist with science and engineering investigations.

Preschool Benchmarks

13.B.ECa Use nonstandard and standard scientific tools for investigation.

13.B.ECb Become familiar with technological tools that can aid in scientific inquiry.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Try out one or two tools to explore the world (e.g., look at classroom through a prism, study natural items under a magnifying glass).	Use a variety of tools, such as magnifiers, balance scales, and thermometers, to explore the world and learn how things work.	Use standard and nonstandard tools and technology in pretend play (e.g., ruler, scale, or yarn to measure, rocks to compare weight, cardboard tube to amplify a voice).
Observe teacher using technology to aid in investigation, exploration, and scientific inquiry.	Make suggestion to use technology to aid in investigation, exploration, and scientific inquiry.	Use technology, such as a computer or camera, to aid in investigation, exploration, and scientific inquiry.

Social Studies

Miss Trina and Mrs. Yolanda work as a teaching team at a large, urban child care program. Their 3- and 4-year-olds come and go throughout the day depending on their family members' work schedules. Trina and Yolanda provide many opportunities for the children to get engaged in productive, interesting play with the teachers facilitating—sometimes playing right alongside the children, engaging them in conversations, asking questions, or sometimes sitting quietly and observing. During a team meeting, Trina and Yolanda discussed how much the children enjoy dramatic play and get involved in the roles they act out. They realized that this is really a form of social studies for preschoolers. The children are attempting to understand adult roles, whether they be mommies and daddies or workers of some sort. Recently, a group of children were enacting what happens at the grocery store. Trina and Yolanda posted a sign on their Family Bulletin Board asking for empty food boxes, clean cans, and paper shopping bags to enhance the children's play. They pulled out a toy cash register from their storage area and worked with the children to set up the grocery store. The group decided on a name for the store, "The Food Place," and some children volunteered to make a sign. Others made play money for the cash register. The teachers led the children in discussions about different roles to play in the store: cashier, bagger, shelf stocker, and customer. As children joined in the play, they determined who would play what role and how they would do their job. Of course, cashier was the most popular! One day, Trina commented to Yolanda, "Look at the Food Place, today. We have 10 'customers' waiting patiently in line to check out." It was true. The children were acting out the role of "waiting customer" with no problems whatsoever. Yolanda and Trina were truly amazed that in dramatic play, the children could practice what it means to be a good citizen and member of the classroom community!

The domain of Social Studies includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Concepts Related to Citizenship, Economic Systems and Human Interdependence, and Awareness of Self, Geography, People, and Families**

Social studies is defined as the "part of a school curriculum concerned with the study of social relationships and the functioning of society" (Merriam-Webster). The knowledge and skills learned through social studies prepare children to become informed and engaged citizens of their country and the world. Including social studies in the educational curriculum of the early childhood years provides an opportunity for adults to support children as they are developing a sense of self and an awareness of their family and community. While preschool programs may not have a formal social studies curriculum, many everyday preschool experiences provide a foundation for social studies skills.

Initially, young children's focus is on themselves and their family. As they enter preschool, their world widens to include the school or caregiving environment. And as children grow and develop during the preschool years, they begin to understand that though they are individuals, they

exist not only within a family and school but also within other larger contexts, such as their neighborhood and community. They begin to see that they have a role to play within each of these contexts: They are a son or daughter, a sister or brother, a student or friend, a neighbor or community member. Young children learn how to act as a member of these wider communities, being loving, helpful, respectful, and contributing to the greater good.

At the same time, they are becoming aware that there are other members of these communities who make contributions to their own well-being and that of the other community members. They are fascinated by police officers and firefighters. They imitate doctors, nurses, grocery clerks, and teachers. Preschool teachers can lead them in studies of topics within their community, including businesses, community services, and the jobs and responsibilities of adults. These studies enable children to develop the intellectual habits of investigation and inquiry as they learn how to transform their curiosity into questions and then represent what they have learned using developing skills in language, fine arts, and play.

As children learn about broader communities and their members, their sense of geography expands. They become aware that there are other neighborhoods, other cities, and a larger country. They begin to see how these spaces and locations can be described and studied using maps, pictures, and diagrams. As they enter the primary years, their world will widen even more, and they will begin to understand that other communities exist in other environments. Their investigations in these early years enable children to have confidence and enthusiasm for finding answers to the compelling questions of the social sciences as they continue in their schooling.

By incorporating social studies in the early years, teachers are establishing the foundation for a democracy. They help preschool children to develop group participation skills, such as social negotiation and problem solving, communicating about one's needs, and making decisions as a group. Experiences in social studies provide a foundation for the skills needed to become an active and productive citizen.

GOAL 14

Understand some concepts related to citizenship.[46]

LEARNING STANDARD 14.A

Understand what it means to be a member of a group and community.[47]

Preschool Benchmarks

14.A.ECa Recognize the reasons for rules in the home and early childhood environment and for laws in the community.

14.A.ECb Contribute to the well-being of one's early childhood environment, school, and community.

46 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 14 reads, "Understand political systems, with an emphasis on the United States."
47 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 14.A reads, "Understand and explain basic principles of the United States government."

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Engage in conversation with teacher about fairness and sharing when a conflict needs to be resolved.	Participate in discussions about fairness and sharing in general conversations.	Demonstrate an understanding of fairness and sharing (e.g., accepts the need to wait for a turn with a toy).
Participate in activities that benefit the group as a whole, such as cleaning up after play or watering an early childhood environment plant.	Participate in making group rules and/or rules for routines and transitions.	Display awareness of role as a member of a group and that rules are made to benefit the members of a group (e.g., explain that hitting isn't allowed because someone might get hurt).

LEARNING STANDARD 14.B

Understand the structures and functions of the political systems of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 14.C

Understand ways groups make choices and decisions.[48]

Preschool Benchmarks

14.C.ECa Participate in voting as a way of making choices.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Demonstrate preferences and choices when the group votes to make simple decisions.	Participate in discussions about how voting works (e.g., that the majority vote wins).	Demonstrate an understanding of the outcome of a vote (e.g., recognize and accept that the majority vote wins).

48 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 14.C reads, "Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens."

LEARNING STANDARD 14.D

Understand the role that individuals can play in a group or community.[49]

Preschool Benchmarks

14.D.ECa Develop an awareness of what it means to be a leader.

14.D.ECb Participate in a variety of roles in the early childhood environment.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Assume simple leadership roles (e.g., take on role of line leader).	Take responsibility in simple leadership roles (e.g., as snack helper, ask about and perform the necessary tasks).	Assume the role of teacher's helper (e.g., table helper; person who waters the plant; pass out plates, cups, and spoons for snack).
Identify roles that children play in the group (e.g., line leader, person who selects the afternoon story).	Act out various roles that a person might play within a group (e.g., pretend to be a teacher, student, parent, or child during dramatic play).	Identify and describe roles that children play in the group (e.g., line leader, person who selects the afternoon story).

LEARNING STANDARD 14.E

Understand United States foreign policy as it relates to other nations and international issues.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 14.F

Understand the development of United States' political ideas and traditions.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

49 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 14.D reads, "Understand the roles and influences of individuals and interest groups in the political systems of Illinois, the United States and other nations."

GOAL 15

Explore economic systems and human interdependence.[50]

LEARNING STANDARD 15.A

Explore roles in the economic system and workforce.[51]

Preschool Benchmarks

15.A.ECa Describe some common jobs and what is needed to perform those jobs.

15.A.ECb Discuss why people work.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Identify commonly known community workers and the services they provide (e.g., describe the work of firefighters, nurses, mail carriers, doctors, and police officers).	Act out roles of commonly known community workers in dramatic play (e.g., pretend to be a cashier in a grocery store).	Identify tools and equipment that correspond to various roles and jobs of commonly known community workers.
Participate in a discussion about jobs their family members may have.	Participate in a discussion that relates work to earning money.	Participate in a discussion that relates work to services provided (e.g., to teach, to take care of people, to take care of cars, to manage a business).

LEARNING STANDARD 15.B

Explore issues of limited resources in the early childhood environment and world.[52]

Preschool Benchmarks

15.B.ECa Understand that some resources and money are limited.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Participate in a conversation about taking turns with materials when there is not enough for everyone to have their own.	Recognize equal distribution when sharing a snack, materials, or toys among a group.	Contribute to a community service activity of the class (e.g., collecting food for the needy, recycling early childhood materials).

50 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 15 reads, "Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States."
51 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 15.A reads, "Understand how different economic systems operate in the exchange, production, distribution and consumption of goods and services."
52 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 15.B reads, "Understand that scarcity necessitates choices by consumers."

LEARNING STANDARD 15.C

Understand that scarcity necessitates choices by producers.[53]

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 15.D

Explore concepts about trade as an exchange of goods or services.[54]

Preschool Benchmarks

15.D.ECa Begin to understand the use of trade or money to obtain goods and services.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Engage in trading with peers (e.g., trade two pretzels for two crackers at snack or two small cars for one big truck during play).	Understand that money is needed to obtain goods and services (e.g., while playing store, ask other children to pay for goods; explain that you must pay for things that you get at the store).	Demonstrate understanding that payment or money comes in different forms, such as coins, money, credit cards, and bartering goods (e.g., while playing store, offer to pay for goods with credit card, check, or cash).

LEARNING STANDARD 15.E

Understand the impact of government policies and decisions on production and consumption in the economy.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

53 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 15.C reads, "Understand that scarcity necessitates choices by producers."
54 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 15.D reads, "Understand trade as an exchange of goods or services."

GOAL 16

Develop an awareness of the self and his or her uniqueness and individuality.[55]

LEARNING STANDARD 16.A

Explore his or her self and personal history.[56]

Preschool Benchmarks

16.A.ECa Recall information about the immediate past.

16.A.ECb Develop a basic awareness of self as an individual.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Answer questions such as "How did you get to school today?" or "In what centers did you play today?"	Draw or write about something that happened at school.	Use phrases that differentiate between events that happened in the past and are happening in the present (e.g., describe events that took place yesterday or are happening today).
Discuss things that s/he likes and dislikes.	Demonstrate awareness of self at a younger age (e.g., bring in picture of self as an infant).	Participate in discussions about his or her past (e.g., explain that "When I was little, I could not ride a tricycle, but now I can").

LEARNING STANDARD 16.B

Understand the development of significant political events.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 16.C

Understand the development of economic systems.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

55 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 16 reads, "Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations."

56 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 16.A reads, "Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation."

LEARNING STANDARD 16.D

Understand Illinois, United States, and world social history.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 16.E

Understand Illinois, United States, and world environmental history.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

GOAL 17

Explore geography, the child's environment, and where people live, work, and play.[57]

LEARNING STANDARD 17.A

Explore environments and where people live.[58]

Preschool Benchmarks

17.A.ECa Locate objects and places in familiar environments.

17.A.ECb Express beginning geographic thinking.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Follow directions to find objects or materials in the early childhood environment (e.g., can find crayons if told that they are next to the glue).	Engage in basic mapping activities (e.g., place pictures of common household items in a map showing the correct room, such as placing the toaster in the kitchen and the bed in the bedroom).	Discuss a diagram of the early childhood environment showing where various features of the room are located.
Participate in a discussion about maps and diagrams.	Comment on a diagram showing how mats are arranged at naptime.	Describe basic topographical features, such as hills, rivers, and roads.

57 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 17 reads, "Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States."

58 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 17.A reads, "Locate, describe and explain places, regions and features on the Earth."

LEARNING STANDARD 17.B

Analyze and explain characteristics and interactions of the Earth's physical systems.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 17.C

Understand relationships between geographic factors and society.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 17.D

Understand the historical significance of geography.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

GOAL 18

Explore people and families.[59]

LEARNING STANDARD 18.A

Explore people, their similarities, and their differences.[60]

Preschool Benchmarks

18.A.ECa Recognize similarities and differences in people.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Distinguish boys from girls.	Notice differences in physical characteristics between self and others.	Describe similarities and differences in physical characteristics between self and others (e.g., comment on characteristics such as hair length, skin color, age, and height).

LEARNING STANDARD 18.B

Develop an awareness of self within the context of family.[61]

Preschool Benchmarks

18.B.ECa Understand that each of us belongs to a family and recognize that families vary.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Compare photos of families and identify members of own family.	Compare photos of families and discuss the variety of family structures.	Role-play a variety of family members in dramatic play.

LEARNING STANDARD 18.C

Understand how social systems form and develop over time.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

59 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 18 reads, "Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States."
60 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 18.A reads, "Compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions and institutions."
61 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 18.B reads, "Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society."

Physical Development and Health

Juanita teaches preschool at a Head Start program in rural Illinois. Her children have long bus rides to and from the program. When they arrive, they have lots of energy and need to run, jump, and play. Juanita recognizes that trying to settle them down immediately is a lost cause. It's far more important for them to have opportunities to move after having been so sedentary on the bus. So, she begins the day with outdoor time if the weather allows and, if not, movement activities indoors. She not only expects the children to use the standard playground equipment at her Head Start site, she also plans for other engaging activities for them outdoors. She sets up obstacle courses—not so much with special equipment but rather with special directions for the children. They love to hear what she's got in store for them this time: "Run to the slide. Climb up carefully. Slide down. Take two big jumps. Walk backward to the red pole, then tiptoe over to me and give me a hug!" Remembering all of those directions is a challenge to the children, and she coaches them as they go. But they keep asking her for another obstacle course every day! When outdoor time is over, they have expended lots of energy and are ready to go inside, eat a nutritious morning snack, and settle into the indoor routines.

The domain of Physical Development and Health includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Movement Skills, Rules and Safety During Physical Activity, Team-Building Skills, Principles of Health Promotion and Prevention, and Human Body Systems**

The general health and well-being of young children is central to the core of child development. The first five years of life mark significant changes in a child's body and establish a critical foundation for the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviors needed to progress through childhood.

In addition to significant health benefits, physical activity, creative movement, and play provide many advantages for the growing child. Young children who are physically active show greater brain functioning and an enhanced ability to develop gross-motor movements. Studies have shown that physical activity plays an essential role in creating nerve cell networks that are the essence of learning (Ratey, 2008). This research reinforces the need to move in a variety of ways, such as left to right, up then down, through and around, tracking a moving ball, and so on. Research also indicates that regular physical activity can help to increase concentration and reduce disruptive behaviors, suggesting a direct correlation to academic achievement (Trudeau, F., & Shephard, R. J., 2008). Physical activity and movement also improve children's self-concept and social skills. Children exhibit joy and confidence as they accomplish basic motor skills while

playing simple games of low organization or when they move to the rhythm of a beat. Creative movement experiences help children express themselves and learn what they can do with their bodies. And in many physical activities, children learn to relate to other children as they share equipment or take turns.

Learning about health and safety practices is important, too. Preschool teachers can help children become more aware of their bodies and develop general health habits early in life. It is also important for children to develop decision-making skills and be able to differentiate between a safe and an unsafe situation.

The teaching of physical development and health at the preschool level plays a significant role across the major developmental domains. A strong foundation of physical activity, healthy eating habits, and general health practices will provide each child with the necessary skills and behaviors to be able to benefit from the learning environment and to lead an active, healthy life.

GOAL 19

Acquire movement skills and understand concepts needed to explore the environment, support learning, and engage in health-enhancing physical activity.[62]

LEARNING STANDARD 19.A

Demonstrate physical competency and control of large and small muscles.[63]

Preschool Benchmarks

19.A.ECa Engage in active play using gross- and fine-motor skills.

19.A.ECb Move with balance and control in a range of physical activities.

19.A.ECc Use strength and control to accomplish tasks.

19.A.ECd Use eye-hand coordination to perform tasks.

19.A.ECe Use writing and drawing tools with some control.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Exhibit body control while running (e.g., run in and out of cones in a figure eight or change directions while moving and step down from higher surface instead of jumping).	Move in general space throughout the play area exhibiting adequate body control and safety.	Demonstrate the skills of climbing (ladders, playground equipment), hopping (on one foot), and jumping (can jump over objects 4-6 inches high and land on both feet).
Exhibit balance while using gross-motor equipment.	Exhibit balance, control, and coordination during movement activities (e.g., climb stairs using alternating feet; run, jump, and walk in a straight line; stand and hop on one foot).	Demonstrate strength and balance by performing body support movements (e.g., bear crawl and crab walk).
Put on clothing items, such as shirts, jackets, pants, and shoes.	Demonstrate ability to use writing and drawing tools (e.g., hold pencils, crayons, and markers in a functional grasp; use paintbrushes to make strokes at an easel).	Demonstrate eye-hand coordination and fine-motor control through various activities (e.g., string beads, manipulate pegs, build with small blocks, pour using different tools, assemble puzzles, button/zip, snap, use scissors to cut paper).

62 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 19 reads, "Acquire movement skills and understand concepts needed to engage in health-enhancing physical activity."

63 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 19.A reads, "Demonstrate physical competency in individual and team sports, creative movement and leisure and work-related activities."

LEARNING STANDARD 19.B

Demonstrate awareness and coordination of body movements.[64]

Preschool Benchmarks

19.B.ECa Coordinate movements to perform complex tasks.

19.B.ECb Demonstrate body awareness when moving in different spaces.

19.B.ECc Combine large motor movements with and without the use of equipment.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Demonstrate awareness of spatial boundaries and the ability to maneuver within the area.	Move effectively in different pathways (e.g., zigzag, curved), able to stop quickly and change directions.	Coordinate large movements to use equipment (e.g., peddle a tricycle, pull a wagon).
Demonstrate the ability to throw (overhand and underhand).	Throw, catch, or kick a lightweight ball.	Demonstrate the ability to kick or strike (using an implement) in a specific direction with some control and accuracy.
Participate in activities involving a series of large motor movements (e.g., dance, play "Follow the Leader," play "Simon Says").	Demonstrate understanding of spatial relationships, such as under, over, behind, and next to, by using the body and an object.	Demonstrate ability to coordinate fine- and gross-motor movement (e.g., build structures, such as some houses and roads, with hollow and unit blocks).

LEARNING STANDARD 19.C

Demonstrate knowledge of rules and safety during activity.

Preschool Benchmarks

19.C.ECa Follow simple safety rules while participating in activities.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Demonstrate safe, controlled movement during activities, with occasional adult reminders.	Adhere to basic safety rules during gross- and fine-motor activities, with occasional adult reminders.	Apply body control during gross-motor activities to prevent accident or injury to self or others.
Participate in discussions about the importance of helmets for safety on tricycles, scooters, and wagons.	Understand the concept of safety relative to helmets while riding tricycles, skating on a scooter, or riding in a wagon.	Ask for a helmet before riding tricycles, skating on a scooter, or riding in a wagon.

64 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 19.B reads, "Analyze various movement concepts and applications."

GOAL 20

Develop habits for lifelong fitness.[65]

LEARNING STANDARD 20.A

Achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.[66]

Preschool Benchmarks

20.A.ECa Participate in activities to enhance physical fitness.

20.A.ECb Exhibit increased levels of physical activity.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Participate in activities that increase heart rate, flexibility, muscle strength, endurance, and cardiovascular endurance, such as running and jumping.	Participate in activities that require stretching muscles, such as climbing, reaching, and pulling.	Engage in repetitive behavior to practice and promote skill and ability, recognizing that physical activity keeps the body healthy.

LEARNING STANDARD 20.B

Assess individual fitness levels.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 20.C

Set goals based on fitness data and develop, implement, and monitor an individual fitness improvement plan.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

65 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 20 reads, "Achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness based upon continual self-assessment."

66 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 20.A reads, "Know and apply the principles and components of health-related fitness."

GOAL 21

Develop team-building skills by working with others through physical activity.

LEARNING STANDARD 21.A

Demonstrate individual responsibility during group physical activities.

Preschool Benchmarks

21.A.ECa Follow rules and procedures when participating in group physical activities.

21.A.ECb Follow directions, with occasional adult reminders, during group activities.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Ask questions such as "Is it my turn now?" during a game.	Show basic awareness of others and participate in an activity while remaining in their personal space.	Follow rules for simple games.
Participate in discussion of safety during physical activity.	Participate safely in the day's physical activity, with assistance from adults.	Participate safely in the day's physical activity, with few reminders from adults.

LEARNING STANDARD 21.B

Demonstrate cooperative skills during structured group physical activity.

Preschool Benchmarks

21.B.ECa Demonstrate ability to cooperate with others during group physical activities.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Share equipment with others during a group physical activity.	Take turns during group physical activities.	Cooperate with others during a physical activity to complete a task.
Encourage peers to be successful.	Respect others' abilities.	Respect others' abilities and cooperate to help the activity be fun and enjoyable for all.

GOAL 22

Understand principles of health promotion and the prevention and treatment of illness and injury.

LEARNING STANDARD 22.A

Explain the basic principles of health promotion, illness prevention, treatment, and safety.

Preschool Benchmarks

22.A.ECa Identify simple practices that promote healthy living and prevent illness.

22.A.ECb Demonstrate personal care and hygiene skills, with adult reminders.

22.A.ECc Identify and follow basic safety rules.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Participate in discussions about healthy living (e.g., eating healthy foods, hand washing, sneezing and coughing into sleeve).	Distinguish food on a continuum from more healthy to less healthy.	Recognize the importance of doctor and dentist visits for staying healthy.
Participate in hand washing throughout the day, with adult reminders.	Practice personal hygiene, such as using a tissue to wipe nose and throwing used tissues in a wastebasket or covering the mouth when sneezing and coughing, with adult reminders.	Complete personal care tasks, such as toileting and washing hands, with only occasional reminders.
Identify ways to reduce injuries on the playground, such as standing far enough from swings to avoid injury and using play equipment in safe ways.	Discuss safety rules such as pedestrian safety (e.g., look both ways before crossing the street and walking on the sidewalk).	Demonstrate basic safety knowledge (e.g., looking both ways before crossing the street, wearing a seatbelt, practicing bus safety, using a helmet).

LEARNING STANDARD 22.B

Describe and explain the factors that influence health among individuals, groups, and communities.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 22.C

Explain how the environment can affect health.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

GOAL 23

Understand human body systems and factors that influence growth and development.

LEARNING STANDARD 23.A

Describe and explain the structure and functions of the human body systems and how they interrelate.

Preschool Benchmarks

23.A.ECa Identify body parts and their functions.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Point to external body parts, such as arms, legs, knees, ears, and toes.	Identify external body parts, such as arms, legs, knees, ears, and toes, by naming them.	Identify or demonstrate ways to use body parts (e.g., ears to hear, eyes to see, legs to walk and run).

LEARNING STANDARD 23.B

Identify ways to keep the body healthy.[67]

Preschool Benchmarks

23.B.ECa Identify examples of healthy habits.

23.B.ECb Identify healthy and nonhealthy foods and explain the effect of these foods on the body.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Distinguish between being healthy and not healthy.	Participate in discussions of good health habits, such as getting enough sleep, eating healthy foods, and getting enough exercise every day.	Identify good health habits, such as getting enough sleep, eating healthy foods, and getting enough exercise every day.
Participate in discussions about the importance of eating breakfast.	Identify healthy foods and snacks.	Explain that bodies need healthy food to grow, feel well, and have energy to play.

LEARNING STANDARD 23.C

Describe factors that affect growth and development.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

67 In the K-12 IL Standards, Standard 23.B reads, "Explain the effects of health-related actions on the body systems."

GOAL 24

Promote and enhance health and well-being through the use of effective communication and decision-making skills.

LEARNING STANDARD 24.A

Demonstrate procedures for communicating in positive ways, resolving differences, and preventing conflict.

Preschool Benchmarks

Refer to Social/Emotional Development

LEARNING STANDARD 24.B

Apply decision-making skills related to the protection and promotion of individual health.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 24.C

Demonstrate skills essential to enhancing health and avoiding dangerous situations.

Preschool Benchmarks

24.C.ECa Participate in activities to learn to avoid dangerous situations.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Understand some practices can be unsafe (e.g., horsing around on the playground equipment).	Communicate to adults if there is an unsafe condition in the play area, such as "Bobby is tripping other children." or "The playground equipment is wet".	Demonstrate understanding of how to respond in unsafe situations, such as what to do if playing near the street, not wearing a helmet, or someone gets hurt (e.g., tell an adult, call 911).
Participate in a discussion about familiar adults.	Participate in a discussion about who is and who is not a stranger.	Know when you feel "uncomfortable" with an adult to express that to another adult.

The Arts

Jenna teaches at her community church preschool program and emphasizes creativity and the arts with the children throughout the day. She loves to see how they express themselves, whether it is through music, movement and dance, visual arts, or drama. Each child is so unique and interesting! José sings as he builds with blocks, sometimes under his breath and sometimes loudly, almost in triumph, as his block creation is finished. "Ta-daa!!!" Like many of the children, he sings the favorite class songs as well as songs he hears on the Spanish radio station that his family listens to. Marianna always moves with grace and requests scarves and favorite recordings for dancing. She takes dance lessons and shows other children how to hold their arms and point their toes. Lila and Anthony are the drama queen and king. They can act out any scene, whether using puppets to act out a story the group has read or playing at being Mom and Dad in the dramatic play area. While they may argue some over their roles, they successfully negotiate and keep scripts going, sometimes into the next day or week. Jenna has written down some of their scenes and read them back to the group, much to the delight of Lila and Anthony. Painting is Teena's specialty, both at the easel and at a table with finger paints. The messier the better for Teena. She uses many colors and comments as she mixes them. Her paintings are full of energy and motion. Jenna makes sure to communicate with all of the children's families about the ways they express their creativity and the importance of the arts in their young lives.

The domain of the Arts includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Exploring the Arts and Using the Arts to Communicate Ideas and Emotions**

The creative arts allow young children to explore and express their individuality, imaginations, and ideas through music, movement and dance, drama, and the visual arts. Through artistic experiences, children are motivated to engage in problem solving as they experiment with combinations of media and creative expression. Opportunities to regularly recognize and discuss beauty in their environment, their work, and in the work of others support young children as they begin to develop their appreciation of the arts.

Preschool teachers can learn as much about children by observing them in the act of creating as they can by examining the products of these acts. The topic of children's work may reflect their individual interests, while the way they depict the topic may reflect their feelings about that topic, their fine- or gross-motor skills, and their developing perceptual abilities. Teachers can support their creative efforts by observing and talking with them about their work and providing them with strategies that will help them accomplish their artistic goals.

When first introduced to a new element of the arts (a musical instrument, an art medium, or a movement), young children are typically focused on the process of manipulating that element rather than on producing an end product. However, as they are given opportunities to become more familiar with the element, they begin to use it with increasing intent and skill.

It is important to give young children extensive opportunities and encouragement to explore new media so they can begin to use them for expression. Preschool teachers need to provide a rich variety of visual art materials, musical instruments, recordings and experiences, props and materials for dramatizing, and opportunities for movement and dance so the arts are integrated into learning experiences across the curriculum. Accepting the way each child expresses his or her creativity and encouraging experimentation, exploration, and risk-taking as he or she engages in creative work will support a child's development in the arts.

GOAL 25

Gain exposure to and explore the arts.[68]

LEARNING STANDARD 25.A

Investigate, begin to appreciate, and participate in the arts.[69]

Preschool Benchmarks

25.A.ECa Movement and Dance: Build awareness of, explore, and participate in dance and creative movement activities.

25.A.ECb Drama: Begin to appreciate and participate in dramatic activities.

25.A.ECc Music: Begin to appreciate and participate in music activities.

25.A.ECd Visual Arts: Investigate and participate in activities using visual arts materials.

Example Performance Descriptors: Movement and Dance

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Participate in movement games and activities (e.g., imitate animal movements in a group activity, dance with classmates, play "Simon Says", freeze when music stops).	Combine music and movement (e.g., move to the beat of a drum).	Change movement in response to tempo (e.g., moving more slowly when music slows down and more quickly when music speeds up).
Begin to purposely use simple movement patterns as they move to music (e.g., intentionally using dance movements they have learned or made up, dancing to a familiar tune).	Portray emotions through movement (e.g., hanging head and drooping shoulders to portray feeling sad; swinging arms, smiling, and taking big steps to portray feeling happy).	Move in coordination with a partner (e.g., mirroring the movements of a partner, holding hands and moving to rhythmic dance music, swinging partner by linking elbows).
Perform imaginative and unstructured movement activities, such as galloping, twirling in response to music, or dancing with scarves.	Begin to coordinate rhythm and timing in movement activities (e.g., swinging on swings or sharing a teeter-totter).	Move to the beat of music.

68 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 25 reads, "Know the language of the arts."

69 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 25.A reads, "Understand the sensory elements, organizational principles and expressive qualities of the arts."

Example Performance Descriptors: Drama

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Participate in or dramatize familiar songs (e.g., imitate teacher in moving like various animals during a song about farm animals).	Act out roles in the dramatic play area (e.g., pretend to be a doctor, mother, cashier, or police officer).	Use a pretend play to represent known or anticipated situations (e.g., reenact a visit to the dentist).
Begin to dramatize character by changing speech, facial expression, gestures, and body movement (e.g., "washing animals" like Mrs. Wishy Washy with a teacher during a read-aloud).	Begin to coordinate roles in dramatic play with others who take on roles (e.g., enters dramatic play about the grocery store and agrees with other children regarding who will play which role).	Proactively organize dramatic play with others (e.g., assigning roles, props, and laying out rules for the play).
View the dramatic performances of the teacher retelling a story or acting out a puppet play.	View the dramatic performances of other children attentively (e.g., watches other children reenact a familiar story).	Appreciate the dramatic performances of others (e.g., may clap, laugh at, or verbally praise the comedic performance of others).

Example Performance Descriptors: Music

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Listen to music representing a variety of rhythms, styles, and cultures.	Play various musical instruments to explore the type of sound each makes.	Identify differences in styles of music or sounds of musical instruments (e.g., "That music is slower." "The flute sounds high.")
Show appreciation for music through body language and facial expressions (e.g., clap when a favorite song is played).	Request favorite songs to sing, dance with, or listen to.	Request favorite songs to sing, dance with, or listen to and describe favorite features of the song.

Example Performance Descriptors: Visual Arts

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Explore various ways to use visual arts such as painting materials (e.g., combine paint colors, paint with large brushes as well as with cotton swabs).	Manipulate play dough or clay in different ways, such as rolling, pinching, or squeezing.	Create two- and three-dimensional works of art while experimenting with color, line, shape, form, texture, and space (e.g., use paint, markers, crayon, clay, pipe cleaners, found art materials).
Use a variety of visual art materials independently (e.g., get out paper, glue, and scissors to create a collage; get clay, water bowl, and clay tools from shelves and bring to table to work; use digital camera to capture images).	Use a wide variety of tools and techniques to create art (e.g., use fine-bristled brush to paint fine lines and dots).	Begin to revise and expand on ideas by revisiting art projects (e.g., add more detail to a drawing, use another media to elaborate on the original over several days in the art area).
Use the visual arts to represent (not necessarily with appropriate details) a person, place, thing, or event (e.g., draw a picture of Mommy or form a three-dimensional figure using clay).	Begin to coordinate the features of objects and their spatial relationship to one another (e.g., eyes are enclosed in circle that represents head, arms are connected to the body).	Use details to accurately represent some details of objects, people, places, or things (e.g., pictures of person include clothing, hair, and the correct number of fingers).

LEARNING STANDARD 25.B

Display an awareness of some distinct characteristics of the arts.[70]

Preschool Benchmarks

25.B.ECa Describe or respond to their creative work or the creative work of others.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Describe something in their own creative work (e.g., "I made two pancakes with play dough.")	Describe feelings in response to music or art of self or others (e.g., comment that an upbeat song makes him/her feel happy or that he likes the blue paint his friend used).	Show appreciation for the creative work of others (e.g., watch attentively as classmates put on a puppet show or perform with instruments).
Paint a picture and discuss it with a classmate.	Comment on another child's art and ask questions about it, independently or in response to teacher prompts.	Comment on the art of professional artists.

70 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 25.B reads, "Understand the similarities, distinctions and connections in and among the arts."

GOAL 26

Understand that the arts can be used to communicate ideas and emotions.[71]

LEARNING STANDARD 26.A

Understand processes, traditional tools, and modern technologies used in the arts.[72]

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 26.B

Understand ways to express meaning through the arts.[73]

Preschool Benchmarks

26.B.ECa Use creative arts as an avenue for self-expression.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Create movement to intentionally represent something or portray phenomena (e.g., move like a falling leaf, a bird flying, or a ball bouncing).	Create music to accompany activities (e.g., sing and dance during play activities).	Create a puppet or mask to portray a character in a story.
Establish a play space for dramatization (e.g., set up chairs for a pretend bus ride).	Dramatize an event (e.g., act out going on a field trip to the zoo).	Use the visual arts to depict an event (e.g., draw a picture about something that happened on the playground).

71 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Goal 26 reads, "Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced."
72 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 26.A reads, "Understand processes, traditional tools and modern technologies used in the arts."
73 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 26.B reads, "Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts."

GOAL 27

Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

LEARNING STANDARD 27.A

Analyze how the arts function in history, society, and everyday life.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

LEARNING STANDARD 27.B

Understand how the arts shape and reflect history, society, and everyday life.

Preschool Benchmarks

Not Applicable

English Language Learner Home Language Development

Geraldo and his co-teacher, Mingyu, have children from families who speak many different languages in their homes. Both teachers recognize the importance of a child's first language and work hard to use words and phrases they hear at home. They invite families to teach them so they can expand their own capabilities to communicate with the children. They also know that as children participate in an English-speaking environment, their brains are busy processing and interpreting what is being said. They are patient and understanding, letting each child know that he can communicate in whatever way works best for him. They are amazed as they watch children with various languages at play together. The amount of accommodation they make for each other is so heartwarming.

The domain of English Language Learner Home Language Development includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Using Home Language to Communicate and to Make Connections and Reinforce Knowledge and Skills Across Academic and Social Areas**

For young children who are English Language Learners (ELLs), the home language is the vehicle by which they are socialized into their families and communities. It is the medium that fosters their earliest and most enduring relationships, their initial ideas about how the world works, and their emerging sense of self and identity. When preschool ELLs enter English-only preschool classrooms, they may lose their desire and eventually their ability to speak their home language. The development of linguistic, cognitive, and literacy skills in the child's first language provides the foundation for learning these skills in English. The knowledge and skills children demonstrate in their home language can be applied to the learning of English for social and academic purposes. Therefore, a child's understanding and ability to use her home language is the first step in acquiring English proficiency and English literacy skills.

Recent research from cognitive neuroscientists has found that

- the preschool years are an ideal time for children to learn two languages;
- there are multiple cognitive, social, and cultural benefits when young children have the opportunity to learn more than one language;
- knowing more than one language does not delay the acquisition of English or impede academic achievement in English when both are supported; and
- children who learn English after their home language has been established (usually around 3 years of age) are capable of adding a second language and this dual-

language ability confers long-term cognitive, cultural, and economic advantages. Some children learn two languages simultaneously, starting before the age of 3, and follow similar developmental trajectories as their monolingual peers when the development of both languages is supported.

The early childhood years are the critical time for developing mastery of the sounds, structures, and functions of language and thus an ideal time to expose children to the benefits of two languages. Therefore, the Illinois ELL Home Language Development Standards begin with home language goals and benchmarks. These indicators of progress in mastering the elements of the home language are critical to the process of acquiring English proficiency and developing the underlying linguistic knowledge necessary for academic success in English.

GOAL 28

Use the home language to communicate within and beyond the classroom.

LEARNING STANDARD 28.A

Use the home language at age-appropriate levels for a variety of social and academic purposes.

Preschool Benchmarks

28.A.ECa May demonstrate progress and mastery of benchmarks through home language.

28.A.ECb Use home language in family, community, and early childhood settings.

28.A.ECc Develop an awareness of the different contextual and cultural features in the early childhood and community settings the child participates in.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Use the home language in greetings and other social situations.	Answer questions about self in home language.	Use the home language to respond to stories, conversations, or share personally meaningful information, such as what the family did over the weekend.
Label elements in family photo (e.g., self, family members, event, location) in the home language.	Describe actions in play scenarios and act out familiar role in dramatic play using home language (e.g., mother, grandfather, doctor).	Resolve conflicts with another child who speaks the same language using home language (e.g., taking turns on a bike, sharing a doll).
Use one- to two-word utterances to convey an idea in the home language.	Use three- to five-word utterances to convey an idea in the home language.	Use utterances of five or more words to convey an idea in the home language.
Begin to show some awareness of different languages, communication styles, and/or formats to use in community settings (e.g., home, grocery store, church).	Begin to show some awareness of different languages, communication styles, and/or formats to use in early childhood settings (e.g., gym, art, playtime, group times).	Use different languages, communication styles, and/or formats to use in early childhood settings and in community settings (e.g., chooses language(s) for play depending upon the peer(s), turns and talks to a peer using appropriate language, talks to adults using appropriate language).

GOAL 29

Use the home language to make connections and reinforce knowledge and skills across academic and social areas.

LEARNING STANDARD 29.A

Use the home language to attain benchmarks across all the learning areas and to build upon and develop transferable language and literacy skills.

Preschool Benchmarks

29.A.ECa Use home cultural and linguistic knowledge to express current understandings and construct new concepts.

29.A.ECb With adult support, begin to bridge home language and English to demonstrate progress in meeting IELDS.

29.A.ECc Exhibit foundational literacy skills in home language to foster transfer to English.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
In home language, retell home routine to understand concept of sequencing (e.g., tell the things done at home before school).	In home language, describe what s/he is doing in a play or group experience.	In home language, explain a new discovery or understanding acquired through a play or group experience.
With adult support, use one or two English words to communicate about familiar routines.	With adult support, attempt to use general and specific English words connected to a specific topic (e.g., butterfly, wing, eye, pretty, fly) with home language in conversations, responses, and/or questions.	With adult support, connect vocabulary in home language with English vocabulary (e.g., círculo/circle, más/more, carro/car).
Pretend to read text in home language (e.g., tell the things seen in pictures to read a picture book to a friend in home language).	Use knowledge of stories read in home language to answer simple questions in English or the home language (e.g., after completing a picture walk of a book in home language, the child answers questions about characters in the book).	Dictate information that includes some details or sequence of events to be written on a piece of work in the home language (e.g., could dictate to a family member, classroom volunteer, or another person who speaks the child's home language).

Social/Emotional Development

Tamika knows that preschool children's social/emotional development is the foundation for all of their learning. In her park district preschool program, she focuses on building strong relationships with and among the children. She respects the ways each child shows and receives affection, giving big hugs to some and shaking hands with others. And she recognizes the budding friendships children are developing and tries to support each child in those relationships. She encourages children's expression of feelings and empathy for others. She is proactive rather than reactive, helping children learn ways to talk about and label their feelings to prevent physical expressions of anger or frustration. She guides them as they try to work out disagreements and come to mutual understanding, recognizing how their actions affect others. She has even set up a "Peace Table" where children can go and negotiate with each other. Most of them have become so successful at it that she's not even needed in the discussion much of the time, except to recognize them when a solution is reached. Tamika uses many strategies to help children develop self-regulation. She gives them plenty of notice when transitions are about to occur. She encourages them to make plans for their play activities and helps them to follow through. She invites them to pretend in ways that help them control their behaviors, such as being as quiet as butterflies when they have to walk past the park offices on their way to the playground. She also plans for ways to develop children's focus, attention, engagement, curiosity, and initiative. She knows these approaches to learning will build toward academic success in kindergarten and beyond.

The domain of Social/Emotional Development includes Preschool Benchmarks in: **Self-Management Skills, Social Awareness and Interpersonal Skills, and Decision-making Skills and Responsible Behaviors**

Social/emotional competence of young children is an important predictor of success in school. There is solid evidence that children need to achieve minimal social/emotional competence by about the age of 6 (Katz & McClellan, 1997) to have a positive experience in the early elementary grades. The basic competencies of social/emotional development help not only in the preschool and kindergarten years but also in the long-term—affecting lifelong trajectories related to schooling and employment. The inclusion of social/emotional development in the IELDS is essential to promote children's growth in all domains. And there is much that preschool teachers can do to take advantage of natural as well as planned opportunities to support this important aspect of early development.

Social/emotional development includes learning to

- identify and understand one's feelings,
- accurately read and comprehend emotional states in others,

- manage strong emotions and their expression in a constructive manner,
- regulate one's behavior,
- develop empathy for others, and
- establish and sustain relationships. (Boyd, Barnett, Bodrova, Leong, & Gomby, 2005, p. 3)

Young children are gradually developing an understanding of the consequences of their actions. Part of this development is learning to understand rules and their purposes. In addition, the early years are an important time to develop self-regulation—the ability to postpone acting on one's first impulse, which might be anger or aggression or not following the teacher's directions—and gradually learn how to develop constructive strategies that lead to conflict resolution. For children to become successful learners in a classroom, they must begin to self-regulate. Preschool teachers can work with children to help them focus on the task at hand and "begin to think ahead, to plan their activities, and to think about and use strategies to solve social problems" (Boyd et al., 2005, p. 4).

Approaches to learning are another important area addressed in the social/emotional domain (under Goal 30, Learning Standard C). Preschool children are learning how to be a learner at their early childhood program. They are developing executive functions, "the brain functions we use to manage our attention, our emotions, and our behavior in pursuit of our goals. ... Executive functions predict children's success as well as—if not better than—IQ tests" (Galinsky, 2012). When preschool teachers help children develop their approaches to learning and executive functions, they are building the foundation for academic success in kindergarten and beyond. In the IELDS, approaches to learning include

- eagerness and curiosity as a learner;
- persistence and creativity in seeking solutions to problems;
- initiative, self-direction, and independence in actions; and
- engagement and sustained attention in activities.

Preschool experiences can be ripe with opportunities to develop children's approaches to learning and build toward their future school success. As children play, they explore and investigate new items, materials, and ways of using them. They stay with tasks that are interesting and rewarding to them, solving problems as they arise with creativity and critical thinking. Play fosters independence and self-direction. As preschool children become more competent players, their ability to engage and sustain attention spills over into other activities that are interesting to them, including teacher-led small and large groups that include active participation, hands-on exploration, movement, and challenging exploration of a topic, an experience, or a long-term study.

Teachers have a large role to play in the development of social/emotional competence. A positive foundation in these skills will serve children well throughout their lifespan, helping each child to accept and benefit from education and experience in every domain.

GOAL 30

Develop self-management skills to achieve school and life success and develop positive relationships with others.

LEARNING STANDARD 30.A

Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior.

Preschool Benchmarks

30.A.ECa Recognize and label basic emotions.

30.A.ECb Use appropriate communication skills when expressing needs, wants, and feelings.

30.A.ECc Express feelings that are appropriate to the situation.

30.A.ECd Begin to understand and follow rules.

30.A.ECe Use materials with purpose, safety, and respect.

30.A.ECf Begin to understand the consequences of his or her behavior.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Begin to label own basic emotions with teacher assistance (e.g., Teacher: "How does that make you feel when they don't let you play here?" Child: "That makes me mad.").	Identify the emotions of characters in a storybook (e.g., "How do you think that made her feel when..."?).	Use language to express feelings when playing with or negotiating with another child (e.g., "Don't yell so loud. That scares me.").
Begin to increase ability to follow early childhood environment rules and procedures (e.g., accept need to wait when interested in playing at the sand table when it is already "full").	Increase ability to control impulses and follow rules (e.g., wait for teacher approval before opening the early childhood environment door to the outdoor play area).	State rules as reasons for own behavior and for what other children should do (e.g., "You shouldn't run in the classroom. You can run outside.").
Begin to respond appropriately to teacher intervention when not following early childhood environment rules (e.g., stops throwing sand when asked most of the time).	Can discuss with teacher reason for teacher intervention when not following classroom rules (e.g., Teacher: "You need to come off the slide now. Do you know why?" Child: "Because I'm climbing up the slide instead of the stairs.").	Accept, with minimal frustration, consequences for not following the rules (e.g., being removed from the water table after repeatedly and intentionally splashing another child).
Begin to use materials safely and with purpose.	Use materials safely and with purpose (e.g., put away things in designated locations at cleanup time).	Recognize unsafe use of materials and tell an adult.

LEARNING STANDARD 30.B

Recognize own uniqueness and personal qualities.[74]

Preschool Benchmarks

30.B.ECa Describe self using several basic characteristics.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Express likes and dislikes, including favorite foods, colors, or activities.	Show confidence in abilities, (e.g., "Look what I can do." or "Look how far I jumped.)	Describe him or her self (e.g., talk about self in terms of looks, gender, family, and interests; complete a self-portrait and describe the picture to the teacher).

74 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 1.B reads, "Recognize personal qualities and external supports."

LEARNING STANDARD 30.C

Demonstrate skills related to successful personal and school outcomes.[75]

Preschool Benchmarks

30.C.ECa Exhibit eagerness and curiosity as a learner.

30.C.ECb Demonstrate persistence and creativity in seeking solutions to problems.

30.C.ECc Show some initiative, self-direction, and independence in actions.

30.C.ECd Demonstrate engagement and sustained attention in activities.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Show excitement about new items in the early childhood environment (e.g., express delight over new blocks or science materials or the addition of bubbles in the water table).	Ask questions about new items in the early childhood environment (e.g., "How does this work, teacher?").	Ask questions using "who", "what", "how", "why", "when", and "what if" to learn about the indoor and outdoor classroom environment.
Use materials or props in novel ways (e.g., use a block as a cell phone or a banana as a microphone).	Persistently work toward completing challenging activities and ask for assistance from peers or an adult if needed (e.g., when trying to complete a difficult puzzle or build a complex block structure).	Independently seek out solutions to problems (e.g., use tape to combine materials to create new objects for dramatic play or to make a block structure more stable).
Begin to make choices for play activities and follow through with self-direction and independence.	Make choices for play activities regularly and follow through with self-direction and independence.	Suggest new ideas for play activities and follow through with self-direction and independence.
Stay with one or two tasks that interest him or her for at least 10 minutes each.	Stay with more than two tasks that interest him or her for at least 10 minutes each.	Sustain engagement with a task that interests him or her for long periods of time (at least 30 minutes) and begin to sustain attention in tasks that are not based on his or her interests (e.g., in a teacher-led small or large group).

75 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 1.C reads, "Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals."

GOAL 31

Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

LEARNING STANDARD 31.A

Develop positive relationships with peers and adults.[76]

Preschool Benchmarks

31.A.ECa Show empathy, sympathy, and caring for others.

31.A.ECb Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

31.A.ECc Interact easily with familiar adults.

31.A.ECd Demonstrate attachment to familiar adults.

31.A.ECe Develop positive relationships with peers.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Ask about another child's feelings (e.g., "Is she sad that her Mom left?").	Demonstrate sympathy and caring (e.g., comfort a friend who has fallen on the playground).	Describe how others are feeling based on their facial expressions, gestures, and what they say.
Greet teachers upon arrival and say goodbye to family members upon departure.	Demonstrate affection for familiar adults through hugs, kisses, or making gifts.	Engage in reciprocal conversations with familiar adults.
Choose to play with another child more frequently than with others.	Develop friendships with peers.	Accept that others may have different preferences, such as foods they like, favorite colors, or activities they like to do.

76 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 2.A reads, reads, "Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others."

LEARNING STANDARD 31.B

Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.

Preschool Benchmarks

31.B.ECa Interact verbally and nonverbally with other children.

31.B.ECb Engage in cooperative group play.

31.B.ECc Use socially appropriate behavior with peers and adults, such as helping, sharing, and taking turns.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Acknowledge another child through a smile or wave when she enters the early childhood environment.	Talk with another child in play or other daily activities.	Engage in reciprocal conversations with other children throughout the day.
With teacher assistance, communicate with another child to determine roles and activities during play (e.g., Teacher: "Can you tell your friend that you want to help him build his road?" Child: "Can I build with you?").	Communicate with another child to determine roles and activities during cooperative play (e.g., talk with classmate to decide who will be the nurse during dramatic play, talk with classmate to come up with a plan for setting the table together).	Follow through with cooperative actions after communicating with another child to determine roles and activities during cooperative play (e.g., act out roles in doctor/nurse play, set the table together).
Respond to teacher request to help or share (e.g., responding to request to help teacher and children clean up the block area).	Interact in socially appropriate ways with peers, such as helping and sharing (e.g., assist another child with a puzzle, share blocks with a classmate).	Interact in socially appropriate ways with peers and adults, such as helping and sharing (e.g., offer help to adult in getting the paints cleaned up).

LEARNING STANDARD 31.C

Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

Preschool Benchmarks

31.C.ECa Begin to share materials and experiences and take turns.

31.C.ECb Solve simple conflicts with peers with independence, using gestures or words.

31.C.ECc Seek adult help when needed to resolve conflict.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Respond positively to teacher reminders to share materials and take turns most of the time.	Keep play going with another child by sharing materials most of the time.	Take turns with another child when materials are limited (e.g., share microscope with classmate, each taking turns to look at objects).
Respond positively to teacher assistance in solving a conflict with another child.	Attempt to resolve conflicts to keep play going with another child.	Suggest solutions to conflicts (e.g., propose to classmate: "You play with these cars, and I can use these trucks.").
Begin to accept adult help when needed to resolve conflict.	Accept adult help when needed to resolve conflict.	Ask an adult for help when needed (e.g., seek out a teacher when another child is being physically aggressive).

GOAL 32

Demonstrate decision-making skills and behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

LEARNING STANDARD 32.A

Begin to consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.[77]

Preschool Benchmarks

32.A.ECa Participate in discussions about why rules exist.

32.A.ECb Follow rules and make good choices about behavior.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Accept reminders from teacher about why rules exist.	Participate in a discussion about how throwing objects in the early childhood environment is dangerous.	Discuss how hitting others is not allowed because it can hurt others.
Follow an early childhood environment rule with teacher reminder.	Follow more than one early childhood environment rule with teacher reminder.	Follow simple early childhood environment rules independently much of the time.

77 In the K-12 IL Learning Standards, Standard 3.A reads, "Consider ethical, safety and societal factors in making decisions."

LEARNING STANDARD 32.B

Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.

Preschool Benchmarks

32.B.ECa Participate in discussions about finding alternative solutions to problems.

Example Performance Descriptors

EXPLORING	DEVELOPING	BUILDING
Stop actions and listen to teacher discuss alternative solutions to hitting someone.	Participate in a discussion with a teacher about alternative solutions to hitting someone who has taken a toy.	Offer solutions to problems (e.g., "I am using these; you can use those.").

LEARNING STANDARD 32.C

Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.

Preschool Benchmarks

Refer to Social Studies, Standard 14.A

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This list also includes those who participated in the development of the original standards.

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