

PACT FOR WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Curriculum & Family Engagement

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Revised 6-24-22

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Head Start - *The Creative Curriculum the 6th Edition* is a scientifically based model that describes the theory and research that form the foundation of our preschool curriculum. The comprehensive curriculum applies theory and research to everyday practices, giving teachers a roadmap for teaching. The Creative Curriculum provides teachers a clear guidance on how to plan lessons and at the same time allows room for teacher creativity.

Early Head Start- *The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers 3rd Edition* is a scientifically based model that describes the theory and research that form the foundation of our infant, toddler, twos curriculum. The comprehensive curriculum applies theory and research to everyday practices, giving teachers a roadmap for teaching. The framework outlines the theory and research that explain the curriculum’s focus on the importance of meeting basic needs, fostering social/emotional development, developing, secure attachments, and supporting cognition and brain development.

Curriculum

HS Standard: 1302.32 – fidelity

PACT will support teachers to effectively implement curricula through monitoring, curriculum implementation and fidelity and provide support, feedback, training and coaching.

Definition of Curriculum Fidelity – The Creative Curriculum is being implemented in the ways the developers intended. (example: studies, intentional teaching experiences, etc)

HS Standard: 1302.92 C1 – coaching

Education Staff will be assessed with monitoring tools, CLASS, Self-Assessment, and the Professional Development Plan to identify strengths, areas of needed support to identify which staff would benefit from intensive coaching to implement the Creative Curriculum with Fidelity.

HS Standard: 1302.31 (b) (1) (iii) – TSGOLD

Teaching practices must: Integrate child assessment data in individual and group planning. TSGOLD Teaching Strategies offers 3 online training called “My Courses”

1. Objectives & Dimensions for Development and Learning
2. Intro to Teaching Strategies
3. Gold Introduction

The three on-line trainings “My Courses” must be completed within six months of hire. The **Interrater Reliability Certification** must be completed within 12 months of hire and renewed every three years.

Teaching Strategies offers Interrater Reliability Certification to help early childhood educators increase effectiveness as they identify the children’s levels of development and learning. Teachers can participate in certification any time it’s convenient, from any location. When reliability is achieved, teachers can stand behind assessment decisions with greater confidence.

The Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum is organized with materials to assist teachers to implement the curriculum and assessment with fidelity. This means teachers follow the guidance related to what and how to teach and assess; and to make adjustments to meet children’s needs without changing the nature and intent of the material. Implementing a curriculum requires a commitment to learn it and use it as a guide to make decisions.

The following resource materials are assigned to each classroom and the materials can be found in the teacher resources or center resources at each center and the new Digital Curriculum for in-person or remote learning called *The Creative Curriculum Cloud*.

Creative Curriculum Cloud-Enables all teachers, at any experience level to provide inspired, developmentally appropriate, whole-child learning experiences with everything you need to facilitate planning and instruction in a single spot. Creative Curriculum Cloud subscription allows teachers to access smart tools that help teachers individualize daily instruction, makes home-to-school connections stronger by providing automated or customized multimedia playlists to families, with activities tied directly to classroom instruction and helps support two-way communication. In the Digital Context Library, teachers have access to all the Creative Curriculum Resources, including new content, as it’s developed. Teachers also have access to the foundation volumes and teaching guides, as well as a Digital Children’s Library with over 200 titles for teachers and families. Daily resources are searchable by objective and Dimensions.

1. **The Fidelity Tool Teacher Checklist** – is a road map to continuous improvement and professional growth to have a positive impact on the children you teach.
2. **Intentional Teaching cards** – for teacher-guided routines and experiences and to individualize teaching and caregiving.
3. **Mighty Minutes** – for teacher to turn “in-between” time into learning time.
4. **Book Conversation/Discussion Cards** – for teacher to promote children’s language and literacy learning, and social–emotional development, during read-aloud.
5. **HS Teaching Guides/Studies** – comprehensive daily plans that support teachers as they help every child explore, investigate and learn.
 1. **Beginning of the Year**
 2. **Balls**
 3. **Clothes**
 4. **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**
 5. **Building**
 6. **Trees**
 7. **Getting Ready for Kindergarten**
 8. **See C.C Study Starter Notebooks Vol I & II for additional topics.**
 9. *See ...The Creative Curriculum Cloud for more Study Topics.*
6. **EHS Teaching Guides/Studies for Twos are located in The Creative Curriculum Cloud.**
 1. **Containers**
 2. **Shoes**
 3. **Brushes**

4. **Light**
5. **Rocks**
6. **Bags**
7. **Clothes**
8. **Seats**
9. **Balls**
10. **Paper**

7. **HS/EHS The Foundation Volume 1** - to keep pace with new research and the evolving needs of early childhood educators.
8. **EHS Routines and Experiences Volume 2** – guidance and resources to help teachers establish developmentally appropriate daily schedules centered around caregiving routines.
9. **EHS Objectives for Development & Learning volume 3** - children’s development and learning along a progression across the whole of the early childhood years.
10. **HS Interest Areas Volume 2** - key to integrating learning into every part of the day, for every child, in every area of learning.
 - a. **HS Literacy Volume 3**
 - b. **HS Mathematics Volume 4**
 - c. **HS Science and Technology, Social Studies, and the Arts – Volume 5**
 - d. **HS Objectives for Development and Learning Volume 6**

HS Second Step: Social-Emotional Curriculum – There are Four Core Components required for implementing the program with fidelity.

- Component 1: Teaching all the Weekly Theme activities in order
- Component 2: Playing the Brain Builders every day
- Component 3: Encouraging children to use the skills every day and reinforcing skill use with specific feedback
- Component 4: Engaging families with the Home Links

Curriculum in a Box - materials in the Second-Step Kit will help you decrease classroom behaviors.

- Weekly Theme Cards – 28 lessons
- Unit Cards – 5
- Posters
- Feelings Cards
- Puppets - (give puppets a name)
- Join In and Sing CD
- Listening Rules Cards
- Teaching Materials Notebook – Activation Key, Research, Fidelity, Brain Builders, Song, Family Letters
- SecondStep.org – second step curriculum materials, videos of the program being taught, and lots of teaching and planning resources.

Second Step Units and 28 Weekly Themes:

- Unit 1: Skills for Learning—Weeks 1–6

- Unit 2: Empathy—Weeks 7–12
- Unit 3: Emotion Management —Weeks 13–18
- Unit 4: Friendship Skills and Problem Solving—Weeks 19–25
- Unit 5: Transitioning to Kindergarten—Weeks 26–28

In addition to doing the Four Core Program Components, it's important to model self-regulation and social-emotional skills yourself.

We provide a variety of other resources recommended by Head Start to supplement the Creative Curriculum and provide a well-rounded challenging program to our children. These resource books can be found in the teacher resources or center resources at each center.

Baby Doll Circle Time

For Toddlers, we use Baby Doll Circle Time to teach attachment and nurturing. Activities within Baby Doll Circle Time help children learn to build relationships, strengthen social play and become more attuned to others. The curriculum promotes positive, joyful play between the children and the children's caregivers which is key to healthy development. Activities are designed to teach emotional self-regulation and stress management, which the child can use life-long. Children are invited to participate in BDCT activities daily but are allowed to opt out when they wish.

MESS (Marvelous Explorations through Science and Stories) Curriculum

This is an early childhood resource designed for children's early science explorations. MESS was developed by the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida in partnership with local Head Start programs and public libraries and funded by the Administration for Children & Families. This resource is found in the center resources in 2 large white binders.

High Five Mathematize

This was developed by the National Head Start Family Literacy Center for the Office of Head Start. It uses and promotes the strategy of mathematizing. Mathematize means bringing out the math in what children are doing.

I am Moving I am Learning

This approach seeks to increase daily moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA), improve the quality of movement activities intentionally planned and facilitated by adults, and promote healthy food choices every day. Many of these resources are found online.

Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC)

The PITC's videos, guides, and manuals are designed to help site supervisors and infant/toddler care teachers become sensitive to infants' cues, connect with their family and culture, and develop responsive, relationship-based care. The training materials provide the foundation for a style of care in which infant/toddler care teachers study the infants in their care, reflect on and record information about the children's interests and skills, and search for ways to set the stage for the child's next learning encounters. This resource is found in each EHS classroom.

Yoga

In addition to Baby Doll Circle Time and Second Step, Yoga is offered daily. Yoga not only offers physical activity but also helps calm the mind, increases concentration, promotes

confidence, and teaches children breathing techniques. With Yoga the child can strengthen muscles by using them in different ways. Positioning refines balance and coordination and helps the child concentrate. Achieving yoga poses can build the child's self-esteem and confidence. Breathing techniques become embedded and can be used life-long for managing stress.

Screen Time in the HS and EHS Classroom

All PACT staff have an iPad for work that may be used in the classroom for developmentally appropriate purposes. The iPads may be used to pull up songs for the children to listen to and dance, but the children should not be viewing these as videos or sitting and watching the iPad at any time. Due to the fact, that many of our families already provide ample screen time to their children, we only provide screen time in the form of educational computer programs or eBooks, available on the Creative Curriculum Cloud subscription. These are available in the Head Start classrooms only and only available at limited times.

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggestions on screen time are as follows:

- For children younger than 18 months, avoid use of screen media other than video-chatting. Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce digital media should choose high-quality programming and watch it with their children to help them understand what they're seeing.
- For children ages 2 to 5 years, limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs. Parents should co-view media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them.
- For children ages 6 and older, place consistent limits on the time spent using media, and the types of media, and make sure media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.
- Designate media-free times together, such as dinner or driving, as well as media-free locations at home, such as bedrooms.
- Have ongoing communication about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline.

Lesson Plan

The approach to child development and education will focus on individual children's progress, interest, temperament, language, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. The teachers use the information from the *Education Survey for School Readiness*, the *Cultural/Home Language Survey*, and the children's assessment collection to understand children's developmental needs

Goals and Objectives are planned and developed with parents for each child as shown on the *Family Conference Form*. The completed *Family Conference Form* will include the descriptions of the child's current knowledge, skills, and abilities observed and documented by the teacher in TSGOLD. The next steps are planned for the child's development and learning and confirmed with the teacher and family member signatures.

The teacher is responsible for observation, assessment collection, individualization and curriculum management to meet the needs of the performance standards. The teacher relies on multiple methods and sources of information, (such as home visits, parent observation, curriculum-based assessments, TSGOLD On-the-Spot checklists, work samples, etc.) to

determine which developmental level the children are at and this information is recorded into TSGOLD.

Every teacher must find a way to ensure that each child gets individualized attention based on his/her needs. While individualizing should be done spontaneously as teachable moments arise in the classroom, this strategy alone does not ensure that each child will receive equal & fair attention based on the specific needs found in their assessment. For this reason, planned individualization is planned on the monthly Individualization form.

Once the individualization has been planned for the month the teacher will complete the EHS Group Planning Form/HS Lesson Plan. Some individualized activities may be incorporated into group activities with an emphasis on the child who is targeted for individualization. At the end of the week the teacher will self-evaluate the week's activities and experiences and document in TSGOLD.

Early Head Start Group Planning Form

EHS teachers use TSGOLD child assessment data to guide their planning of experiences. Teachers will use the Group Planning form to consider:

- Implementation of Intentional Teaching Cards
- Implementation of Mighty Minutes
- Implementation of Book Conversation Cards, with Highlights Hello Books.
- Implementation of Studies for Twos
- changes to the classroom environment
- teachable experiences during routine care
- Implementation of Baby Doll Circle
- safety activities that need to take place.
- ways parents can be involved in the program for the week.

Components of the EHS Group Plan are:

- **Routines**

Caregiving routines are at the heart of EHS infant/toddler care. Children under three do not distinguish routine chores from play or adventure the way adults do. For children, every event of their day is exciting and important as the next.

Ordinary routines become special to children because the experience is repeated over and over. Routines work better in a primary caregiver system in which each caregiver has the major responsibility of their assigned children. EHS teachers are primary caregivers of their assigned children, according to HS Standard 1302.21.

Many curriculum goals are supported during responsive, personal-care routines.

Routines go beyond the basic care. Routines should be carried out with respect for the child and a genuine interest in what the child is experiencing.

Routines should provide an opportunity for the child to explore, develop skills, deepen relationships, and share enjoyment.

The components of each routine are influenced by the child's age, cultural values and expectations of her or his family. It is important that these are respected in the classroom. When engaging in the essential activities of daily living, such as feeding, diapering, and napping, with all children, the teacher needs to be aware of her own cultural messages and how she approaches the routine.

During daily routine care, teachers will provide individualized experiences based upon the TSGOLD Class Profile or Individual Planning Form. There are many times throughout the day that includes routines, such as: hand washing, tooth brushing, meals, snacks, nap, toileting, transitions, etc.

- Routines are a major part of the EHS curriculum.
- Personalized caregiving routines are learning opportunities and relationship building activities.
- Two parts of Group Care routines are health and safety and building relationships and facilitating learning.
- An infant or toddler develops a sense of who he or she is through repeated daily interactions with their primary caregiver.

Components of the EHS Group Plan are:

- **Studies for Twos**

Many two-year-olds are interested in the same topic. Teachers can expand on children's interest by incorporating several different experiences related to a topic into the "Group Planning Form."

To focus on "Studies for Twos," teachers will need to consider children's developmental skills as well as their interests. Example: a topic of study on rocks, after children collected rocks on their walk. The developmental skills to consider for studies:

- Sit in a small group & listen to a short story.
- Attempts to group objects that have similar characteristics.
- Use writing tools.
- Use language to describe objects.

The Creative Curriculum Cloud provides high-quality resources that build off children's natural curiosity and interests to promote hands-on investigative learning. Teaching Guides for two-year-old children are written to provide hands-on study explorations, while still maintaining responsive routines and caregiving.

- **Indoor Experiences**

During this time teachers will provide materials and experiences based upon the TSGOLD Class Profile, Individual Planning Form and special activities. Two's may be ready for

simple studies/projects.

(Note: Large group activities are not planned or expected by teachers in EHS classrooms. Children may form their own group.

- **Outdoor Experiences – 2x per day**

During this time children should have the opportunity to play outside. Teachers should be rotating the outdoor classroom supervising play and engaging with children. EHS classrooms will have two sessions of outdoor experience. Note: Children should have the opportunity to go outside except in extreme weather conditions. See the weather chart. If severe weather conditions exist the teacher will provide MVPA indoors.

- **MVPA (Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity)**

This can take place indoors or outdoors and should give the children opportunity to exercise different muscle groups.

Head Start Lesson Plan –

HS lesson plan is a semi-filled written plan for teachers to follow and implement daily.

The first two weeks of each HS program year, teachers will focus on classroom rules and routines. The Second Step Curriculum will be implemented on the first day of class along with the pre-filled activities on the lesson plan. This will allow teachers time to focus on relationship building with children and families.

The Creative Curriculum study topic: “Beginning of the Year” will begin the third week. Use the Teaching Guide to prepare for the study. This lesson can last 4 to 6 weeks. There are six additional studies to implement throughout the program year. Other topics of studies/projects are on-line.

HS teachers will use this written plan to consider

- Implementation of Second Step
- Implementation of Teaching Guide for Studies
- Creative Curriculum Study Starters Notebooks: Volume I and II – provides teachers with additional topics of studies.
- Teacher follow the guidance provided in the Teaching Guide.
- Use TSGOLD Class Profile data to guide planning of activities.
- KWL chart is used to introduce the topic, in the beginning of each study.
- Add materials related to the study to Interest Areas
- Implementation of Intentional Teaching Cards
- Implementation of Mighty Minutes
- Implementation of Book Discussion Cards
- Special activities/field trips that need to take place.
- Safety & nutrition activities that need to take place.
- reflect on what went well at end of week on the lesson plan.

Components of the Head Start Lesson Plan are:

- **Arrival Routine** – scripted on lesson plan to be encouraged daily. Children and families are greeted. Hang up jacket/book bag. Wash hands. Children with parent/staff visit “chart” areas for attendance, feelings, and area to sign-in, before play. (see lesson plan)

- **Welcome Circle** – important to get children full attention with songs or movement. During this time teachers follows a structured routine that contains MVPA-Yoga & Breathing, Attendance, Question of Day, Shared Writing, Rules, and any other teacher chosen activities, if time allows. Limit to 10-20 minutes.

1. Attendance CC ITC SE02
2. Rules CCITC SE09
3. Question of Day – TG related to study, At A Glance
4. Picture Schedule CC Volume 1: Foundation, Daily Schedule P81-82
5. Pre-filled activities on Lesson Plan

(Note: Teachers should not use a calendar review because children’s understanding of time (sometimes referred to as temporal understanding) is not developed until first grade, therefore “calendar time” is not a meaningful activity for preschool children.)

- **Routines** – are predicable, respectful, responsive
There are many times throughout the day that includes routines, such as: hand washing, tooth brushing, meals, snacks, nap, toileting, transitions, etc. During these times teachers plan short educational activities (finger plays, whiteboard games, songs, etc.) and use teachable moments to provide expansion of children’s cognition.

1. During hand washing and dressing for the outdoors teachers will discuss/teach the importance of health.
2. During tooth brushing teachers will discuss/teach the importance of dental health.
3. During meal times teachers will discuss/teach the importance of nutrition.
4. Children wash hands upon arrival into the classroom.
5. Children are encouraged to nap, not forced to nap. HS Standard 1302.31

- **Choice Time**

During free choice children have the opportunity to play in a variety of areas for at least 45 - 60 minutes. During this time the child gets to choose where they want to play and how they want to play (within the boundaries of the classroom rules). Choice time is an opportunity to offer Read-Aloud as a choice. (Note: Schedule Read Aloud 2-3 times per day.) Teachers often use a center management system during this time to limit the number of children in some areas. During this time the adults are actively engaged in children’s play, following their lead.

- **Setting up Interest Areas for Choice Time**

1. Observe to see if children are engaged during choice time.
2. Setting up classroom on pages 56-70, CC Volume 1 Foundation
3. Study related materials for the interest areas are listed in the Teachers Guide, “At a Glance” chart.

4. Interest Area display of materials related to the topic of study , CC Volume 2, Interest Areas
5. Block Area allows space for 3-4 children.
6. Dramatic Play allows space for 4-6 children. See Teaching Guide for different ways to transform area from one study to another.
7. Center Management signs are displayed at each Interest Area.
8. Display area for documentation of children’s learning

- **Clean-Up**

1. Use a 5 minute reminder
2. Use the clean-up song, with everyone singing & helping
3. Well labeled classroom is easy to clean up
4. Classroom labeling on pages 56-70, CC Volume 1 Foundation
5. Assign jobs – Classroom jobs – CC ITC SE12
6. Implement Mighty Minutes

- **Transitions**

- Limit transitions – how many do you have?
- Use songs/music to gather children to circle
- Use Mighty Minutes to facilitate learning
- Lead Second Step “Brain Game” – see written lesson plan

- **Large Group**

During this time the teacher leads Second Step or reads a story to the classroom as a large group. During large group activities the non-lead staff will assist with late arrivals or other needs of the classroom. When two or more children lose interest, the teacher will use this cue to change the activity. The read aloud is often followed by additional literacy activities and can be a precursor to the small group activity.

1. Teaching Guide, At-A-Glance Activities
2. Strategies to keep children engaged - CC ITC SE11
3. Follow-up questions with “Shared Writing” on easel.
4. Follow Book Discussion Cards, with multiple Read-Aloud

- **Small Group**

During this time the teacher will break children into smaller groups of 6-10 students so that the teachers in charge of the group can work with the children in a more focused way. The children may all be doing the same activity (but at different levels) or the children may be doing different activities that will rotate throughout the week.

1. Teaching Guide, At-A-Glance Activities
2. Intentional Teaching Cards for teacher-guided planned experiences
3. Monthly Safety or Nutrition activities

(Note: Both large and small group times should be limited in time based upon the attention of the children, teachers must have appropriate expectations.)

- **Outdoor Play/MVPA Indoors**

During this time children should have the opportunity to play outside for at least 30 minutes. Teachers should plan and lead one structured game for the children. Rest of the time outdoors can be spent in free play. Teachers should be rotating the outdoor classroom supervising play and engaging with children. Full day classrooms will have two sessions of outdoor play.

Note: Children should have the opportunity to go outside except in extreme weather conditions. See the weather chart. If severe weather conditions exist the teacher will provide MVPA (Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity) indoors.

- **Closing Circle**

During this time teachers use a structured routine for closing the day which may include: story, sharing, music and movement, class meeting to discuss problem solving, etc.

Individualization

Teachers begin individualizing the curriculum for each child, after observing the child for 2 weeks upon entry to the classroom, based upon the *Education Survey for School Readiness* form. The teacher will select 1 goal (Education Survey for School Readiness Form, Family Conference Form, IEP or IFSP) to focus on and will plan or select activities for these goals. The teacher will work on these goals and activities for no longer than a month and then a new individual plan will be created. The teacher may use the same goal with different activities or use different goals and new activities. After working on the individualized goal for a month, the teacher will record how the child is progressing to meet his/her goal, on the Outcome section of the Individualized Plan. At least one activity related to the individual plan will be recorded on the EHS group/HS lesson plan (marked with an *) each week.

Assessment TSGOLD Data Guiding Outcomes

TSGOLD recommends assessing children's development and learning with the full set of objectives for learning and development because doing so ensures teachers understand the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the whole child. On-The-Spot Checklist is available for teachers to date observed behaviors and development to be used during Checkpoints.

Checkpoints - Teachers must observe children's behavior and development more than once to determine the child's skill level to complete Checkpoints. Checkpoint Data is used to report school readiness goals to the Office of Head Start. Teachers must understand the Fall or Baseline level will provide information for reporting on children's progress throughout the program year.

Teachers will use child assessment data (Class Profile, after checkpoints are finalized) to complete the HS lesson plan of activities and EHS group planning experiences. To gather the necessary documentation needed for checkpoints, teachers will need to observe children and document children's learning weekly.

Child Outcomes worksheet is completed by the HS/EHS teacher after checkpoints are finalized to self-analyze teaching practices. HS Standard 1302.102c2ii. This form is used to see if children are

making gains since they entered the classroom. A copy of the Child Outcomes Worksheet is forwarded to the Site Supervisor to send to the Education Coordinator and file a copy in the Curriculum Notebook. Education Coordinator will use the information when reporting School Readiness Data to managers, staff, and board members.

Class Profile - will identify the highest levels of children, showing the teaching practice for this group of children is going well. Next, the teacher will identify the lower levels of children and reflect of ways to change classroom teaching skills.

Individual Child Report – is used to identify children who are regressing, (example: Baseline Fall level is 4. Winter level is 2). There are 3 possible reasons a child’s development may regress, family issues, assessed by a different staff, or teacher error. If a child is identified as regressing, the teacher will explain on the Child Outcomes worksheet and make plans to individualize with this child (this may prompt focused activities, evaluation of assessment methods, a family support plan, or a referral based upon the child/family information).

Education Contacts

Part-Year HS Program: A minimum of two (2) home visits and two (2) parent conferences are planned and scheduled with families, but additional visits or conferences may occur to meet the educational needs of the child and family. The first home visit must take place before the children enters into the classroom.

Full-Year HS/EHS Program: A minimum of two (2) home visits and three (3) parent conferences are planned and scheduled with families, but additional visits or conferences may occur to meet the educational needs of the child and family. The first home visit must take place before the children enters into the classroom.

The teacher attempts a parent contact approximately every three months (Aug, Nov, Feb, Apr/May and July/Aug for full year).

Purpose of the Education Contacts

An education contact is a time for parents and teacher to fill out paperwork, update emergency information, exchange thoughts and ideas, and discuss the child’s learning and development.

The family advocate may choose to attend the HS/EHS conference or may collaborate with the teacher to discuss needed health or social service needs with the family.

Planning an Education Contact

Selecting a time is important for families and teachers. Parents and Teachers both have needs to be considered and must have a voice in choosing the time.

Teachers need to accommodate the needs of parents when scheduling education contacts. When both parents work, it may be necessary to offer the option of evening or weekend hours. Specific invitations to fathers and accommodations to their schedules demonstrate that teachers value the participation of fathers.

Locate a private location when conducting contacts at the center post a sign on the door, “Conference in Progress. Do Not Disturb.” This will let families know that the conversation will be strictly confidential. Privacy may be needed away from the child to facilitate comfort in talking. Teachers will model sensitivity and respect for children’s feelings by not discussing issues within auditory range of the child.

To prepare for the education contact the teacher should consider

- Date & time scheduled
- Coverage in classroom arranged
- Quiet, private area is arranged
- Organization of education file and portfolio
- Conference letter send to parents, DCFS, etc.
- List of questions for parents is prepared
- Outline of topics or subjects to discuss are prepared
- The environment prepared – privacy sign

A class newsletter before the conference time could be used to remind parents of actions they can take to help prepare for conferences. Suggestions might include getting their own goals for the conference, creating their own list of questions and topics for discussion, and setting a time for parents to observe their child in the classroom.

Begin Contact with a Positive Attitude.

Teachers will always begin their contact with a positive comment about the child. It is important to indicate to parents at the outset that you like and appreciate their children. Parents are more likely to accept later comments or concerns if the conference begins with a Teacher’s clear indication that she has paid specific attention and knows the child well.

Strategies for a successful conference

- Be mindful of parent’s time
- Establish rapport
- Begin on a positive note
- Encourage the parents to talk
- Listen attentively
- Develop an attitude of mutual cooperation
- Encourage suggestions from the parents
- Address child/family goals/needs
- Summarize points covered
- Make plans together for future actions
- End on a note of continuing cooperation
- Make follow-up notes after conference

Teachers need to offer information in an objective way without implying evaluation or criticism. This means avoiding the labeling of a child. If the teacher needs to share challenging issues/behavior with a parent it is best to describe the behavior instead of labeling the child.

For example...

He sometimes hits when he wants a specific toy....instead of he is mean.

She sometimes tells other children in the classroom how they should play....instead of she is bossy.

He sometimes sits to the side of the group instead of engaging in the activity... instead of he is shy.

When parents turn a conversation to personal matters not directly related to their child, teachers need to make it clear that their only role is to listen supportively if the parent needs to talk, ensuring confidentiality and to refer to more expert community resources if a parent seems interested.

Difficult Discussions

During the contact, teachers may need to share concerns with a family. It is important that teachers already have laid some groundwork in previous conversations. The concern should not come as a complete surprise to the parent. Teachers must empathize with the emotional response if a parent hearing difficult news.

If parents become verbally abusive or irrational in anger, it is impossible to communicate effectively. At this point, a teacher's task is to defuse the anger so that communication can begin. To do this, it is crucial not to become defensive or angry in return. A teacher needs to remain calm, speaking softly and slowing. Teacher must demonstrate an acceptance of the parent's rights to their opinions.

Nonattendance at a Contact

Remember that nonattendance at a contact does not necessarily indicate disinterest in the child or the school. Instead, it may reflect different cultural or social economic values, extreme pressures, or the stress of family or work demands.

A teacher's response to non-attendance should be to review the possible explanations for nonattendance. See if different scheduling or educational actions will help, persist in invitations and efforts, and understand that other methods of reaching a parent will have to be used in the meantime.

Scheduling Contacts

Two weeks prior to the scheduled contact month, the teacher sends a note home or makes a phone call to explain the purpose of the contact and schedule a date and time. *For foster children, DCFS caseworker will also be contacted.*

If the parent does not respond to the first note, within two (2) days, a formal letter is mailed to the parent/guardian by the teacher. If there is no response after the second attempt the teacher will attempt a third time to contact the family and schedule a conference. If the third attempt is unsuccessful the teacher will ask the family advocate to assist in contacting the family. The teacher will need to give the family advocate enough information to schedule the parent-teacher conference or home visit with the family. The teacher will follow the no contact made process on the *Education Contact Report*.

Education Contact Report- No Contact Made

All attempts to schedule a home visit or conference will be documented under the “staff comment” section on the *Education Contact Report*. After the third attempt the unsigned *Education Contact Report* with a large X over the signature section will be forward to the Site Supervisor. **Note:** (The children’s “end of program year” paperwork may be mailed to the family for unsuccessful end of year contacts.) The teacher will document this on the Education Contact Report.

Home Visit

The first education contact for HS/EHS is scheduled in the home before the child’s entry into the classroom. The second education contact in the home is scheduled in November.

Home visits are at least one hour in length. They are scheduled to allow sufficient time to learn about the child’s family and to allow adequate time for parents to ask questions about the program and inquire about their child’s participation. Teachers need to be responsive and flexible to families’ needs during the time of the visit.

Home visits may be conducted with a parent, step-parent, foster parent, or relative that is the primary care giver. Any questionable situations are referred to the Education Coordinator in consultation with the Executive Director.

A child’s presence is not a requirement of any particular home visit and a home visit should not be canceled because of a child’s absence.

Note: The Education Coordinator is contacted if parents refuse a visit in the home or if teachers cannot visit the home due to health or safety issues.

Parent Conferences

The parent-teacher conference is scheduled to allow adequate time for parents to ask questions about the program and inquire about their child’s participation. Teachers need to be responsive and flexible to families’ needs during the time of the conference.

Education Records

A Assessment Records ssessment records that are shared with family will show the growth of the child while he/she is in our program and provide examples of the developmental levels indicated in the checkpoints. These records are kept in a portfolio and given to the family at the end of the year. They will include:

- original work with name, date, and anecdotal note
- pictures and anecdotal notes from TS GOLD assessment portfolio for each collection period
- returned copies of Weekly Goal Charts, Linking Home/School Pages
- Individual Child Report, if requested by parent

Education Contact Report – FORM in English and Spanish.

All planned and non-planned activities that occur on home visits or parent/teacher conferences are documented on the *Education Contact Report*. The teacher forwards the original *Education*

Contact Report to the Site Supervisor and makes a copy for the child's education file. The *Education Contact Report* is due to supervisor after each completed family contact. For HS/EHS children the child's attendance % and weekly goal chart information is reported on the ECR. A Child Plus report will be printed by the Family and Community Services Coordinator, to assist teachers with reporting children's classroom attendance to parents.

Parent-Teacher Agreement – *FORM in English and Spanish*

During the first education visit, the HS/EHS teacher and parent review the Parent/Teacher Agreement form. The agreement specifies the variety of ways in which parents may be involved in the program. There may be areas the parent cannot agree to do. This is acceptable. This list is only to let parents know what the program expects of them. The parents will be asked to commit to four things. The teacher may need to emphasize the importance of completing and returning weekly goal charts (homework), good attendance, and reading to child daily, and completing health needs. The original form is filed in the child's Education file. It will be revisited at following contacts if the family is not meeting the program goals for returning 70% of weekly goal charts or 85% attendance.

Cultural/Home Language Survey

At the first education visit for HS/EHS children the *Child/Family Cultural Survey* will be completed with families willing to share their family culture for individualization and curriculum planning. The parents are the resource for integrating cultural activities into the classroom. The form will also identify children who are Dual Language Learners. These scores are transferred into the Home Language Survey in GOLD. The *Education Survey for School Readiness* (on the back of this form) identifies the Kindergarten or Preschool eligible child. The child's strengths, temperament, interests, educational goals, etc. are recorded on this form. The information of the *Education Survey for School Readiness* is reviewed with parents during the first parent-teacher conference, for goal planning.

Release of Children - *FORM in English and Spanish*

The Release of Children form is completed by the Family Advocate (Assistant Site Supervisor or supervisor for child care) on the Intake Visit. The form is placed in the classroom Health & Safety Notebook. The teacher is responsible to make sure the necessary information is listed on the Release Form. The teacher will review the Release Form during Home Visits and Parent Teacher Conferences, noting this on the top of the form by initialing and dating it.

Permission and Consent from Parent *FORM in English and Spanish*

On the Family Advocate's Intake visit (child care intake with Assistant Site Supervisor), the *Permission and Consent from Parents* form is explained to the parent/guardian, completed, and signed. The FA will copy the form for the child's DCFS File and the original form is mailed to Central Office. The teacher will place a copy of "NO" to Permission for Publicity in the classroom Health & Safety Notebook.

If a parent states that they do not wish their child or family to be photographed, the teacher is responsible for making managers, supervisors, and classroom staff working with that child aware of this.

Permission for Publicity for Foster Children

If a foster child is enrolled, the Family Advocate notes this on the form. Under DCFS Policy Guide 2017.07, a foster child's picture may only be used in the classroom/center and portfolio, as

long as the child is not identified as a DCFS youth in care. Photos, videos, or names are not to be used outside of the classroom or center.

File Maintenance Checklist

Staff uses the *File Maintenance Checklist* to maintain children's files in the field. The form is attached to the front of the child's education file and items inside are checked off in the first column. When a child leaves the program staff will follow instructions on the form to shred or retain the form in the file, or submit form to appropriate coordinator. Files for children who drop mid-year will be gathered (attach all past year's files) and given to the family advocate to attach all other files (family file, DCFS file) before forwarding to Central Office. At the end of the year, children's files will be brought to the Camp Point Center by the Site Supervisors for the end of year checkout procedure.

Toilet Training Agreement

This form is completed by the teacher with the parent prior to toilet training and the parent will receive a handout on toilet training. If the child is not ready at the time of the Education visit, the agreement may be done when the child is ready. A conference can be set up to go over the agreement at that time

Family Conference Form – TS GOLD FORM

The Family Conference Form is created from finalized checkpoints and teacher documentation. The teacher creates the *Family Conference Form* after checkpoints are finalized and the report is used for parent contacts, communication with school districts, and individual planning with parents.

The *Family Conference Form* is a one-page document describing a child's development.

The teacher selects one objective & documentation from each of the developmental areas.

1. social-emotional development with documentation
2. physical development with documentation
3. language development with documentation
4. cognitive development with documentation
5. literacy with documentation
6. math with documentation
7. Optional - science & technology, social studies, and the arts.

The teacher then plans for the child's next steps by identifying 10 possible goals to discuss with the parent. The parent will select five or more goals based upon the child's current developmental levels. This is indicated by the parent initialing or starring the goals chosen. A copy of the *Family Conference Form* is given to the parent and the original with initials and parent and teacher signatures is kept in the child's Education File. This report is completed for children who have been enrolled in the program for at least 8 weeks.

Note: You cannot create a Family Conference Form unless you have entered objective/ authentic documentation and completed checkpoints. New teachers have the option to use On-the-Spot Checklist to document children's learning with a minimum of entering school readiness goals into TSGOLD for checkpoints and creating the Family Conference Form.

The teacher creates a new *Family Conference Form* after each checkpoint period is finalized (3 checkpoints (fall, winter, spring) for part year classrooms; 4 checkpoints for full year classrooms).

Progress is discussed and new goals are chosen. A copy is left with the family and the original signed copy is kept in the child's file (the SS will need to enter the date of report into Child Plus).

If the child is Not Developing as Expected, the teacher will contact Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator for a possible referral.

Family Role with Assessment & Child Goals

Individualization and parent engagement occurs on the Weekly Goal Chart for Head Start and Early Head Start children. The Weekly Goal Chart is introduced and explained to parents during the First Education Visit. Teachers will fill out the weekly goal chart and attach an activity from TS GOLD Resource Library, ASQ Learning activities or Ready Rosie. A minimum of one objective is written each week by the teacher, beginning at Week 2.

Teachers must plan at least one male involvement activity per month and document this on the INKIND Record Report. Teachers will select an activity from the above choices that allows children to interact with the child's male role model and parents will document the time spent completing this activity.

The parent completes the bottom section which asks if the child enjoyed the activity and if the parent feels the child accomplished the goal. The parent returns the Weekly Goal Chart to the teacher. The teacher will explain to the family the importance of working on this goal and assessing the child's progress towards meeting the weekly goal. The parent's assessment can be documented to TSGOLD.

The returned Weekly Goal Charts are placed in the Child's Portfolio to support parent involvement with assessment. The number of Weekly Goal Charts completed and returned will be used for Family Engagement Outcomes. The teacher will count the number of Weekly Goal Charts that have been sent out and returned for each child and report that number to the SS with each checkpoint (these numbers will be recorded as a cumulative total-for the entire year).

Communicating with families in-person or remote

The Creative Curriculum Cloud offers many resources designed to be shared with families. These resources are full of ideas for simple, developmentally appropriate activities that families can easily do with their children using materials typically found at home. Furthermore, many of these activities include prompts to guide the adult's interactions with and observation of the child.

This communication tool in the Family Icon offers secure, real-time, two-way communication with each family via a family member's email address. The tool makes it easier than ever for a family member to share documentation with a teacher—and easier for the teacher to instantly add that documentation into GOLD®.

Family-Facing Resources*

- *At-Home Guided Learning Plans*
- *Guided Learning Experiences*
- *Family Mighty Minutes*®
- *LearningGames*®

Family Engagement & In-kind

We believe family engagement is critical to the success of our program. It is vital that teachers encourage families to engage in their child's education in any way possible. There are many ways for families to be engaged in our program.

- Volunteer in the classroom or on field trips
- Preparing materials or help in other areas of the center
- Share a skill or hobby with the classroom
- Read a book to the children
- Serve on policy council, parent committee or other groups
- Work with their child weekly using the Weekly Goal Chart
- Sharing curriculum ideas with the teacher
- Attending education contacts, family events and other PACT activities
- Completing health requirements for their child
- And many others

The teacher is responsible to encourage the family to participate and give them the tools necessary to be successful in the ways they choose to participate (this may mean guidance, materials or just encouragement). The relationship between the teacher and family is often the key factor that affects parent engagement.

In-kind Record Report - FORM for (Also see *In-kind Training Guide*)

The In-kind Record Report is introduced by the Family Advocate on the Intake Visit. The Family Advocate will explain In-kind and provide samples to families. The teacher will follow-up on their first Education Visit explaining the Weekly Goal Chart, Linking Home and School form for Head Start and how it feeds into the In-kind form.

The teacher is responsible to help parents understand how to document In-kind (parent time). The teacher reviews and looks over the In-kind Record Report for realistic donation of time, especially during the first month.

Questionable In-kind time should be brought to Family Advocate's attention. Remember, the extra time spent on teaching parents how to record In-kind at the beginning of the year will be beneficial throughout the program year.

In EHS, the teacher is responsible for tracking In-kind Record Reports on the In-kind Tracking Grid, checking for realistic time and forwarding the In-kind Records Reports to central office. The EHS teacher will contact families not turning in their weekly In-kind Record Report. After checking INKIND and signing it, please give it to your Site Supervisor. The Site Supervisor will scan it to the Share file and return the original to you, for the child's education portfolio.

In Head Start, the In-kind Record Reports are forwarded to the Family Advocate. The Family Advocate tracks the returned In-kind Record Reports for HS Teachers. After reviewing and signing the INKIND Record Report the Family Advocate will give it to the Site Supervisor to

scan it to the Share file and return the original to you, for the child's education portfolio.

Volunteer Sign-in Sheet – This form is used for parents and volunteers to sign in when they volunteer in the classroom. This form is submitted monthly to the central office.

Safety and Wellness Check-Ins

During the program year, management will conduct scheduled, 30-minute observations in center classrooms (Head Start and Early Head Start both) to observe and identify strengths, needs, and assess the classroom for any health and safety concerns. These will take place in October and March. A check-in will also be held in January with the staff but will not include an observation.

After the observations, the manager(s) will meet with the classroom staff, family advocate, and site supervisor, to offer feedback about what was observed. The goal is to give more immediate feedback to teaching staff and supervisors, identify children and families that need more support, provide direct support to staff, and identify practices in the classroom that need support such as coaching, health/safety, teaching practices, routines, etc.

This time will also include class reviews to talk about concerns, assistance needed, or issues related to children. Not every child needs to be discussed. Teachers should be prepared to discuss any issues/concerns they have about children in their classroom. Support staff, such as Aides and Transportation staff, need to be present wherever possible and supervisors can work out subs for them to be present in the classrooms that they need. The attending Coordinator(s) will be responsible for starting the meeting, documenting notes on the monitoring tool and keeping the discussion on track.

As discussions about individual children/families are had, the team will discuss whether the concern needs to be addressed individually (a coordinator or the teacher can take care of it) or if a Family Support Plan is needed. If the group believes a Family Support Meeting needs to be held, it will be indicated on the *Class Roster for Child Case Reviews* and shared with the Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator for follow-up. Teachers will also be encouraged to begin PBS paperwork on children if they have not already done so. All Coordinators will meet at Central Office after all Check-Ins have been completed and discuss their findings, needed follow up, including those needing a Family Support Meeting.

Checkpoint Timeline

End of October

- Fall TSGOLD Checkpoints must be finalized for Head Start/Early Head Start.
- Print Class Profile and [view](#) Individual Profile online to assess classroom strengths and needs, complete weekly lessons/experiences, complete Individual Planning Form and to complete **Child Outcomes Worksheet**, and forward to SS
- Create and Print 2 copies of Family Conference Report to share with families

End of January

- Winter TSGOLD Checkpoints must be finalized for all classrooms.
- Print Class Profile and [view](#) Individual Profile online to assess classroom strengths and needs, complete weekly lessons/experiences, complete Individual Planning Form and to complete **Child Outcomes Worksheet**, and forward to SS
- Create and Print 2 copies of Family Conference Report to share with families

End of April

- Spring TSGOLD Checkpoints must be finalized for Head Start/Early Head Start.
- Print Class Profile and [view](#) Individual Profile online to assess classroom strengths and needs, complete weekly lessons/experiences, complete Individual Planning Form and to complete **Child Outcomes Worksheet**, and forward to SS
- Create and Print 2 copies of Family Conference Report to share with families

End of July (Full Year only)

- Summer TSGOLD Checkpoints must be finalized for all classrooms.
- Print Class Profile and [view](#) Individual Profile online to assess classroom strengths and needs, complete weekly lessons/experiences, complete Individual Planning Form and to complete **Child Outcomes Worksheet**, and forward to SS
- Create and Print 2 copies of Family Conference Report to share with families