



**Office of School Readiness
First Class Pre-K
2017-2018 Classroom Guidelines**

TABLE OF CONTENT

I. Classroom Environment	Pg. 2
II. Classroom Community	Pg. 10
III. Discipline and Behavior Management	Pg. 13
IV. Planning, Teaching Learning Section	Pg. 16
V. Gross Motor (outdoor)	Pg. 23
Works Cited	Pg. 25



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NOTE: All OSR classrooms should use OSR funding to purchase copies of Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The book includes the NAEYC Position Statement as well a supplementary CD of more than 60 pdf readings and video examples of developmentally appropriate practice in action. Pages 1-50 and pages 111-183 are mandatory reading requirements for all OSR Lead and Auxiliary teachers. This book will serve as a valuable resource for you as a professional educator of young children.

I. Classroom Environment

“A preschool learning environment includes outside spaces, indoor places, and everything in between—toys, learning materials, wall displays, and equipment. It also includes the children and adults who interact in these spaces. A well-planned environment reflects the culture, home language, and interests of all children and their families. The learning environment has an important impact on children’s efforts to build relationships, play and learn, eat, and rest.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg.107) The social environment (schedules, responsibilities, expectations, and routines) works in tandem with the physical environment (materials, displays, learning areas, furniture, and maintenance) to create a positive and supportive learning community.

A. Displays and Bulletin Boards

1. Should be placed at the children’s eye level. Children should be able to see and interact with what is displayed.
2. Should reflect the current theme, study or topic (i.e. projects completed and displayed in December are not appropriate in the spring).
3. Should reflect the children’s interest and their creations.
4. Should provide opportunities for children to choose what they display or exhibit. Each child should have their own labeled and defined “space” for displayed work. The display of children’s work should not be limited to this area.
5. Should be primarily child or teacher-created materials rather than commercially purchased. Displays and bulletin boards should have a purpose; for instruction, for classroom interaction, or to exhibit children's current work.
6. Displays should include but are not limited to: charts, graphs, experience stories, teacher/child dictation, daily news, questions of the day, etc. These displays should

be meaningful, timely and relevant to current and/or recent themes of study.

These displays should be rotated on a regular basis. Environmental print and symbols such as logos, maps, and photos from the surrounding area and local community are suggested.

NOTE: if a site has the available space and chooses to display a Word Wall, it should be a VERY simple version. All words should be accompanied by a picture. The inclusion of "sight words" in a word wall is NOT aligned with DAP.

7. Display photographs of the children, their families and the community. "Display" can include bulletin boards, class books, digital photo frames, screen savers, etc.
8. Model correct spelling, punctuation, print conventions and handwriting.
9. Should be replaced as they begin to look faded or worn. Torn posters and art should be removed and replaced with fresh items.
10. Use the "less is more" approach when creating displays. Teachers should be cognizant that children with ADHD and children under the autism spectrum may become overwhelmed in a "busy" environment.
11. Use pictures and symbols as well as words.
12. Use large upper and lower case block letters and consistent forms and colors of print.

B. Responsibilities and Jobs

"When children do classroom jobs, they feel more like a part of the classroom community. Giving children important roles during transitions and routines can help their confidence and independence flourish. As children are actively involved in daily routines, they are less likely to feel bored or distracted, and more likely to act cooperatively with others." (Cairone & Mackrain, pg.99)

1. As part of the process of building a classroom community each child should be assigned a job.
2. Jobs should be rotated daily or weekly to ensure children have the opportunity to take different responsibilities.
3. A classroom helper/job chart should be displayed near the whole group area and referred to daily.
4. Job assignments should be consistent, inclusive and fair.
5. Jobs should not be used as a reward or punishment.
6. Children should be involved in deciding which jobs are needed to make the classroom community run smoothly.
7. Children should understand the responsibilities of each job.
8. Using photographs of children performing the jobs are an appropriate way to create the job chart. Other templates or commercial photographs are acceptable.
9. Your coach can provide suggestions for job titles as well as sources for graphics and clip art.

C. Picture Schedule

1. Classrooms are required to have a labeled daily routine picture schedule with words posted near the whole group area.
2. Photos of the children in various activities are ideal; commercial or teacher made photos are acceptable.
3. Include daily activities and routines; add special events or weekly activities as appropriate.
4. Children should consistently participate in monitoring the schedule (such as “moving the clothespin” to the next activity) and discussing the daily plans.
5. It is not necessary to include “clock times” in the picture schedule. The purpose of this schedule is to provide the children with a visual chronological reminder of the pre-K day.

D. Physical Environment

1. Safety practices must meet DHR regulations.
2. Learning materials and furnishings should be well maintained and cleaned on a regular basis. Worn rugs and furnishings should be replaced. “Well organized, equipped, and maintained environments support program quality by fostering the learning, comfort, health, and safety of those who use the program.”
(Cairone & Mackrain, pg126)
3. The classroom **MUST** be carefully arranged to allow the appropriate supervision of all students at all times.
4. The classroom should be clean, organized, and free from non- instructional clutter.
5. Teacher areas should be clutter free and must not intrude on children’s work space. Some classrooms, by their size and layout, may require the teacher to have a small desk/table for their personal/professional space. If this is necessary, teachers should be mindful of the space it occupies in the room and maintain the area in a way that sets a good example for the children.

E. Learning/Free Choice Areas

1. Area arrangement should be thoughtfully planned, clearly defined, identified with some sort of label or sign, and accessible to all children. “Children are less likely to run and get in each other’s way if traffic paths go around interest areas rather than from one end of the room to the other”. (Cairone & Mackrain. pg. 125)
2. Quiet and noisy areas should be separated so they do not interfere with or distract from adjacent areas. “Children are more likely to get involved in play and learning if they are not distracted by activities in other areas.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 125)
3. Shelves and storage bins should be labeled with words and photographs/pictures to support easy access and independent clean up.
4. Children should be introduced to each center gradually. (See Section II, Classroom Management)
5. **Routines and procedures for the use, care and clean-up of ALL classroom materials should be explicitly taught, modeled, and practiced.**

6. Begin the year with the minimum amount of required materials and add more as routines and procedures are established.
7. Rotate and adapt materials as needed for themes, seasons, and/or as children's interests change. "Remove materials and toys the children are no longer using and offer new items to provide fresh experiences and challenges." (Cairone & Mackrain. pg. 118)

F. Required Areas in Each Classroom

1. Cozy Area

"Offering safe, relaxing places for children to observe and take a break from noise and activity helps children build a sense of security. Once children feel relaxed and ready, they can return to group play. When children feel tired or overwhelmed, they may benefit from withdrawing from the noise and action for a while." (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 122)

This area is limited to one child. This area is established in a visible, but quiet area of the room. The area should contain soft furnishings, books, writing materials, sensory materials and quiet puzzles or games. This area can also be used for a child to regain control after misbehavior, before returning to group activities, but should not be referred to as "time out."

2. Art Area

This area should be near a water source with ample space for exploration. Materials should be stored on open shelves in containers that allow for easy access and clean up by the children. The Art Area is intended for free exploration and to encourage creativity by the children not for dictated craft activities.

ART	CRAFT
Creative, unique, original	Similar or identical to other children's
Comes from within the child	Directed by an adult
Open-ended, end results unknown	Direction oriented resulting in end product
Process is valued over end product	Finished product valued over process
Allows for self- expression	Copying and imitating expected

A variety of materials should always be available including the following:

- a. Books about colors, shapes, art, artists, creativity
- b. Drawing materials (minimum of 4): crayons, washable markers, pens, pencils, colored pencils, chalk, and various types and sizes of paper
- c. Tools: glue or paste, scissors, tape/dispenser, hole punch, stencils, stapler, rollers, stamps and cookie cutters for play dough
- d. Paints: (minimum of 4 types): finger paint, tempera paint, water colors, dot paints, roller paints, glitter paint. The area should also include a double sided easel, art aprons, and various size brushes and sponges.
- e. Three dimensional materials (minimum of 4): playdough or clay, wood pieces, foam pieces, buttons, cardboard, tubes, small boxes, craft sticks, chenille strips, egg cartons, found objects.

- f. Collage materials (minimum of 5): felt and fabric remnants, yarn/string, cotton balls, pom-poms, sequins, glitter, feathers, ribbon, wallpaper samples, wiggle eyes, lace, stickers.
3. Fine Motor/Manipulatives Area
- “Fine motor development progresses slowly during the preschool years but can be fostered by providing ample opportunities, appropriate tools, and adult support...”
(Copple & Bredekamp, pg. 119)
- This area should include the following materials:
- a. Small building toys (minimum of 3): interlocking blocks, Lincoln Logs, small table blocks, unifix cubes, bristle blocks, tinker toys, magnetic blocks
 - b. Manipulatives (minimum of 5): various sizes, shapes and colors of beads and laces, lacing cards, pegs/peg boards, pattern blocks, zip/snap/button toys, gears, snap blocks, links, nuts and bolts, pop beads, Mr. Potato Head, train tracks, tweezer activities.
 - c. Puzzles (minimum of 5): puzzles in frames, puzzles with/without knobs, puzzles without frames such as jigsaw puzzles and floor puzzles. Puzzles of varying degrees of difficulty should be available.
4. Listening Area
- The Listening Area should be located in a quiet area of the room and should be conducive to comfortably sit or recline. This area should include a CD player/listening device, headphones, and recorded stories/books.
Children should be explicitly taught the procedures to independently operate and care for the equipment.
5. Music and Movement
- “Most young children are uninhibited, enthusiastic performers and lovers of music and movement, both of which enrich children’s lives and learning in many ways.”
(Copple & Bredekamp, pg. 177)
- This area should include the following:
- a. Home-made or commercial instruments (enough that each child has one for whole group experiences), dance props such as scarves, ribbons, streamers, hats, tutus, shakers.
 - b. A variety of CD’s (minimum of 10) or the equivalent of 100 songs including songs from other countries, languages and cultures.
 - c. Access to a CD player/music source **separate** from the Listening Area.
6. Block Area
- The Block Area should have enough floor space for a minimum of 3 children to be able to independently build large structures. The blocks should be plentiful, organized, and easy to access and located in a space that is out of the traffic flow.
This area should include the following:
- a. Unit blocks and large hollow or homemade blocks
 - b. Accessories such as small vehicles, multi-cultural people figures, career people figures, traffic signs, animals

- c. Books about architecture, construction, buildings, transportation, etc.,
Pencils and paper for planning
- d. A large rug or carpeted area is required, for many classrooms the whole/large group area is the ideal location for the Block Area

7. Dramatic Play

“...research shows that pretend play strengthens cognitive capacities, including sustained attention, memory, logical reasoning, language and literacy skills, imagination, creativity, understanding of emotions, and the ability to reflect on one’s own thinking, inhibit impulses, control one’s behavior, and take another person’s perspective.” (Copple & Bredekamp, pg. 132)

The Dramatic Play area should be large enough for at least 3 children to engage in self-created make-believe play and should include the following:

- a. Books about families, food, and occupations as well as phone books, catalogs, real estate books, menus, note pads
- b. Play kitchen set with dishes, pots, pans, eating and cooking utensils, food containers, plastic food sets, measuring implements, bowls, placemats, and paper napkins, telephones/cell phones
- c. Other home props (minimum of 3): broom, mop, vacuum cleaner, ironing board/iron, stroller, shopping cart, etc.
- d. Dolls (multicultural), doll clothes, doll furniture, and unbreakable mirror
- e. Dress up clothes including community helpers, multicultural attire, generic attire, and costumes
- f. Gender specific (male and female) props such as shoes, hats, purses, wallets, scarves, dresses, ties, jackets
- g. Occupational props (minimum of 3): tool box/tools, workbench, safety goggles, luggage, doctor kit, cash register, computer keyboard, receipt books
- h. Theme related props for transforming the Dramatic Play area into imaginative play environments such as fantasy (capas, hats, wands, costume jewelry), seasonal (scarves, mittens, raincoats, umbrella), beauty shop, camping, pet store, doctor office, department store, restaurant, etc.

NOTE: The Dramatic Play area can be enhanced with “found” objects such as a real mixer, iron, or hair dryer with the cord removed, keys, phones, purses, baskets, shopping bags, etc.

8. Sensory and Discovery Tables or Bins

The Sensory area allows children the opportunity to manually experiment with a variety materials, including but not limited to sand and water. Children should have the opportunity to dig, scoop, pour, and naturally compare and measure materials of different texture, volume, and weight.

This area should include the following:

- a. Plastic tubs or tables with covers are appropriate.

- b. Examples of materials that can be changed out periodically/seasonally include: sand, water, fake snow, ice, soil, colored water, plastic chips, paper shreds, seasonal/holiday objects
- c. Cups, funnels, shovels, scoops, containers, magnifiers should be available

9. Writing Center

The writing area is separate from the Art Area. This area should be located in a space that allows for the exploration of the following materials:

- a. Pencils, markers, crayons, chalk/small chalkboards, dry erase markers/dry erase boards, clipboards, stamps/stamp pads, hole punch, tape, stapler, stencils, scissors, glue, keyboards, rulers, stickers
- b. Variety of papers, notepads, order forms, word cards, name cards, environmental print, catalogs, "junk mail", holiday or greeting cards, thank you cards, invitations, envelopes
- c. Writing materials (paper and pencils) should be available in all required areas
- d. Alphabet books, picture dictionaries

10. Reading Area/Library

The Reading Area should be located in a quiet section of the room with comfortable furnishings. It should include the following components:

- a. A minimum of 36 books in the classroom library and/or other learning areas, representing the following genres/categories: concept books (ABC, number, shapes, rhymes, alliteration), picture books, wordless picture books, people, predictable books, animals, fantasy, realistic fiction, multicultural, fairy tales, Caldecott winners, pattern books, biography, nature/science, poetry/nursery rhymes, abilities, classics, and theme-related books
- b. Class made books should be created and displayed on a regular basis
- c. The Reading Area should include comfortable furnishings such as beanbag chairs, small chairs or small sofa, pillows or cushions and a small rug. A minimum of one "face out" display storage is required for visibility and easy access to books. Additional books should be organized in baskets or bins by themes or genres. Children should be taught the procedure for choosing, enjoying, and returning books. Books should be rotated on a regular basis.
- d. The Reading Area should include additional language materials/props such as puppets, felt/flannel board story characters and stuffed animals.
- e. In addition to the Book Area related/appropriate books should be available in the Dramatic Play Area, Block Area, Writing Area, Science Area, Art Area, and Math Area.

11. Science/Nature Area

"Recognizing preschoolers' curiosity about the world around them, teachers focus on the uses and processes of science in children's everyday lives. They provide interesting experiences and materials that convey key scientific concepts (e.g. weight, light, cause and effect), as well as skills (e.g. predicting, observing, classifying, hypothesizing, experimenting, communicating)." (Copple & Bredekamp, pg. 173)

- a. Materials should include examples of life science/nature, physical science, and earth science. At least one living item such as a plant, fish, hermit crab, etc. should be included
- b. Materials should be rotated, refreshed, and updated as the children's interests change
- c. The area should include collections of natural objects such as seeds, rocks, seashells, leaves, acorns, etc.
- d. The following tools are required: magnifiers, measuring devices, balance scales, linear measuring devices, pipettes, magnets, tubs for sink/float, plastic trays for sorting, graphing charts, pencils and paper for recording data
- e. Minimum of 4 of the following should be rotated: "feely box", work bench and tools, puzzles, plastic insects/animals, color paddles, maps, prisms, ramps and balls
- f. A teacher directed science activity should occur at least once a week
- g. Reference books related to themes or seasons should be available

12. Math Area

"Teachers recognize children's interest in making sense of their world with mathematics. They build on children's intuitive, informal notions and encounters relating to math, making a point of supplying mathematical language and procedures. In other words teachers 'mathematize' children's everyday encounters." (Copple & Bredekamp, pg. 171)

The following materials for the five math standards should be available:

- a. Counting/Numbers (minimum of 5): counting animals/blocks, bingo game and chips, dominoes, counting games, magnetic numerals, unifix cubes, number/numeral puzzles, clocks, number books, tangrams, etc.
- b. Patterns (minimum of 3): pattern cards and blocks, unifix cubes, beads and strings, attribute blocks, tangrams, etc.
- c. Measuring (minimum of 3): unifix cubes, chain links, wooden cubes, 1 inch tiles, digital clocks, balance scale, tape measure or ruler, etc.
- d. Geometry (minimum of 3): pattern card blocks, shape puzzles, lacing shapes, geo-boards, parquetry blocks, magnetic shapes, etc.
- e. Data and Graphing (minimum of 3): sorting trays and items to sort, measuring devices, variety of laminated graphs, "hula hoops" for Venn diagramming, pencils and paper for data recording, etc.
- f. Math theme books (shapes, patterns, numbers, counting, comparison, etc.)

Note: Some classrooms may choose to combine the math and manipulative areas due to space limitations. This is acceptable as long as all the required materials for both areas are in place.

II. Classroom Community

A well-managed and inclusive classroom supports constructive and positive relationships, and discourages inappropriate behaviors. The goal is to help children develop self-regulation and autonomy. Creating this environment is a shared responsibility of the lead and auxiliary teacher, the director and all staff members (food service, custodial, special area teachers, volunteers, etc.) who work with the Pre-K child in the OSR classroom.

A. Families and Communities

“When early care and education providers and families work together to share information, plan together, and support the child’s abilities, needs, interests, and progress, children are more likely to succeed in school and life.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. B11)

1. Opportunities for volunteering and enrichment workshops should be offered on a monthly basis.
2. Regular school-home communication (i.e. notebooks/folders, newsletters, emails, conferences, phone calls, etc.) should be provided so that educational goals of the families and teachers for the child are complementary. Teachers should be mindful of what is shared with families in the form of daily/weekly notebooks or folders. This is an opportunity to focus on positive accomplishments, encourage review and discussion of daily school activities, and to share parenting resources. It is not best practice nor appropriate to incorporate a daily behavior log for each child. This time consuming practice is an ineffective tool in the attempt to change undesirable behaviors. Preschoolers are not developmentally capable of making the desired connection between their misbehavior and a behavior chart sent home at the end of the day or the week. There are times this method may be utilized for a child as part of a formal behavior plan put in place after conferencing with the family under the guidance of a local behavioral specialist. Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of strategies to connect and encourage all families to participate in their children’s experiences, keeping in mind what works for one family may not be beneficial to another family. “Ongoing communication helps relationships to grow and helps prevent misunderstandings that stem from miscommunication.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 181)
3. Families are viewed as partners and recognized as their child’s first and most important teacher, this includes opportunities for parental input into education. **It is powerful for children to see the important adults in their lives working together to support their development.**
4. Staff should show respect for diversity within and among families.
5. Teachers serve as an important early education resource for the community.

B. Building a Classroom Community

“Caring relationships are fostered through nurturing practices, and are the basis for building a safe, strong, and caring community in which everyone is accepted, secure, and ready to learn and have fun.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. B11)

1. Classroom routines and procedures should be explicitly taught, modeled, and practiced. Learning Areas and materials should be gradually introduced taking great care to teach all expectations. Routines, procedures, and expectations should be **regularly reviewed and practiced**. Your Coach can support and guide you through this process.
2. Children should learn to communicate appropriately and work through peer conflicts. Teachers should model desirable behaviors such as negotiating, sharing, and learning from mistakes. Help children practice solving challenging situations by using role-play. Teachers should **always** speak to children in a pleasant tone, using words that convey caring and respect. (Cairone & Mackrain, pgs. 143,144)
3. Teachers should be aware of and prevent, if possible, potential conflicts over materials and supplies by regularly observing which toys, materials and books are most popular. “Young children often want to play with the same toy as their friends, but **they are not developmentally ready** to take turns or share. Duplicates of favorite items minimize disagreements and waiting time.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 124)
4. Teachers should be aware of personality and/or family issues in the classroom. “When teachers are aware of families’ stressors, they can provide support, patience, and understanding that can alleviate adults’ anxiety so they can better support their children.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 192)
5. Classroom rules should be developed as a community, not posted before the children enter the classroom. “Children are more likely to follow rules they have helped set. When teachers involve children in the rule development process, children are more likely to understand why the rules are needed. When rules are simple and there are only a few, children can remember what they are supposed to do.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 147) The rules should be displayed in the classroom for continual reference throughout the course of the day. “Children often forget what constitutes appropriate behavior from one day to the next and from one situation to another.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 147)
6. Teachers and staff should engage all children in clean-up, transitions, celebrations, and other cooperative and community building activities.
7. Children/families are invited to contribute materials to the classroom learning areas (books, nature items, “trash to treasure” for the art area, etc.)
8. Accomplishments should be validated by promoting self-efficacy and confidence in children’s strengths such as, “You figured out that puzzle by yourself”, rather than external adult approval in statements such as, “I like the way you put that puzzle together”. “Children who are recognized for effort will make the connection between effort and improvement and will internalize the value of effort.” (Cairone & Mackrain pg. 140) hh

9. “When a child hears a description of the outcome of his behavior he/she is more likely to choose positive behaviors again in the future. Offering specific comments on a child’s words and actions lets him/her know that you are aware of, and in tune to what he/she is saying.” For example, “Anna, you took Addie’s hand and walked her to the swings. Then, you helped her climb up on the swing and gave her a gentle push. What a kind thing to do for a friend.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 214)

C. Cooperation Among Teachers

1. Lead and Auxiliary teachers share instructional responsibilities, child supervision, and other classroom duties. Lead and Auxiliary teachers **MUST** interact with the children during Learning/Free Choice time and Gross Motor time to facilitate children's play and to collect anecdotal notes for GOLD. “Language skills thrive when children and adults talk regularly with one another.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 168)
2. Lead and Auxiliary teachers work together to plan for the collection of GOLD documentation.
3. Lead and Auxiliary teachers model conversation, cooperation and collaboration throughout the preschool day. Mutual respect and professionalism is expected in the First Class Pre-K classroom at all times.
4. Lead and Auxiliary teachers **MUST** sit with the children during meals and snacks to facilitate appropriate conversation and to model respect, social skills, manners and healthy nutritional habits.
5. Lead and Auxiliary teachers should engage in at least one extended conversation with each child every day. Create a system to remind yourself to invest in **positive time** with each child. “Young children’s language development progresses most when they are actively engaged in verbal interaction and teachers encourage them to extend their comments.” (Copple & Bredekamp, pg. 166)

D. Transitions

“When transitions are well planned and children are not expected to wait for long periods of time, **which is something they are not yet developmentally ready to do**, behaviors are more likely to be positive.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg.96)

1. Teachers should minimize wait times with thoughtful planning and preparation.
2. Conduct transitions (hand washing, water breaks, bathroom, etc.) in small groups or individually when possible. Continually evaluate transitions to see what works well and what could be improved.
3. Transitions are learning opportunities. Use songs, games, finger plays, and other activities to extend learning.
4. **Model and practice** how you expect a transition to happen. Give children cues. Establish predictable routines and consistent goals.
5. Thoughtful scheduling and preparation minimizes the needs for unnecessary transitions throughout the day.

III. Discipline and Behavior Management (Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs, pgs. 150-159)

“Teaching preschoolers is hard work and can quickly become overwhelming when children’s behavioral concerns are a problem. There is no one solution or recipe that will ensure every day runs smoothly; however, there are steps teachers can take to help create a peaceful and inviting classroom, where both children and teachers feel safe and happy. Creating such places and implementing these practices ensures learning is happening at each and every moment, and children are gaining the social and emotional skills they need for a lifetime of success in and beyond the classroom.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 5)

- A. Teachers should model and support the Redirection and Conflict Mediation process as children learn to solve their own problems and conflicts by:
1. Acknowledging the conflict and the feelings of the children
 2. Allowing each child to speak and explain his/her perspective
 3. Helping the children decide on and implement a solution and plan different ways to behave in the future. Consider the implementation example below:

Implementation Tip

“Making Amends-The Play Dough Conflict”

Scenario 1: Forced Amends

Alec wants some of Tina’s play dough and takes it. Tina tries to grab the play dough back. Alec pinches Tina’s arm. Tina screams. The teacher arrives and comforts Tina. Then she “regains control” by putting Alec on a time-out chair. After a few minutes, the teacher lectures Alec on his inappropriate behavior. When done, she tells Alec, “Now you can go say you’re sorry.” Alec does, but he remains upset because he can only see the situation from his own viewpoint: Tina wouldn’t share, Tina got Alec in trouble, the teacher embarrassed Alec by her actions. Alec feels forced into an apology he doesn’t feel. Alec may feel resentment toward Tina, the teacher, and himself.

Scenario 2: Genuine Amends

Alec wants some of Tina’s play dough and takes it. Tina tries to grab the play dough back. Alec pinches Tina’s arm. Tina screams. The teacher arrives and comforts Tina, doing a quick triage to make sure there is no blood. Then she follows this five-finger formula for conflict mediation.

1. Make sure all parties calm down, **including the teacher**, which may or may not involve separating Alec—not for a time out—but to help him calm down.
2. Help each child say how she or he saw the conflict. Help children agree to each child’s version: “You saw it this way? And you saw it this way?” (The teacher leads but remains a neutral mediator, not a judge.)
3. Have the children brainstorm how they can resolve the conflict. Suggest possibilities if needed.
4. Help all parties together agree on a resolution, including what kids can do to resolve immediate conflict and what they can do next time instead.

5. Follow up individually with Alec if necessary. Explain to Alec quietly that he hurt Tina and ask him, “How do you think you can help her feel better?”

Note this difference between the two scenarios: Not “Now you go say you’re sorry” as a consequence imposed on the child as a result of causing a conflict. But, “How do you think you can help her feel better?” after both children have solved the problem together with the teacher’s guidance. When you give the child the power of a choice, he often says “I can tell him I am sorry.” But children also come up with other creative ideas: “We could put a wet paper towel on the ow-ee,” or “I could blow on the boo-boo so it feels better,” or “I could shake her hand and tell her I am sorry.” When the method of making amends comes from the child, the teacher can pretty well figure the reconciliation is sincere (Gartrell, 2010).

(This implementation Tip was written by Dan Gartrell for special inclusion in: [Promoting Resilience in Preschoolers A Strategy Guide for Early Childhood Professionals](#) (Cairone & Mackrain pgs. 217,218)

- B. Wait to intervene when a child’s inappropriate behavior is not harming others, when you know the child can probably stop the behavior on his/her own without assistance, and when you believe the goal of the behavior is to gain attention from others. Use these four steps to **ignore inappropriate behavior** (remember to ignore the behavior, not the child.)
 1. Turn the front of your body away from the child, while keeping the child in your side view.
 2. Say nothing to the child.
 3. Keep facial expressions neutral.
 4. Give immediate positive attention when the child replaces the inappropriate behavior with an acceptable alternative.

(Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 230)
- C. Behavior charts, stoplights, and/or other behavior documentation displays publically shame children, are not developmentally appropriate, and shall not be used in any form in the First Class Pre-K classroom. The use of stickers, candy, treasure boxes, and other extrinsic rewards used for the purpose of singling out children to reward good behavior discourages the development of self-regulation, are not developmentally appropriate, and shall not be used in the First Class Pre-K classroom. It is more effective to reinforce positive behavior by using immediate, effective verbal acknowledgement that describes a child’s appropriate words and actions.

For Example:

“Sam thank you for pushing all the chairs under the table after snack.”

“Mary I appreciate you inviting Sam to help build a fort with the blocks.”

“I’m so glad we are all lined up and ready to go to the playground. We will have more time to enjoy the sunshine.”

Teachers are encouraged to invest time and effort in establishing the critical routines and procedures for all aspects of the Pre-K day increasing the likelihood of success for all children in the classroom.

- D. Teacher imposed time-out or isolation/threats/closing areas and/or withdrawal of playtime (indoor or outdoor) are **reactive consequences** that lack the reflection and follow up needed to bring about a change in behavior and shall not be used in the First Class Pre-K classroom. A **proactive teacher** provides clear expectations and uses effective methods to prevent and redirect challenging behaviors by fully planning and preparing for the Pre-K day with materials readily accessible. (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre) Specific consequences for incidents of **aggressive behavior** may be used. In these situations the teacher should maintain eye contact, use a calm, even, yet firm tone of voice and speak in short sentences with simple words.

For Example:

“Because you hit Sam with a block, you cannot play in the block area the rest of the morning.”

“No hitting. Hitting hurts. I won’t let you hurt anyone, and I won’t let anyone hurt you. You can sit in the beanbag chair to calm down and then we will talk about how you can solve this problem.”

Provide a space and materials that will help a child regain control of emotions, words, and actions. When the child is calm, discuss feelings and how to handle such situations differently in the future. (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 223)

- E. No form of physical or mental punishment is permitted. Children should always feel safe and valued in the Pre-K classroom. All teacher interactions with children should support the child’s development of trusting relationships and sense of security in their surroundings. When adults are respectful and nurturing, children can learn the skills necessary to engage positively with others. ...**“Say and do the things you want the children to say and do.”** (Cairone and Mackrain, pgs. 139, 220)
- F. When chronic behavior problems persist the following steps will be helpful:
1. Teachers should closely review their daily schedule, routines, procedures and lesson plans. Your Coach can assist and support you with this process. “When transitions and routines are planned in advance, teachers are better prepared to effectively guide the learning process, thus allowing the day to run more smoothly and the children to feel more secure and at ease.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 92)
 2. Teachers should use Teaching Strategies GOLD Social-Emotional Objectives/Dimensions as one way to document concerns in the area of behavior. This information will be valuable when conferencing with families to pinpoint behavioral concerns.
 3. Your Coach can provide guidance and support in utilizing the “FLIP IT” strategy. www.netsmartu.com/FLIPIT
- G. In cases where challenging behaviors (tantrums, physical aggression, bullying, biting) is a danger to the student or others the family and other appropriate professionals (program director, guidance counselor, local LEA, school nurse, mental health professionals) must be involved in developing a behavior intervention plan. If a child has an IEP in place, the IEP team should be consulted to develop a behavior plan.

IV. Planning, Teaching, Learning

Planning for instruction includes creating a daily schedule, daily lesson plans, short term lesson plans, (weekly/monthly themes and lessons), and long term lesson plans (themes or studies for the year). The interests, curiosity, and needs of the children should be taken into consideration when developing classroom plans. Developing lessons and free choice activities around themes or studies, maximizes learning in a meaningful context based on the NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

*Note: **Weekly lesson plans are required in all OSR classrooms. The lesson planning format that the teacher chooses will be approved by the Coach at the beginning of the school year. All plans will be based on the Alabama Developmental Standards for Preschool Children and Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives and dimensions. Teachers are required to reference these resources in all lesson plans.***

Lesson Plan Format Checklist

	Identifies a Theme or Study Topic
	Whole Group activities are planned including Music and Movement and Shared Writing
	Small Group Activities are planned with specific skills identified
	2 Read Alouds planned daily
	Indications of how the theme will be incorporated in Room Areas
	Weekly Science Lesson planned
	Evidence of planned Gross Motor Activities
	GOLD/Alabama Pre-K Standards documented in plans
	Resources are identified (Books, Websites, Songs, etc.)
	Lesson Plans are accessible, up to date, and organized
	Lesson Plan Format Approved by Coach

A. Establishing a Daily Schedule

1. A written schedule, including times, should be posted outside the classroom door for Directors, Coaches, Monitors, Administrators and visitors to view.
2. The daily schedule should be flexible to allow for children’s interests and needs.
“Challenging behavior is more likely to occur when children are asked or expected to do things that are not appropriate for their age, stage of development, or individual characteristics. When expectations are realistic, children can achieve and grow.”
(Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 141)
3. Schedules should reflect a balance of groupings: multiple whole groups, small groups, free choice, and gross motor activities.
 - a. Whole groups may last **up to** 20 minutes and should occur throughout the day.
 - b. Small group instruction should occur at least once per day and may last **up to** 20 minutes.
 - c. Free choice must be **uninterrupted** and should last for at least 1 hour 10 minutes **NOT** including time used to clean up. “One’s ability to make choices is not only a desirable skill but also creates a pattern of social competence. When children are taught how to identify, select, and initiate choice-making opportunities, they can become adults who independently make choices. Research has demonstrated that providing choices can reduce problem behaviors and increase appropriate behaviors and thus social competence of the individual.” (Cairone & Mackrain, pg. 124) **Both teachers are expected to move around the classroom interacting and engaging with the children during free choice time.** This time is a valuable opportunity to collect anecdotal GOLD documentation. Children **may not** be pulled from free choice for teacher led small group instruction.
 - d. At least two planned, developmentally appropriate Read Alouds must be scheduled each day. Teachers should consider this to be a time to introduce vocabulary, encourage discussion, and foster an appreciation for quality children’s literature. Thoughtful planning also allows teachers to create opportunities to enhance Concept Development and Quality of Feedback (Pianta, LaParo, & Hamre).
 - e. Music and Movement should be **thoughtfully** planned and occur daily. Music and Movement involve separate components, both important in the pre-K day. To assure the daily Gross Motor time requirement of 60 minutes many teachers plan a period of Music and Movement that involves large gross motor movement often utilizing a smart board or similar technology. Equally important is a whole group time set aside to focus on learning a repertoire of songs, chants, and finger plays for enjoyment and mastering recall of both melody and lyrics. This type of quality music and movement encourages appropriate social interaction, teaches underlying literacy and math skills, and improves spatial awareness (crossing the midline). A variety of resources should be utilized to guarantee exposure to multiple musical genres. Both teachers should actively engage in Music and Movement with the children encouraging participation and enjoyment.

- f. A science activity should be planned and occur weekly. This activity should be used as an opportunity to enter documentation for GOLD Science and Technology Objectives.
- g. The daily schedule should include time for children to nap or relax quietly. Generally speaking 45 to 60 minutes of the Pre-K day should be set aside for napping/resting. Provisions should be made for children that indicate a need to rest during any time of the day. Provisions should be made for early risers and non-nappers. Cots are required in the OSR Pre-K classroom. Cots should be covered with a sheet or towel that is regularly laundered and sanitized. All children must be within sight and sound of the teacher during rest time.
- h. The daily schedule should be adhered to as closely as possible.
- i. The schedule will be approved by the OSR Coach at the beginning of the year.
- j. The OSR Coach should be notified of any permanent schedule changes.

Daily Schedule Checklist

	Schedule reflects a 6.5 hour day
	Whole Groups are scheduled multiple times daily and do not exceed 20 minutes
	2 planned and purposeful Read Alouds are scheduled daily
	Music and Movement is scheduled and occurring daily
	Small Group is scheduled daily and does not exceed 20 minutes
	Free Choice is scheduled daily for a minimum of 1 hour 10 minutes (uninterrupted and not including time to clean up)
	Gross Motor is scheduled for 60 minutes daily (this time may be divided into segments)
	A Picture Schedule with words is posted near the Whole Group Area Children should participate in monitoring the schedule
	A Science activity is planned and occurring weekly
	Daily Schedule Approved by Coach

B. Lesson Planning

1. When planning for instruction a theme or study topic to be investigated in depth should be identified. The length of time dedicated to this study depends on the topic and the interests of the children. Plans to incorporate the theme in the free choice areas should be noted.
2. Plans should include the Alabama Developmental Standards /GOLD objectives and dimensions that will be documented at the conclusion of lessons. Documentation should be entered daily by both teachers.
3. Potential materials, books, music, activities, and resources should be identified.

C. Small Group Instruction

1. Small group instruction should take place at least once daily and may last **up to 20** minutes. During this time a small group of ideally 6 to 8 children meet with a teacher to explore and experiment with materials and discuss and solve problems. Small group instruction must be included on Lesson Plans.
2. Teachers may choose to divide the children into 3 groups with both teachers conducting a small group lesson simultaneously with 2 of the groups while an independent group of children work on iPads, fine motor activities, self-correcting games, etc. **The independent group MUST BE in full view and supervision of both teachers at all times. Small groups MAY NOT be taught as a part of free choice time.** Your Coach can assist you with planning for small group instruction.
3. Lessons should be planned and purposeful resulting in the documentation of targeted GOLD objectives and dimensions.
4. Worksheets/workbooks, coloring sheets, or craft activities are NOT appropriate for small group instruction and are NOT allowed as part of the lesson or assessment of learning. Lined paper should not be used to teach handwriting.
5. The composition of the groups should be flexible and dynamic based on the needs of the children.
6. The amount of time spent in small group should also be flexible. Time devoted to small group instruction may increase as the year progresses. It is reasonable that a small group may last 5 to 8 minutes at the beginning of the year and increase up to 20 minutes by the end of the year. Small group time **should not exceed 20 minutes.**

D. Whole Group Instruction

1. Whole group instruction should occur multiple times daily lasting **up to 20** minutes. It is reasonable that a whole group may last 5 to 8 minutes at the beginning of the year and increase up to 20 minutes by the end of the year. **Teachers should always be mindful of the amount of time they are expecting children to sit and engage as part of a large group.**
2. One whole group meeting should include a shared writing experience such as Daily News or Morning Message.
3. Whole groups should include opportunities for children to share, discuss, and learn respect for others. Teachers should develop strategies to capture valuable GOLD documentation during this time.

4. Whole groups should include music, movement, and finger plays.
 5. Whole groups should include discussion of the Picture Schedule and the Job Chart.
- E. Technology
1. Personal electronic device use (in the classroom) is **limited to 15 minutes per day for each child**. Teachers should monitor the use of electronics and ensure children are using them appropriately and purposefully.
 2. Opportunities for using computer labs (located away from the classroom) should be limited to one time per week for no more than 30 minutes.
 3. Children should be redirected to other activities rather than waiting for electronics to be available. Teachers should develop a system to ensure that all children have a turn to use technology.
 4. All videos, applications of technology hardware and software (computers, iPads, iPods, Smart Boards, etc.) should be carefully selected to support Alabama Developmental Standards and Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives and dimensions.
- F. Handwriting
1. Formal, rote handwriting instruction and letter formation in large or small groups (tracing or copying) is not developmentally appropriate in the pre-K classroom. Lined paper can be available in the Writing Area and throughout the room **for exploration** but it **MAY NOT** be used for instructional purposes.
 2. Explicit instruction should be provided to children on an individual basis in response to their expressed interest.
 3. Signing In should be a daily part of the arrival process. The process should be a progression of skills from recognizing their picture, to recognizing their written name, to tracing their name, to copying their name, to writing their name independently by the end of the year.
 4. Child-created stories, writing, and dictation should be exhibited to encourage writing.
 5. The classroom should be a print-rich environment with alphabet charts, writing models, morning messages, daily news, letters, labels, etc. to demonstrate the purposes of writing.

The Difference Between "Writing" and "Handwriting"	
Writing (Appropriate)	Handwriting (Inappropriate)
<p>Developmental spelling refers to children being encouraged to write through their own way while moving through progressive stages of learning how to spell. It is encouraging young children's attempt to use what they already know about letters and sounds to write words. Research indicates that encouraging developmental spelling is highly effective in promoting children's understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds. Example: "ct" for the word cat</p> <p>This can be modeled and encouraged by engaging children in dictating stories, letters, messages, and charts while also assisting children in their own efforts to write.</p>	<p>Tracing letters, words and sentences in order to improve penmanship. Using lined paper. Stressing the importance of correct letter formation.</p>

G. Worksheets

1. Coloring sheets/coloring books are not developmentally appropriate and SHOULD NOT be available in the OSR Pre-K classroom. The development of fine motor skills is better accomplished through experimentation with more suitable materials such as playdough, puzzles, manipulatives, various drawing and writing implements, paper and scissors, beads and laces, etc...
2. Photocopied worksheets which require a child to match items (i.e. upper-lower case letters, rhymes, etc.), fill-in-the-blanks, trace or write repeated shapes, letters or numerals, use lines for handwriting, or any similar activity that demands one correct answer, ARE NOT to be used.
3. Open-ended worksheets for data collection, graphing, or recording where children can document their own ideas and solve problems ARE appropriate.

H. Assessment of Learning

Assessment is critical to supporting children's development and learning in the classroom. It is essential in "making sound decisions about teaching and learning, identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions."(1) Assessment is the process of gathering information about children from several forms of evidence, then organizing and interpreting that information. (2) Teaching and assessment go hand in hand. For First Class Pre-K, we believe that Teaching Strategies GOLD will serve as the roadmap for guiding children's experiences toward development and learning. We expect full implementation of Teaching Strategies GOLD. This simply means that there is evidence of documentation to support the level assigned to each child based on observation. Two pieces of documentation (notes, photos, audio, On-the-Spot or Assessment Opportunity Cards) per teacher (not child) daily will provide sufficient evidence. One documentation entry should focus on no more than 3-5 objectives or dimensions for the group of children or individual child observed. Guidance on authentic observation and effective documentation is available from your OSR coach as well as videos and tutorials on the Teaching Strategies GOLD website.

Both Lead and Auxiliary teachers are expected to complete the two and one half day GOLD training, the four online modules, and the Interrater Reliability Certification.

- (1) NAEYC Position Statement. Pg.1. November 2003
- (2) Basics of Assessment: A Primer for Early Childhood Educators, NAEYC. Pg.3.

V. Gross Motor/Outdoor Play

Daily activities should include many opportunities for young children to develop competence and confidence in their gross motor skills. While children develop many of their physical capabilities through play they also need planned movement activities with verbal and modeled instruction and structured physical skill development opportunities. The OSR Pre-K classroom schedule is required to include 60 minutes of gross motor activity. This 60 minutes may be broken into smaller segments of time within the day.

A. Playgrounds (Based on CPSC guidelines, NAEYC and DHR safety standards)

1. The play environment should include equipment that is age and developmentally appropriate.
2. The play environment should provide a minimum of 60 square feet for each child. This shall be for all 18 children at one time (DHR).
3. The play environment should be enclosed by a fence or wall at least four feet in height. When measuring the four foot height, take into consideration areas where a fall zone is next to a fence, where erosion has caused soil to pack around the base of the fence or has caused large gaps at the base of the fence, or the location of a border next to the fence. Any of these instances can detract from the actual height of the fence. The fence or wall shall be free from sharp protruding edges. Gates to the area shall be secured.
4. The play area should be well drained.
5. There should be semiprivate areas where children can play alone or with a friend. Semiprivate areas should be visible at all times. For example, teachers should have clear vision into tunnels while children are at play.
6. Opportunities and materials for activities such as dramatic play, block building, manipulative play, art and music should be provided.
7. The environment should include a variety of natural and manufactured surfaces for children to explore. Natural areas should include elements such as nonpoisonous plants, shrubs, and trees.
8. Children with disabilities should be able to participate in the outdoor curriculum and activities (NAEYC).
9. The outdoor play area should be arranged so children can be supervised by sight and sound at all times. Staff should practice active supervision, meaning they are moving around supervising and monitoring all play.
10. There should be an area for children to have large motor experiences such as running, climbing, balancing, riding, jumping, crawling, scooting and swinging.
11. OSR has one certified Early Childhood Playground Safety inspector to provide guidance and resources for safe environments and playground quality enhancement.
12. Sandboxes should allow for drainage, if necessary by type and location. Sandboxes should be covered when not in use and cleaned of all foreign matter on a regular basis. Staff must replace sand as often as is necessary to keep sand clean and free of debris.

13. Concrete or asphalt shall not be used under outdoor playground equipment except wheeled toys.
14. Playground equipment which is not designed to be portable should be securely anchored so that it cannot be tipped over by an adult or child.
15. Tripping hazards should be addressed.
16. Wooden equipment should be regularly checked and maintained in reference to sharp areas and splintering wood that could cause cuts or splinters. Metal equipment should be regularly checked for rust. Rust should be removed immediately. Equipment should be treated with paint to prevent rust and paint from flaking.
17. All broken toys and equipment should be removed and replaced immediately. All missing pieces should be replaced on equipment.
18. Playground shall not be shared with younger or older children at time of play.
19. Equipment needed to meet Developmental Skills: Climbing and sliding structures, tricycles with helmets and paths to ride on, water and sand play equipment, art materials, structural materials (loose parts) for imaginative play, natural features to experience the seasons, various sizes of balls, wheeled vehicles to push or pull, walking board, crawl through equipment, toys for digging. Lockable storage units may be necessary to store equipment and materials.
20. Shaded areas should be available to provide a break from the sun or heat. NAEYC recommends 1/3 of the playground be shaded to prevent equipment from becoming too hot.
21. Fall surfacing is strongly recommended.

Works Cited

Cairone, K.B. & M. Mackrain. Promoting Resilience in Preschoolers: A Strategy Guide for Early Childhood Professionals. 2nd ed. Lewisville, NC: Kaplan Early Learning Company.

Copple, C. & S. Bredekamp, eds. 2009. Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8. 3rd ed. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Pianta, Robert C., Karen M. LaParo, Bridget K. Hamre. Classroom Assessment Scoring System. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing Company.