

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: _____ N. _____

Date: February 28, 2007

Topic: Report on Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Physical and Motor Development and for Personal and Social Development (Preschool Standards)

Presenter: Mr. Mark Allan, Director of Elementary Instruction

Telephone Number: 804-786-3925 **E-Mail Address:** Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov

Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by
 State or federal law or regulation
 Board of Education regulation
 Other: _____

Action requested at this meeting Action requested at future meeting: _____ (date)

Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action
date October 26, 2005
action A report on preschool standards in science, history and social science was presented to the Board of Education.

Background Information: In 2001, the Department of Education developed the document, *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Guidelines for Literacy and Mathematics*. The purpose of the document was to provide early childhood educators a set of guidelines for literacy and mathematics with indicators of success for entering kindergarten students. A committee of Department of Education specialists, literacy and mathematics professors from Virginia universities, and public and private preschool teachers and administrators developed the guidelines using current scientifically-based research. The guidelines reflected a consensus of children's conceptual learning, acquisition of basic knowledge, and participation in meaningful and relevant learning experiences.

During the 2004 session of the Virginia General Assembly, language was added to the Appropriation Act for the At-Risk Four-Year-Old Program (The Virginia Preschool Initiative) requiring the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs to establish academic standards that are in accordance with appropriate preparation for students to be ready to successfully enter into kindergarten. The additional language required that these standards be established in such a manner as to be measurable for student achievement and success.

In order to comply with these requirements, the Department of Education convened a committee of Department of Education specialists and preschool teachers and administrators to review and revise *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Guidelines for Literacy and Mathematics*. The result of their work was the document *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Literacy and Mathematics*.

During the spring and summer of 2005, the Department of Education convened a committee of department specialists and preschool teachers and administrators to develop preschool standards for four-year-olds in the areas of science, and history and social science. The result of their work was the document *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Science, and History and Social Science*.

During the summer and fall of 2006, the Department of Education developed preschool standards for four-year-olds in the areas of physical and motor and personal and social development. They were reviewed by preschool teachers, administrators, and the team members for the state's Early Childhood Grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). The result of their work is the attached document *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Physical and Motor Development and for Personal and Social Development*.

Summary of Major Elements: *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Physical and Motor Development and for Personal and Social Development* describes specific indicators for preschool children in the areas of physical and motor and personal and social development. These guidelines provide early childhood educators with a set of minimum standards with indicators of success in these areas for entering kindergarten.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept the report.

Impact on Resources: This responsibility was conducted within the agency's existing resources. If the agency is required to absorb additional responsibilities related to this activity, other services may be impacted.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: The Department of Education will notify school divisions of the preschool standards and the legislative requirement to comply with these preschool standards in Virginia preschool programs.

Virginia's
Foundation Blocks
for Early Learning:
Standards for
Physical and Motor
Development and for Personal
and Social Development
(Preschool Standards)

Presented to the
Virginia Board of Education

February 28, 2007

Standards for Physical and Motor Development

Introduction

Research has established a compelling link between physical development and cognition, language, personal and social development. Through body movement the brain internalizes the foundations of laterality (left, right), directionality (up, down, in, out), and position in space (over, under, behind). These processes are developed through early motor development and are critical to mathematical thinking, as well as beginning reading and writing. They lay the foundation for the child to "see" how letters are formed and put them together in patterns called words, and to translate this understanding into symbols on paper in the form of writing.

The brain and body's movement and learning systems are interdependent and interactive with body movements. Gross and fine motor movement experiences provided at the preschool level need to be structured to

encourage a child's brain to use the movement experiences as building blocks for future learning.

Within the preschool daily schedule there should be strong emphasis on both gross and fine motor development activities. Outdoor and indoor physical activity should be an integral part of the curriculum and should be viewed as an opportunity for learning. If children are provided with positive movement experiences at an early age they may later choose to participate in physical activities and stay active for a lifetime.

All children, regardless of physical or mental development, learn by moving through their environment and should be provided with opportunities to participate in preschool motor learning activities with appropriate modifications.¹

Physical and Motor Development Foundation Block

Skilled Movement:

The child will build body awareness, strength and coordination through locomotor activities, non-locomotor (stability) activities and manipulative skills.

Movement Principles and Concepts:

The child will demonstrate the use of the movement concepts of directions, levels, pathways, and effort.

Personal Fitness:

The child will participate in structured and unstructured physical activity designed to increase heart rate and breathing along with improving muscular strength and flexibility.

Responsible Behaviors:

The child will demonstrate good listening skills and cooperative behaviors.

Physically Active Lifestyle:

The child will participate in physical activity and explain why physical activity is good for health.

Virginia Physical and Motor Development

Foundation Block 1

Skilled Movement

The child will build body awareness, strength and coordination through locomotor activities, non-locomotor (stability) activities and manipulative skills.

Locomotor Activities

Locomotor activities (walking, running, galloping) are built on patterns. The brain prepares for learning by mastering movements that lay the framework for sequencing thoughts and recognizing patterns. Information arranged in patterns is more easily processed, stored and retrieved. Mathematics concepts, the alphabet, etc., are built on patterns.

Locomotor Skills

- a) Demonstrate progress in performing the mature level of selected locomotor skills.
- b) Demonstrate initial, elementary and mature forms of walking and running.

(Note: Initial is the first efforts at a movement skill; Elementary is the intermediate phase; and Mature is the form the movement should resemble when done correctly.)

Sample Activities

- Practice leaping, jumping, hopping (unilateral movements) and galloping (bilateral movements). Skipping (cross-lateral movement) should be added after mastery of the unilateral and bilateral movements.
- Present opportunities for practice of all locomotor skills both indoors and outdoors. Add objects (e.g., jump ropes) for the students to maneuver around safely and also to step/leap/jump into, out of and over.
- Using a thick mat on the floor, allow children to lie down on their stomachs and roll stomach to side to back to side to stomach (log roll) for the length of the mat.

Virginia Physical and Motor Development

Foundation Block 1

Skilled Movement (cont'd)

The child will build body awareness, strength and coordination through locomotor activities, non-locomotor (stability) activities and manipulative skills.

Non-locomotive Skills

Non-locomotive skills (stability) use the sensory components of balance, coordination, spatial awareness, directionality, and vision; and are developed as the child rolls, creeps, crawls, spins, twirls, bounces, balances, walks, jumps, juggles, and supports his or her own weight in space. A series of non-locomotor movement progressions prepare the brain for input and processing.

- a) Maintain a stable static position while practicing specific balances.
- b) Maintain balance while performing a controlled spin.
- c) Maintain balance while walking on a painted line or a low balance beam that is no more than three inches above the floor.
- d) Maintain balance while climbing up steps and walking on a horizontal ladder placed on the floor.
- e) Perform criss-cross pattern activities that will stimulate the brain.

Sample Activities

- Provide opportunities for the child to practice balancing on one or more body parts.
- Provide opportunities for the child to spin with arms extended at shoulder height away from the body at least three revolutions without losing his/her balance.
- Provide opportunities for the child to walk forward and backward on a painted line or on a low balance beam that is no more than three inches above the floor.
- Provide opportunities for the child to practice bending, shaking, turning, twisting, swaying, and swinging.
- Practice simple activities that cross the midline of the body, such as hugging oneself by crossing arms, patting oneself on the shoulders, and tapping the right knee with the left hand and the left knee with the right hand.

Virginia Physical and Motor Development

Foundation Block 1

Skilled Movement (cont'd)

The child will build body awareness, strength and coordination through locomotor activities, non-locomotor (stability) activities and manipulative skills.

Manipulative Skills

Manipulative skills of toss, catch, throw, aim, strike, jump, juggle, kick, bounce, and dribble develop visual tracking of moving objects, eye-hand and eye-foot coordination, visual fields, cross lateralization, sequencing of patterns, and dynamic balance. These skills aid the brain in organizing thoughts in sequence, and tracking exercises strengthen the eye muscles and visual fields used in reading.

- a) Manipulate a variety of objects during structured and unstructured physical activity settings.
- b) Manipulate small objects using one hand independently, the other hand independently, and both hands working on the same task.

Sample Activities

- Provide yarn balls, helium quality balloons, and playground balls no larger than 8 inches, as well as bean bags both large and small for the child to manipulate. Styrofoam bricks can be used to build or work on patterns. Scarves can be employed to practice non-threatening catching and throwing.
- Practice throwing, catching, kicking, and striking skills in a safe physical activity setting or environment. Large targets offer an opportunity for the children to try to refine a manipulative skill.
- Provide large plastic nuts and bolts at a work station or center that screw together. Ask the children to unscrew the nut with one hand and screw the nut back on. Then ask the children to switch hands so that the other hand can be used to unscrew and screw the nut on the bolt.
- Provide objects for the children to practice grasping, such as safety scissors for cutting and crayons for drawing or coloring (fine motor skills).

Virginia Physical and Motor Development Foundation Block 2 Movement Principles and Concepts

The child will demonstrate the use of the movement concepts of directions, levels, pathways, and effort.

Movement Concepts

Movement is navigation in one's environment and allows the child to develop motor skills, self awareness, self esteem, and social skills critical to a child's ability to learn. Children gain the knowledge of movement by practicing the concepts regularly during structured or unstructured movement opportunities offered both indoors and outdoors.

- a) Apply knowledge of movement concepts by performing various locomotor movements while changing directions (right, left, up, down, forward and backward), levels (high, medium, and low), pathways (straight, curved, and zig-zag), and effort (fast, slow, hard, and soft).
- b) Identify fundamental movement patterns.
- c) Begin and expand movement vocabulary.
- d) Perform various locomotor movements demonstrating changes in directions, levels, pathways, effort, and relationships in space while listening to music, or responding to a drum beat, the beat of a tambourine, verbal instruction, or other signal.

Sample Activities

- Provide opportunities for drama and imagery, allowing the children to explore. Examples include, but are not limited to, "Going on a Bear Hunt" or acting out songs such as "Five Little Monkeys."
- Create opportunities for the children to explore by crawling through tunnels and large cardboard boxes.
- Use musical activities to explore directions, levels, pathways, effort, and space, focusing on relationships of over/under, behind/in front of/ alongside of, and around/through.
- Provide opportunities for mirroring and matching with a partner, along with imitation of various animals and their movements.
- Use music and rhythmical activities to stimulate listening for cues.
- Provide opportunities for naming movement skills and concepts.

Virginia Physical and Motor Development

Foundation Block 3

Personal Fitness

The child will participate in structured and unstructured physical activities designed to increase heart rate and breathing while improving muscular strength and flexibility.

Personal Fitness

Physical fitness is having a healthy body and mind. When children engage in exercise that elevates the heart rate, the brain and body go into a homeostatic state, balancing brain chemicals, hormones, and body system functions. This homeostatic state increases the brain's ability to retain or retrieve memory. Blood traveling to the brain at a greater rate feeds the brain the needed nutrients of oxygen and glucose. Engaging in vigorous activity gives the brain the nutrients it needs to function at an optimal state and benefit the learner.

- a) Participate in activities that allow the child to experience a rise in the heart rate and breathing rate.
- b) Demonstrate the ability to determine if the heart is beating faster after activity.
- c) Participate in activities designed to strengthen major muscle groups.
- d) Participate in activities that enhance flexibility.

Sample Activities

- Provide opportunities for the child to climb, hang, and swing on large appropriately-sized indoor and outdoor recreational equipment.
- Take periodic walks in the neighborhood, to a specific park, or walk the perimeter of the outdoor recreational area with brief breaks for gathering information about the trip.
- Provide opportunities for the children to ride large-wheeled tricycles.
- Check an increase in heart rate by having the child place the right hand on/near the heart and then raising the left hand above the head. The left hand should open and close with each heart beat.
- Provide opportunities for children to imitate animal movements, especially those that require using the arms to support the body weight (bear crawl/walk, seal walk, crab walk).

Virginia Physical and Motor Development Foundation Block 4 Responsible Behaviors

The child will demonstrate good listening skills and cooperative behaviors.

Responsible Behaviors

All children must be provided with opportunities to experience rules regarding safety and behaviors towards others, as well as to demonstrate an understanding of what cooperation means. These behaviors need to be practiced on a regular/daily basis so that acceptable behaviors may be positively learned and reinforced.

- a) Demonstrate safe behaviors by applying rules regarding behaviors in a physical activity setting.
- b) Share equipment and space, and take turns with help from the teacher.
- c) Work well with all children.
- d) Listen to and follow simple directions.

Sample Activities

- Provide opportunities for the child to participate in simple, non-competitive activities to encourage sharing, cooperating, and taking turns.
- Provide opportunities for the child to explain simple safety rules including knowing where the safe play space is by walking around the safe play space perimeter, or by moving around a hula hoop or designated shape or space.
- Provide opportunities for each child to work with every other child by sharing a ball, bean bag, or some piece of play equipment.
- Provide opportunities for a child to demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of "stop" and "start" as well as "listen" by providing positive reinforcement of these cues when the child performs them correctly.

Virginia Physical and Motor Development Foundation Block 5 Physically Active Lifestyle

The child will participate in physical activity and explain why physical activity is good for health.

Physically Active Lifestyle

Regular physical activity prepares the brain for learning by providing a healthier body that works more efficiently. Young developing brains benefit from regular physical activity.

- a) Identify the activities that they like and dislike.
- b) Describe what it means to be physically active and then have the opportunity to actively pursue the activities they have described.
- c) Participate in structured and unstructured physical activity every day.
- d) Participate in activities geared toward different levels of proficiency.
- e) Identify places at home, in the neighborhood and in the communities where children can play safely and be physically active.

Sample Activities

- Walk, run, jump, hop or gallop around the outdoor recreational area. During this time children should have access to large open spaces and be able to be active on large appropriate recreational equipment as well as being able to play with balls and other manipulative objects.
- Provide structured and unstructured physical activity/motor learning movement time each day.
- Teachers should model active behaviors for the child to emulate.

Resources

Listed below are additional resources that will provide more information about early childhood education. An * denotes a reference used for development of this document.

*Dennison, Gail E. and Paul E. Dennison. (1989). Brain Gym Teacher's Edition. Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. Ventura, CA.

*Jenson, Eric. (2000). Teaching with the Body in Mind. The Brain Store, Inc., CA.

*Gallahue, D. L. and Donnelly F.C. (2003). Developmental Physical Education for All Children. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

*Gallahue, D. L. and Ozman, J.C. (2002). Understanding Motor Development: Infants, Children, Adolescents, Adults. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

*Massachusetts Department of Education (2003). Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences. Malden, MA.

*McCall, Renee M. and Diane H. Craft. (2000). Moving With a Purpose: Developing Programs for Preschoolers of All Abilities. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

*National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2000). Appropriate Practices in Movement for Young Children Ages Three - Five. Washington, DC: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

¹Portions of this introduction have been adapted from "Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences". Permission has been granted by the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education Care. All Department publications are revised periodically. The complete and current version of "Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences" is available on the Internet at:
<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/TAGuidelinesForPreschoolLearningExperiences.pdf>

Standards for Personal and Social Development

Introduction

Research has established a compelling link between personal and social development and school success. The personal, social, and behavioral competence of young children is a strong predictor of academic performance in the early grades. Appropriate and supportive learning experiences provide an important foundation for personal and social growth.

Several aspects of personal and social development are particularly evident during the preschool years. Foundations of personal and social development involve changes in emotions, perceptions, communication, and interpersonal systems.

During the preschool years children are learning about themselves and others. Young children want to be liked, belong to groups, and be active participants. They need support as their emotional and perceptual abilities develop beyond their egocentric barriers.

A child's sense of self-worth and social competence is facilitated by social experiences. Early childhood education provides preschoolers with supportive social contexts to foster children's personal and social development.

Personal and Social Development Foundation Blocks

Self-Concept:

Block 1: The child will demonstrate self-confidence and self-reflection.

Self-Control:

Block 2: The child will show self-direction and responsibility.

Approaches to Learning:

Block 3: The child will show eagerness and persistence as a learner.

Interaction with Others:

Block 4: The child will interact easily with other children and with familiar adults.

Social Problem-Solving:

Block 5: The child will learn and use non-physical ways to resolve conflicts.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 1 Self-Concept

The child will demonstrate self-confidence and self-reflection.

Self-Concept

The essence of early personal and social development is a child's self concept. A sense of self-worth enables a confident child to participate in most classroom activities, express emotions, explore toys and materials, and interact with others in the classroom. To develop this confidence, many preschool children need opportunities to learn how to play with others. At times, young children need support in trying new classroom activities.

- a) Demonstrate knowledge of personal information including first and last name, gender, age, and birthday.
- b) Begin to recognize and express own emotions using words rather than actions.
- c) Recognize self as a unique individual and respect differences of others.
- d) Develop personal preferences regarding activities and materials.
- e) Demonstrate self-direction in use of materials.
- f) Develop increased independence in school activities throughout the day.

Sample Activities

- Provide opportunities for children to choose an activity, make a plan, and carry out the plan.
- Provide opportunities for children to share ideas and thoughts. Use small tables for snack time and facilitate a conversation between two children.
- Teach/model for children how to put on their jacket, hat, and other outdoor clothing. Provide plenty of time for children to get ready so they have time to practice these skills.
- Make sure classroom materials are accessible and labeled so children can use them independently and return them to a designated location.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 2 Self-Control

The child will show self-direction and responsibility.

Self-Control

Young children benefit from routines and structure. They find comfort and feel secure when they can predict the flow of events and people each day. Managing change can be a challenge for preschoolers. Young children are most successful handling transitions when they are told what to expect in advance. Prior knowledge enables young children to feel in control and participate without confusion.

- a) Contribute ideas for classroom rules and routines.
- b) Follow rules and routines within the learning environment.
- c) Use classroom materials purposefully and respectfully.
- d) Manage transitions and adapt to changes in routine.
- e) Develop positive responses to challenges.

Sample Activities

- Model for children what to do when they finish a snack. For example, clear their place by disposing of napkin and leftovers in the trash.
- Have child-size cleaning materials available and teach children how to use them. For example, children can sweep the sand around the sand table or use a sponge and bucket to clean up spilled paint.
- Teach the children a simple song to sing when it is time to transition from one activity to another.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 3 Approaches to Learning

The child will show eagerness and persistence as a learner.

Approaches to Learning

As young children develop more awareness perceptually, they are naturally curious and ask questions about everything they encounter. As children gain experience with asking questions, they ask for clarification or additional information. Preschoolers should be able to attend to tasks for 10-20 minutes. Learning to work until tasks are finished or problems are solved is challenging for children of this age group and they frequently need support in this area.

- a) Show interest and curiosity in learning new concepts and trying new activities and experiences.
- b) Demonstrate ability to learn from experiences.
- c) Increase attention to a task or activity over time.
- d) Seek and accept help when needed.

Sample Activities

- Collect samples on an outdoor field trip.
- Draw pictures about events and others.
- Participate in small group planning discussions.
- Select and complete a puzzle.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 4 Interaction with Others

The child will interact easily with one or more children and with familiar adults.

Interaction with Others

Young children are learning to communicate with others. This is an extraordinary challenge as it includes physical, social, linguistic, cognitive, emotional, and personal growth. To accomplish this new level of social interaction, many children need coaching and adult supervision. As a child learns appropriate styles of communication with others, the adult can reduce the amount of supervision and offer simple reminders as needed.

- a) Initiate and sustain interactions with other children.
- b) Demonstrate verbal strategies for making a new friend.
- c) Interact appropriately with other children and familiar adults by cooperating, helping, sharing, and expressing interest.
- d) Participate successfully in group settings.
- e) Demonstrate respectful and polite vocabulary.
- f) Begin to recognize and respond to the needs, rights, and emotions of others.

Sample Activities

- Model appropriate styles of communication with children and adults.
- Demonstrate interaction strategies through role-play.
- Use photographs of classroom activities as an opportunity for children to share their thoughts and ideas. Make a class record or graph of their thoughts and ideas.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 5 Social Problem-Solving

The child will learn and use non-physical ways to resolve conflicts.

Social Problem-Solving

Social situations can be a source of frustration for young children. At times, toys and turns seem more important than the feelings of others. Physical aggression is often the strategy of choice used by preschoolers to settle conflicts. Aggression seems to work at first, since the victim may relinquish the toy or give up a turn. Preschoolers need adult support and guidance in learning alternatives to aggression for resolving conflicts. Teachers should coach and model ways for children to communicate their needs and feelings verbally.

- a) Express feelings through appropriate gestures, actions, and words.
- b) Recognize conflicts and seek possible solutions.
- c) Allow others to take turns.
- d) Increase the ability to share materials and toys with others over time.
- e) Include others in play activities.

Sample Activities

- Role-play common classroom situations.
- List common social problems and ideas for solutions with the class.
- Discuss and make a poster of appropriate responses to social conflicts.
- Write a story with the children using a social situation and read it with the class.

Resources

Listed below are additional resources that will provide more information about early childhood education. An * denotes a reference used for development of this document.

*Dichetelmiller, M., J. Jablon, D. Marsden, and S. Meisels (2001). The Work Sampling System Preschool through Third Grade Omnibus Guidelines. New York, NY: Rebus Inc.

*MyTeachingPartner (2004). Building Language, Literacy, and Social Relationships. University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA. Available online at www.myteachingpartner.com

*Raver, C., and Knitzer, J. (2002). Ready To Enter: What Research Tells Policymakers About Strategies to Promote Social and Emotional School Readiness Among Three-and Four-Year Old Children. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.

*ZERO TO THREE (2003). Assuring School Readiness By Promoting Healthy Social and Emotional Development. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE Policy Center.

*Zins, Joseph (2004). Building Academic Success on Social and Emotional Learning: What Does the Research Say? New York: Teachers Press, Columbia University.