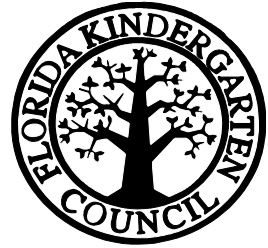


**Accrediting
Early Childhood
Programs**



Florida Kindergarten Council

Bylaws & Accreditation Standards

**Revised 2009
(Updated 1/22/10)**

• Our Inspiration is from the Past • Our Duty is in the Present • Our Hope is in the Future •

The Florida Kindergarten Council validates and supports exemplary early childhood schools through the accreditation process and provides professional services to member schools.

**Bylaws and Standards
Revised August 2009**

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The Florida Kindergarten Council, Inc.

Bylaws

Revised August 2009

ARTICLE I — Name of the Organization

Section 1.

The name of the organization shall be: The Florida Kindergarten Council, Inc.

ARTICLE II — Purposes

Section 1.

The purpose of Florida Kindergarten Council is to:

- Establish and maintain exemplary educational and ethical standards for the membership
- Accredite schools with early childhood programs which meet the published standards of the Florida Kindergarten Council
- Provide support services to member schools to include: professional development, shared resources, collaboration and accreditation guidelines
- Make membership information available to Florida independent schools with early childhood programs
- Disseminate and promote legislation, through the relationship with Florida Association of Academic Non-Public Schools (FAANS), for the protection of school patrons and for the elevation of standards for Florida Kindergarten Council schools.

ARTICLE III — Membership

Section 1.

Any independent preprimary school or division of a school in Florida which does not discriminate in admission or employment on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin and which follows fair employment practices and meets the requirements of the Bylaws and general standards for accreditation of this association shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2.0.

An independent preprimary school or division of a school shall be defined as an academic school which may begin with programs for children two years old and must extend through five-year-old kindergarten and has a minimum of 25 children enrolled in the school. The school is not primarily supported by public funds. All programs of eligible schools must offer a consistent level of quality care and education. Member schools as of November 17, 1990 with no five-year-old kindergarten may continue Florida Kindergarten Council membership.

Section 2.1

The 2-year-old to 5-year-old program must include a significant number of children in relation to the total school enrollment unless the elementary program is accredited by another recognized accrediting agency.

Section 2.2

Schools with programs for children under age 2 and/or over grade 3 must state in all printed material that Florida Kindergarten Council accreditation covers only those programs which include 2-year-olds through grade 3.

Section 2.3

The school may not operate as a daycare center nor may it have the words "child care" or "daycare" either stated or implied in its official name.

Section 3.

Accredited membership can be attained by:

- a. having been in operation for not less than three years under the same ownership and director;
- b. having been inspected by our evaluation committee and having been found to adhere to Florida Kindergarten Council bylaws and general standards.

Section 4.

Schools presenting themselves for accreditation must pay all food, travel and lodging expenses for the visiting team.

Section 5.

All accredited members and provisional affiliates shall file an annual report. This report is due within thirty (30) days from the date a form is issued. Failure to submit the annual report shall result in withdrawal of accreditation.

Section 6.

Change of Ownership, Head, Program or Location:

Upon any of these changes, a school having accredited membership shall be re-evaluated within a period of six months to one year. It is the responsibility of the school to notify the Florida Kindergarten Council State Office in writing of any of the above changes.

Section 7.

An accredited member school must present itself for re-accreditation every five years. However, the Florida Kindergarten Council reserves the right to return and review at any time.

Section 8.

It is expected that schools accepting membership will send representatives to the Florida Kindergarten Council's annual meeting, the fall conference and council-sponsored workshops.

ARTICLE IV — Provisional Affiliation**Section 1.**

Provisional affiliation, following a visitation, is available to any independent school in the state that has been in existence less than three years. This affiliation does not convey the right to vote in meetings nor to publicize the school as being accredited by or affiliated with the Florida Kindergarten Council. A provisional affiliate may be evaluated for membership after its third

year of operation and must be evaluated for accredited membership by the end of its fourth year of operation. A school having provisional affiliation may continue that status into the fourth year while waiting for evaluation for accredited membership. During this period no publications from the school may include the name of the Florida Kindergarten Council.

Section 2.

To maintain provisional affiliation, a school must submit an annual report in the prescribed form and pay annual dues upon notice.

ARTICLE V— Application for Membership

Section 1.

Schools considering membership in and accreditation by the Florida Kindergarten Council should request information from the Florida Kindergarten Council State Office. After studying the membership requirements, schools who believe they meet the Florida Kindergarten Council standards should then request an application form, complete it, and return it to the Florida Kindergarten Council State Office with the appropriate application fee attached. A representative of the school must attend an orientation session for self-study preparation and the school must subsequently follow all evaluation procedures.

Section 2.

The executive board may admit to accredited membership or provisional affiliate status any school which meets the qualifications defined and designated in the bylaws and general standards of the Florida Kindergarten Council

Section 3.

A school applying for initial accreditation which does not meet Florida Kindergarten Council general standards may be deferred until improvements can be made. If accreditation is deferred, the school will receive specific reasons and recommendations for improvements. The school may make the necessary improvements and request an additional visit within a one year period from the date of the initial evaluation. The school may petition the board in writing for an extension of deferment citing justifiable extenuating circumstances. The costs of the follow up visitation are incurred by the school. A school may appeal to the executive board within sixty (60) days upon receipt of notification for a review of the action taken. The appeal will be considered at the next scheduled board meeting. After any such appeal, the board's decision shall be final.

Section 4.

A school applying for initial accreditation which does not meet the Florida Kindergarten Council bylaws and general standards may be denied. If accreditation is denied, the school will receive specific reasons for denial. The school may appeal to the executive board in writing within sixty (60) days for a review of the action or may initiate a second application for membership after one (1) year from the date of denial.

ARTICLE VI — Loss or Suspension of Membership, Provisional Affiliate Status, Removal or Suspension from Office

For conditions herein described, suspension, loss of accredited membership or provisional affiliate status and removal from office or suspension from office by an officer shall become

effective fifteen (15) days after notification by registered mail by the secretary and authorized by the executive board with a quorum vote.

Section 1.

A school with accredited membership or provisional affiliate status shall lose its standing if:

- a. Its annual dues shall remain unpaid for a period of ninety calendar days following the date of billing;
- b. the school fails to file its annual report form provided by the council on the scheduled date or within thirty days of such scheduled date;
- c. by the date referred to in "b." (above) or upon an evaluation by the evaluating Committee, it is shown that the school is not maintaining the minimum standards set by the Florida Kindergarten Council;
- d. the owner, director or principal of a school is convicted of a felony or morals charge;
- e. any of the individuals referred to in "d." (above) be proved a member of a subversive organization by an authorized agency of the United States government;
- f. the school at anytime fails to meet the eligibility requirements in Article III, Section 2.0. This requirement must be continually maintained throughout the period of the school's accreditation.

Section 2.

An accredited school which does not meet Florida Kindergarten Council bylaws and general standards upon visitation will, by the action of the executive board, be subject to one of the following actions:

- a. may be accredited with the status "accredited warned". This applies to schools being re-evaluated that meet major Florida Kindergarten Council general standards, but which have one or two serious deficiencies. A follow-up visit is required within one year.
- b. may be placed on probation to be re-evaluated, and, if still deficient, be dropped from membership;
- c. may be dropped from membership. A written appeal may be submitted to the executive board for a review of this action within four (4) weeks. Public notice of disaccreditation will be made at the end of this appeal period.

ARTICLE VII — Officers of the Organization

Section 1.

The officers of the Florida Kindergarten Council shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Officers of the Florida Kindergarten Council must be from schools which have been accredited members for one year.

Section 2.

There shall be an executive board elected from the membership and composed of members from each geographical region (north, central and south Florida), plus the elected officers and the last retiring president.

Section 3.

The officers and members of the executive board shall be elected by the full membership by a majority of all votes cast at the annual meeting.

Section 4.

A nomination committee that must be representative of all three regions shall be appointed by the president at the fall executive board meeting. They shall present to the election meeting a proposed slate, mailed thirty (30) days in advance, which shall consist of the officers and executive board members. Nominations from the floor will be in order after the report of the nominating committee.

Section 5.

The term of office for all elected officers will be two (2) years. The Immediate Past President shall be a member of the executive board for one term. Elected officers may be re-elected for one (1) additional year.

Section 6.

One third of the Executive board shall be elected at each annual meeting and serve for one three-year term. Any individual appointed to fill an unexpired term is eligible for election to a maximum of two successive terms upon completion of the unexpired term appointment. Members may serve for a maximum of two (2) successive terms. After an interval of one (1) year, executive board members will again be eligible for re-election to the board.

Section 7.

Executive board members are expected to attend all meetings. Excessive absences may result in a request for resignation from the board.

Section 8.

The officers and executive board shall be installed at the time of election but shall start their term of office one (1) month after that time. The incumbent officers will function until December 31.

Section 9.

Any vacancy in an elective office shall be filled by a majority vote of the executive board for the unexpired term.

Section 10.

Founding members of the Florida Kindergarten Council may become honorary members of the executive board. These members shall serve in an advisory capacity only.

ARTICLE VIII — Meetings and Voting

Section 1.

A regular membership meeting shall be held annually.

Section 2.

Only members in good standing shall be considered in the quorum count.

Section 3.

Each member school shall designate its official representative.

Section 4.

Each member school shall have one vote which shall be cast by its official representative or by written authorization.

Section 5.

Only members in good standing shall be eligible to hold office or to vote.

Section 6.

All members will be available to serve on committees and will be expected to attend meetings regularly.

ARTICLE IX — The Fiscal Year Dues

Section 1.

The fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31.

Section 2.

The annual dues for members shall be determined by a majority vote of the accredited members.

Section 3.

Payment of annual dues shall be requisite to voting in the annual meeting

Section 4.

Payment is required within ninety days of billing.

Section 5.

Schools initially accredited and approved for membership at the November or January governing board meetings shall be billed for the full amount of annual dues. Schools initially accredited at the April or June board meetings shall be billed for one-half stated annual dues.

ARTICLE X — Duties of Officers

Section 1.

The president shall act as presiding officer at all business meetings, shall maintain order, shall enforce all rules, shall have authority to appoint standing committees, and shall notify members of the time and place of meetings.

Section 2.

The vice-president shall act in the absence of the president and serve as the evaluation chairman and in turn appoint chairpersons for the visitation teams.

Section 3.

The secretary shall call roll at each general and executive board meeting and keep the minutes of the meetings. He/she shall send to the president a copy of the minutes of each general meeting and each executive board meeting within fourteen (14) days after each meeting for distribution to the membership.

Section 4.

The treasurer shall be custodian of funds and shall keep the necessary financial records. He/she shall keep the funds in a national bank. The books shall be subject to annual audit/review by the executive board.

Section 5.

All checks shall be signed by the treasurer and countersigned by either the president or the vice-president.

ARTICLE XI — Special Meetings

Section 1.

Special meetings may be called by the president. All members shall have at least seventy-two (72) hours notice of such meetings.

ARTICLE XII — Committees

Section 1.

There shall be the following standing committees: legislative, ethics and standards, convention planning, membership, public relations, evaluations, long-range planning, and finance.

Section 2.

The President may appoint committees as needed.

ARTICLE XIII — Appointed Positions

Section 1.

Directors for each of the three (3) regions (north, central, south) shall be appointed by the president for a term of two (2) years. They may be reappointed for one (1) additional year.

- a. They shall be committed to organizing such activities as will promote communication of the faculty and staff among member schools through workshops and in-service programs.
- b. They shall encourage within their region the development of the goals of the Florida Kindergarten Council.
- c. They shall serve as non-voting participants of the executive board.

ARTICLE XIV — Amendments

Section 1.

These bylaws may be amended at any regular membership meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the vote is taken.

Florida Kindergarten Council

Code of Ethics

1. The welfare of students will be the primary concern in all decisions regarding ethics and standards.
2. A school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in its admission or hiring policies.
3. A school must carry out commitments made to students, teachers, staff members, school organizations, patrons and the general public.
4. A school will carefully avoid misleading or ambiguous statements about the philosophy, stated missions and status, in its publications, correspondence and materials.
5. A school will make clear all dates concerning the admission procedure and adhere to those dates. A candidate for admission and the parents will be informed of the complete costs for the forthcoming school year and the applicable payment schedules.
6. A school will not knowingly initiate attempts to bring about the transfer of a student from another independent school.
7. A school recognizes its obligation to keep, protect and preserve the records of a student's attendance and achievement. A school will take all reasonable and lawful measures to maintain the confidentiality of reports and information exchanged among schools concerning the student and parents.
8. A school respects the right of a teacher to visit and consider employment in another school without notifying his/her present school, and it recognizes and respects the right of another school to hold preliminary discussions about possibilities of employment without notifying the present school. No binding contractual arrangement should be formalized, however, without communication with the current employer.
9. Officials of a school, including trustees and administrators, will not seek to encourage a teacher or administrator from another school to break a contract.
10. A performance appraisal and the teacher's qualifications should be supplied by one head to another, upon request, and such information should be confidential within the prescriptions of the law.
11. The head of a school and all employees in that school bear the ultimate responsibility of fulfilling this Code of Ethics.

General standards

1.1 Membership

_____ 1.1.1 The school must adhere to the principles set forth in the bylaws and code of ethics.

_____ 1.1.2 The school should provide instructional personnel to serve on evaluation committees at the request of the FCIS/FKC Associate Director for Accreditation.

_____ 1.1.3 The minimum number of children enrolled in the school must be at least twenty-five students to attain membership.

2.1 Evaluation

_____ 2.1.1 The self-study must have involvement from faculty members and other constituents of the school, as appropriate.

_____ 2.1.2 The school should start as soon as possible to conduct its self-study. The self-study must be completed at least two weeks before the evaluation, and copies sent to all members of the evaluation committee and the FCIS/FKC Executive Director at that time.

_____ 2.1.3 Each individual committee member is to be provided a packet containing a map of the school, teachers' names and class assignments, schedule of the classes and room numbers, student handbook, enrollment according to grade, and any other information that will assist the committee.

_____ 2.1.4 During the on-campus visit, a room closed to all others should be set aside for the committee to meet and confer. The room should also be equipped with the items and documents noted on the "*Documents for Review*" on page 38.

_____ 2.1.5 A school should maintain a regular schedule on the day or days of the evaluation, avoiding tests and audio/visual materials which are more than incidental to the day's lesson. The committee needs to observe the teaching process. Lunch should be available at the school so that the committee will not lose time during the evaluation.

3.1 Governance and Leadership

_____ 3.1.1 The school shall be organized as a corporation (either for profit or not for profit), as a proprietorship, an ecclesiastical (church-related) affiliation or a partnership.

_____ 3.1.2 All materials shall contain accurate information concerning philosophies, objectives, accreditation status, facilities, program and statement of non-discrimination.

_____3.1.3 The school shall provide for strategic long-range planning and the implementation of the plan as feasible and appropriate.

_____3.1.4 A qualified individual is designated to lead and be responsible for the early childhood program at all times.

_____3.1.5 The director, supervisor or principal of the early childhood programs must have at least a bachelor's degree and several years of teaching and/or related administrative experience. The director is charged with assuming responsibility of the day-to-day operations of the program, maintaining program policies, and monitoring the program's compliance with applicable requirements of civil authorities. The director's leadership addresses the program's goal of fostering the intellectual, physical, social, emotional and character development of children. A clearly understood table of organization for the school exists, with written job descriptions which specify levels of responsibilities and reporting relationships.

_____3.1.6 The director/administrator is responsible for hiring staff that support the philosophy and mission of the program.

_____3.1.7 The director ensures instructional staff either is qualified to observe children and record these observations or have assistance from personnel trained in methods of observing children and recording these observations.

_____3.1.8 A board of trustees (directors, owners) shall develop school policies; maintain financial stability; provide access to legal services; lead in fund raising and employ, supervise and support the school head.

_____3.1.9 The governing body shall generate necessary resources for providing and maintaining the physical facilities and all approved programs of the school.

_____3.1.10 Schools with a governing body shall develop and maintain procedures for the board which are reviewed and signed by all governing body members annually. These procedures should include a conflict of interest policy.

_____3.1.11 The governing body shall support the head in establishing and maintaining appropriate personnel policies, salaries, and benefits for faculty and staff.

_____3.1.12 The administration and supervision of the school are the chief responsibilities of a school head chosen by the governing body to develop, organize and lead the administration, faculty and staff, carryout policies; and oversee the day-to-day operation of the school.

_____3.1.13 Parent organizations: Member schools should organize and maintain effective parent organizations to ensure good school-home communication and relationships.

3.2 Philosophy and Objectives

_____3.2.1 The school shall have a written philosophy by which the school's entire program is developed and maintained.

_____3.2.2 Admission procedures shall reflect and be consistent with the school's educational philosophy and mission.

_____3.2.3 The school shall have a curriculum consistent with its philosophy and objectives, designed to effectively fulfill the needs of the students enrolled.

3.3 Academic Program

_____3.3.1 A curriculum guide shall include a philosophy and a scope and sequence, and be published and followed by the instructional staff. The council requires evidence of the school's continuing study of the curriculum and evaluation of program effectiveness. This guide shall be made available to FKC evaluation committees. A curriculum guide is a structured document that delineates the philosophy, goals, objectives, learning experiences, instructional resources and assessments that comprise a specific educational program. The guide represents an articulation of what students should know and be able to do and supports teachers in knowing how to achieve these goals. (For more details, see section on curriculum guidelines, p. 22.)

_____3.3.2 One unique element of an independent school education is an emphasis on the moral and ethical development of the child and this shall be an integral part of each school's philosophy and program. It is strongly recommended that this type of training embrace service to the school community, and the community at large.

_____3.3.3 Parent-teacher conferences shall be scheduled and documented, at least once per year, to discuss student progress. Progress reports shall be given at regular intervals.

_____3.3.4 The academic program reflects educational best practices, with clearly defined expectations for student learning. The school must provide developmentally appropriate opportunities and experiences for all students to meet the intellectual, emotional, physical and social needs of its students.

_____3.3.5 Early childhood programs must provide experiences for growth in social development, language arts, math, science, social studies, tactile development, music, arts and crafts, and physical development.

_____3.3.6 Instructional materials such as textbooks and equipment to support effective teaching must be appropriate to the goals of the curriculum, sufficient in quality, quantity and variety.

_____3.3.7 A child entering the five-year-old level shall be five years old by the dates established by Florida state law. Any deviation from this regulation shall take into account the

emotional and physical development of the child. If a child is enrolled who does not comply with the entry dates established by state law, a clear notice will be given to the parents that the child may not be eligible to enter the first grade in a public school.

_____ 3.3.8 **For non-FCIS Schools that include elementary grades (1, 2, or 3):** The instructional program should be structured to provide students the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding in the following areas:

- a. Language Arts, including reading, writing and speaking.
- b. Mathematics
- c. Natural Sciences
- d. Social Sciences (including an awareness of other cultures)
- e. World Languages
- f. Health and physical education
- g. Art, music and drama
- h. Integrated computer technology

_____ 3.3.9 **Special Purpose Schools:** Special purpose schools are established and maintained for varying types of exceptional education. The school must be principally an academic institution providing basic instruction in the conventional area of education. Variations from the Council Standards must be justifiable. The school's philosophy must be specific enough in its statements so the program can be judged against it for quality and application of educational techniques suitable to effectively serve its student population.

_____ 3.3.10 Extended day programs operated by the school shall be consistent with the philosophy and mission of the school. It is required that the extended care child: adult ratio is consistent with the FKC classroom ratio (Standard 3.4). Schools must limit their extended day program to students enrolled in their school.

3.4 Enrollment

_____ The following **student:teacher** ratio will be maintained:

18 months – 23 months	12:2 ~ Aide required
2 years	14:2 ~ Aide required
3 years	15:1 ~ Aide available
4 years	20:1 ~ Aide available
5 years	20:1 ~ Aide available

(Effective August 2010)

3.5 Professional Staff

_____ 3.5.1 Regularly scheduled faculty meetings shall be held.

_____ 3.5.2 A plan for an annual scheduled faculty evaluation shall be in place. New employees should be evaluated within the first six months.

_____3.5.3 Instructional staff is trained in the use and presentation of the curriculum. Opportunities for instructional staff to share their input regarding the curriculum are provided annually.

_____3.5.4 Instructional staff members shall spend the major part of the day teaching in the field(s) in which they are academically prepared. If the academic preparation is out of field, a minimum of 12 semester hours and/or in-service equivalents must be obtained in the field in which the individual is teaching.

_____3.5.5 All full and part-time employees must submit to a background check and fingerprinting in compliance with the screening required by the state (Level II screening).

_____3.5.6 Administrative policies should be issued to faculty and staff in written form. Employee handbooks require a signed acknowledgement of receipt. Each school must maintain an effective orientation program for new staff.

_____3.5.7 Kindergarten through Grade Three Teachers: All teachers in grades kindergarten through grade 3 must have a bachelor's degree or a foreign equivalent (not including art and music). *Teachers of physical education who do not meet this standard, as of July 2002, must be enrolled in a program and take a minimum of 6 hours per year until the standard is met. Teachers of a centralized library shall be supervised by a trained library media specialist.*

_____3.5.8 Grade Prekindergarten Four: The teacher of the four-year-old program (teachers hired after January 1, 2007), and teachers of kindergarten and grades one through grade three shall have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. If the academic preparation is out of the field of early childhood education, a minimum of 12 relevant semester hours or their in-service equivalents shall be obtained. Those teachers of the four-year-old program (hired before January 1, 2007) grandfathered in must have a bachelor's degree by the year 2012.

_____3.5.9 18 months through Prekindergarten Three: Instructional personnel of the 18 month, two and three year-old children, (teachers of four year old children hired before January 1, 2007) will comply with ONE (1) of the following:

- a. A valid teaching certificate in early childhood or elementary education.
- b. A bachelor's degree plus experience or training in early childhood education if the degree is out of field (12 semester hours).
- c. An A.A. degree in early childhood/child development or equivalent or at least a CDA credential.
- d. An associate of arts degree with a valid Montessori teaching certificate. These teachers may teach multi-age groupings comprised of two, three, four and five-year old children.

_____3.5.10 Each school shall provide the services of qualified **technology personnel**. Personnel with overall responsibility for technology shall have a bachelor's degree, plus 12 hours of instruction in technology, or technical certifications and experience that are suitable to manage and oversee the school's technology operations. Technology personnel who work directly with students in the use and integration of technology must have a bachelor's degree that includes 12

hours of instruction in educational technology or in general education courses. Schools that outsource and/or supplement technology functions may hire technology consultants that possess technical certifications in the areas they are expected to support. All technology personnel must keep abreast of current technological trends.

3.6 Records

_____ 3.6.1 Schools must secure records in one of the following ways:

- a) At least one set of records and permanent files for each student must be maintained safely in a fire resistant file or vault, and must contain the cumulative record of attendance, health and academic progress in terms of the school's demands and the results of objective tests.
- b) If both academic and health records are maintained electronically, current backups are to be securely housed in another building.

_____ 3.6.2 The student cumulative folders shall contain permanent and current records showing each child's **birth certificate**, name, address, parent/legal guardian's name, attendance, diagnosed health issues, physical examinations, evidence of state required immunizations, cumulative academic progress, periodic progress reports to parents/legal guardians and individual results on standardized tests.

_____ 3.6.3 Grade and progress reports must be distributed to parents/legal guardians at regular intervals. The distribution may include online assessments and performance indicators.

_____ 3.6.4 If the school administers standardized tests to individuals, groups, and classes with results, norms, and medians, or other meaningful interpretations being filed, the school should demonstrate its regular review and use of testing data. These records must be retained on a permanent basis.

_____ 3.6.5 Legal requirements for student and personnel records:

- a) Schools with grades K-3, which are closing, must comply with the Florida law, which requires its permanent student records to be turned over to the county school district or to the FKC State Office.
- b) Secured personnel files should be maintained for all employees, instructional and non-instructional, in compliance with federal and state labor laws. Personnel files should include state mandated screenings, professional development documentation, evaluations and college transcripts.

3.7 School Sessions

_____ 3.7.1 The school day and school year shall be carefully planned to include the academic class schedule, laboratory periods, if necessary, study periods, assemblies, periods of recreation and physical education, and periods for nonacademic extracurricular activities.

_____ 3.7.2 The school year shall conform to the Florida Compulsory School Attendance Law, as directed by the State Board of Education for private school:

- a. A minimum of 170 days; and
- b. A minimum of 540 instructional hours for kindergarten.
- c. A minimum of 720 instructional hours for grades 1-3

3.8 Business and Finance

_____3.8.1 The financial resources and management of the school shall be such as to sustain an approved educational program consistent with the school's philosophy and objectives. Evidence of financial stability in the form of an annual financial review or audit must be prepared by a certified public accountant. A financial compilation will not fulfill this requirement. The school's most recent financial report, along with the financial review or audit, shall be provided to the evaluation committee chairman.

_____3.8.2 The school's financial review/audit, the school's most recent financial report, and budget shall be provided to the chair of the evaluation committee at least two weeks prior to the visit.

_____3.8.3 All personnel shall be covered by liability insurance. Liability insurance shall be adequate for the size of the school and provide minimum limits of \$500,000 per occurrence. The school must have coverage of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 aggregate.

_____3.8.4 The governing body approves compensation and benefits policies. Policies reflect an effort to compensate and retain quality staff by including benefits such as health coverage, sick leave, vacation leave, Social Security and the opportunity to participate in a retirement plan.

_____3.8.5 The school's compensation policy shall be available to and understood by the employee.

_____3.8.6 Schools shall publish a list of tuition and fees as well as its refund policy.

_____3.8.7 The current budget shall include a line item for library/media and technology expenditures.

_____3.8.8 The current budget shall include a line item for professional development.

3.9 Development

_____3.9.1 If the school is nonprofit, the school must follow fundraising procedures appropriate to its needs, which include capital gift campaigns, annual fund drives, alumni development initiatives, and deferred gift efforts. All funds should be under the control of the head or board.

3.10 Health and Safety

_____3.10.1 Schools must provide evidence of compliance with all applicable state and county health, safety, fire, and sanitation codes, including immunization schedules and any other county regulations.

_____3.10.2 Children shall be supervised by a designated adult at all times.

_____3.10.3 Key administrators and at least one faculty member in every building/wing of the on-campus staff must be properly trained and prepared to administer **first aid** and **CPR** treatment. Staff is alerted to special health conditions of children. Adequate first aid supplies are maintained that are available to faculty and staff but not to children.

_____3.10.4 Potential safety hazards shall be corrected, or student access shall be controlled. Preschool and elementary schools must be fenced from hazards such as lakes, pools, ponds, or canals.

_____3.10.5 Fire extinguishers shall be sufficient in number and type, properly placed around the school, and maintained and inspected regularly. A log of regular fire/disaster drills shall be maintained and fire/disaster drill procedures shall be posted in each classroom. Attendance shall be taken to account for all students.

_____3.10.6 Each school shall have a written emergency/crisis plan that is reviewed and updated annually.

_____3.10.7 Attendance shall be taken and recorded before children board a vehicle for transportation on a field trip, and again, upon return to the school. Written field trip policies and procedures are in place that ensure the safety and supervision of students.

_____3.10.8 All cleaning supplies, chemicals, gardening and maintenance tools shall be stored out of children's reach.

_____3.10.9 A school policy shall be in place which registers and approves all visitors on campus.

_____3.10.10 All full and part-time employees shall submit to **Level II** screening.

_____3.10.11 An arrival and dismissal procedure that ensures a safe arrival and departure for students shall be in place.

_____3.10.12 Space shall be provided for the isolation of ill students.

_____3.10.13 A written policy is in place indicating when children who are removed from school for health reasons may return to school.

_____3.10.14 A blood-borne exposure control plan is in place, and annual training is provided to the staff regarding blood-borne pathogens and the use of universal precautions.

_____3.10.15 Hand washing procedures are in place and posted.

_____3.10.16 Appropriate school personnel should document all accident reports and give to parents.

_____3.10.17 A written policy that complies with the requirements of state and county health departments for storing medications has been developed and made available to the parents/guardians of the children in the program.

_____3.10.18 A medical log is maintained that includes a record of all medications given to children, the time the medication was given, and the person who administered the medication.

_____3.10.19 Emergency phone numbers or 911 are posted by telephones that have 911 access.

_____3.10.20 Hot water heaters are set for 110 F or less if the heated water is accessible to children.

_____3.10.21 All electrical outlets in the wall are covered to prevent children from being shocked by electricity.

4.1 Transportation

_____4.1.1 Drivers shall be properly licensed and in compliance with Level II screening.

_____4.1.2 Vehicles shall be regularly inspected by qualified personnel.

_____4.1.3 Vehicles shall not be overcrowded and there shall be a seat for each child when in use. Children in vehicles shall be under adult supervision at all times. Current state and local regulations shall be followed with regard to child safety restraints. First aid kits should be available in all school owned and contracted vehicles.

_____4.1.4 Adequate insurance must be maintained on all vehicles. The minimum amount of vehicular coverage shall be at least \$300,000 per individual and \$500,000 per occurrence. The recommended amount is \$1,000,000 per occurrence/\$5,000,000 aggregate.

5.1 Library/Media Center

_____5.1.1 The library/media center has adequate facilities (central or decentralized) and technological resources to support the school's philosophy, mission and its programs.

_____5.1.2 The library/media center has a definite and appropriate budget to meet the needs of the educational program.

_____5.1.3 The library/media center has adequate print and electronic resources to support the educational program.

_____5.1.4 Either a centralized or decentralized library shall be utilized by students. The library shall contain a minimum of ten (10) quality hardbound books per student. Selection of the books shall be determined in accordance with the developmental needs of the young child.

_____5.1.5 Books, materials and audio visual equipment shall be systematically organized and formally listed, whether the library is centralized or decentralized.

_____5.1.6 A variety of well-maintained media equipment shall be available for classroom use.

6.1 Technology

_____6.1.1 There is a written technology plan and budget to support the school's mission and philosophy.

_____6.1.2 Policies, including an acceptable use policy for technology, are disseminated and understood throughout the school community.

_____6.1.3 The school has a reliable system to back up critical data.

_____6.1.4 The school has a set of minimum competencies for use and integration of technology for faculty and provides for professional growth opportunities for teachers to remain current in technology skills and applications.

_____6.1.5 Age appropriate technology shall be available in the school to support its mission and philosophy.

7.1 Student Discipline and Morale

_____7.1.1 The school shall have a well-defined discipline policy which reflects the philosophy of the school, written and distributed to students, parents, and faculty. There shall be evidence that this policy is understood and is effectively in operation.

_____7.1.2 There shall be evidence of self-discipline, care and concern for fellow students, and a level of positive morale necessary for an effective and productive school community.

8.1 Buildings, Grounds and Equipment

_____8.1.1 All buildings shall have ample space for the program. The buildings shall be of sound construction, provide sufficient light and ventilation, and be properly cleaned. Heating and air conditioning units shall be adequate.

_____8.1.2 Closets, storage places and shelves shall be provided for needed equipment and classroom materials. Students shall be provided with individual storage areas or cubbies. Bathrooms shall have outside ventilation and there shall be at least one toilet and one wash basin for every twenty (20) children, with a minimum of two (2) for each school.

_____8.1.3 Floor coverings shall be kept clean and safe.

_____8.1.4 Outdoor equipment shall be scaled appropriately and be sufficient to provide physical activities, social development and imaginative expression. Outdoor play area shall be 45 square feet per child on the playground at any given time and have a balance of sun and shade.

_____8.1.5 Play area shall be equipped, fenced and supervised. Appropriate cushioning materials of recommended depths are used under equipment such as swings and climbing apparatus following national playground safety standards.

_____8.1.6 All furniture and equipment shall be scaled appropriately for the age of the children and there should be sufficient tables and chairs of suitable size to meet the needs of the group. All toys, equipment and furnishings shall be safe and maintained in a sanitary condition.

_____8.1.7 Lunchroom and kitchen areas shall be inspected and adequately equipped to meet the needs of the school, which must comply with all state and local regulations.

_____8.1.8 Drinking water shall be readily accessible to children. Drinking fountains shall be clean and well maintained.

_____8.1.9 There shall be an appropriate variety of equipment available to meet the needs of the school curriculum in the following areas: art, science, music, language arts, math, social studies, technology, and physical education, indoor and outdoor play.

9.1 Communication

_____9.1.1 A process is in place to ensure good communication among staff.

_____9.1.2 The parent/guardian handbook satisfactorily explains:

- a. the program's philosophy
- b. policies
- c. day-to-day functions
- d. conference schedules
- e. visitation policy and communication protocols

_____9.1.3 Parents/guardians are expected to sign an acknowledgement of receipt and agreement of support of the parent/guardian handbook.

Curriculum Guidelines

An exemplary curriculum guide is a tool that assists in planning and implementing a high quality instructional program. It should:

- a. establish a clear philosophy and set of overarching goals that guides the entire program and the decisions that affect each aspect of the program;
- b. establish sequences both within and between levels and assure a coherent and articulated progression from grade to grade;
- c. outline a basic framework for what to do, how to do it, when to do it and how to know if it has been achieved;
- d. allow for flexibility and encourage experimentation and innovation within an overall structure;
- e. promote interdisciplinary approaches and the integration of curricula when appropriate;
- f. suggest methods of assessing the achievement of the program's goals and objectives;
- g. provide a means for its own ongoing revision and improvement; and provide direction for procurement of human, material and fiscal resources to implement the program. ¹.

A school's **curriculum mapping document** is sufficient if it meets the aforementioned criteria.

It is recognized that there is a broad variation in the development of all children between the ages of two and five years. Children entering preschool and kindergarten should be placed in an environment that is loving, comfortable, safe, and supportive of the developmental needs of each child. More emphasis should be on the experience rather than on the mastery of skills, and on providing a sense of security while encouraging independence and group socialization. The daily schedule should offer extensive flexibility and positive transition activities, without creating frustration for the individual child.

- In a published curriculum guide, a scope and sequence including each age group is developed with written goals and objectives established from research-based developmental benchmarks as determined by the school.
- The physical environment of the classroom is arranged not only to stimulate learning by accommodating large and small groups of children but also to encourage exploration and experimentation.
- Schools initially accredited after 2004 must limit their extended day program to students enrolled in their school.

Program and Curriculum for Two-Year-Old Children (may include multi-age programs for children 18 months to 3 years)

Program standards for two-year-olds should first provide the child with a sense of security. Emphasis should be placed on the experience rather than the outcome or mastery of skills. Daily schedules should be flexible, while maintaining a general routine (“circle time”, “work time, “snack time”, etc.).

The curriculum shall include all of the areas of development that are listed. The guidelines within each area of development are not mandatory. Comparable activities may be substituted.

Each developmental area should be taught in a manner that is consistent with the mission of the school.

A. Social Development

1. Developing a sense of security and independence
2. Adjusting comfortably to the school environment
3. Initiating play activities
4. Beginning to understand the meaning of sharing, cooperation
5. Developing self-confidence, self-esteem

B. Language/Literacy Development

1. Linguistic Development
 - a. Building receptive and expressive vocabulary
 - b. Listening to stories, poems, nursery rhymes
 - c. Participating in finger-plays, songs, dramatic play
2. Auditory Development
 - a. Auditory discrimination: recognizing differences in environmental sounds, loud/soft
 - b. Auditory memory: practicing and repeating, two or three sounds, etc., in sequence; following one-step directions
 - c. Auditory association: matching objects with the sounds they make
3. Visual Development
 - a. Visual discrimination: identifying primary colors, models and pictures of animals, household objects, etc.; same/different
 - b. Visual memory: remembering objects after being hidden
 - c. Visual-motor skills: coloring, painting, sewing, blocks, puzzles, bead-stringing, etc.

C. Math Readiness Development

1. Providing opportunities for children to work with manipulatives in order to explore various math concepts concretely.
2. Providing opportunities for the teacher to model math concepts, such as counting objects and describing size, weight, etc.

D. Science Development

1. Exploring elements of our world
2. Participating in nature outings

- E. Social Studies Development**
 - 1. Developing awareness of families
 - 2. Developing an awareness and respect of self and others
- F. Music Development**
 - 1. Participating in rhythmic activities
 - 2. Participating in musical games
 - 3. Singing with the group
 - 4. Creatively expressing music through body movements
 - 5. Exposing students to a wide variety of musical styles
- G. Arts Development**
 - 1. Providing opportunities for students to explore art using a variety of media
- H. Physical Development**
 - 1. Providing opportunities to develop gross motor skills through running, climbing, kicking, throwing, etc.
 - 2. Providing opportunities to develop fine motor skills through large piece puzzles, clay, large beads, etc.
- I. Personal/Social Development**
 - 1. Working on dressing skills
 - 2. Verbalizing toilet needs
 - 3. Becoming aware of body parts
 - 4. Establishing routine habits

Program and Curriculum for Three-Year-Old Children

Program standards should be more advanced than those of the program for two-year-olds with more emphasis on social interaction among the children and less on academic readiness. A variety of activities should be included and be flexible enough to take into consideration the different developmental levels and needs of the individual child. A balance of active/passive and group/individual activities is recommended.

The curriculum shall include all of the areas of development that are listed. The guidelines within each area of development are not mandatory. Comparable activities may be substituted. Each developmental area should be taught in a manner that is consistent with the mission of the school.

- A. Social Development**
 - 1. Establishing routine physical habits, work habits, courtesy, and discipline within the group
 - 2. Developing social values, sharing together, taking turns, independence, follow-through, dependability, group acceptance, and cooperation
 - 3. Developing self-confidence and self-esteem (using classroom jobs, opportunities to lead, etc.)
 - 4. Learning to make the transition from home to school easily

B. Language /Literacy Development

1. Linguistic Development
 - a. Listening to stories, poems, nursery rhymes
 - b. Developing listening skills
 - c. Participating in dramatizations, puppetry, finger-plays, etc.
 - d. Building vocabulary of both receptive and expressive language
 - e. Reciting stories and rhymes
 - f. Dictating experience stories
2. Auditory Development
 - a. Providing opportunities for auditory discrimination: e.g., loud/quiet, same/different, sounds of nature, daily life, animals
 - b. Providing opportunities for auditory (sequential) memory: e.g., recognizing sounds, following directions, following a sequence of two different directions (first and last)
 - c. Providing opportunities for auditory association: e.g., matching sounds, recognizing and identifying voices, sounds of animals, objects, etc.
3. Visual Development
 - a. Providing opportunities for visual discrimination: e.g., recognizing colors, shapes, sizes, patterns, and parts of a whole
 - b. Providing opportunities for visual memory: e.g., recognizing and identifying colors, shapes, sizes, animals, plants, objects of daily life using pictures
 - c. Providing opportunities for visual association: e.g., recognizing and identifying objects and concepts that “go together” (shoe and sock, teeth and toothbrush)
 - d. Providing opportunities for visual sequential activities: e.g., cutting, stringing large beads, catching a ball that is rolled

C. Math Readiness Development

1. Exploring spatial relationships e.g., long/short, tall/short, big/little, narrow/wide
2. Counting experiences with a variety of objects
3. Using finger-plays and songs involving math concepts
4. Providing opportunities for children to work with manipulatives in order to explore various math concepts concretely
5. Providing opportunities for the teacher to model math concepts such as counting objects and describing size, weight, etc.

D. Science Development

1. Providing opportunities with books, picture cards and real life experiences, to become aware of the world around them
2. Providing hands-on experience with science concepts
3. Providing opportunities to care for and feed small animals, and care for and water plants

E. Social Studies Development

1. Beginning awareness of community helpers
2. Refining an awareness of self and family
3. Beginning awareness of others
4. Celebrating appropriate holidays and birthdays with songs, stories, etc.
5. Developing an awareness of other cultures

F. Music Development

1. Providing group singing opportunities
2. Participating in rhythmic activities
3. Participating in musical games
4. Creatively expressing music through body movements
5. Providing opportunities for a rhythm band
6. Exposing students to a wide variety of musical styles

G. Arts Development

1. Providing opportunities for art appreciation experiences
2. Providing opportunities for experimentation with various media

H. Physical Development

1. Providing opportunities to develop gross motor skills through running, climbing, kicking, throwing, swinging, etc.
2. Providing opportunities to develop fine motor skills through pouring, bead-stringing, cutting, building with small blocks and other manipulatives, etc.

Program and Curriculum for Four-Year-Old Children

The program for four-year-olds should be similar to the program for three-year-olds, with more emphasis on utilizing interest centers, units, and theme topics in a combination of group and individual instruction. A variety of activities should be included and be flexible enough to take into consideration the different developmental levels and needs of the individual child. A mixture of active and passive activities should be implemented.

The curriculum shall include all of the areas of development that are listed and shall provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate use of technology. The guidelines below each area of study are not mandatory, but are suggestions that should be considered. Comparable activities may be substituted. Each developmental area should be taught in a manner that is consistent with the mission of the school.

A. Social Development

1. Learning to make the transition from home to school easily
2. Developing self-confidence and self-esteem
3. Developing the ability to practice social habits of courtesy, sharing, cooperation, respect, and self-control
4. Developing the willingness to share and take turns
5. Learning to accept consequences for one's own behavior

6. Beginning to develop a sense of independence in working alone, using time constructively, and showing self-direction

B. Language/Literacy Development

1. Auditory Development
 - a. Providing opportunities for auditory discrimination by identifying common sounds and naming loud/quiet, same/different
 - b. Providing opportunities for auditory (sequential) memory by listening to and following two- and three-step directions, recalling the sequence of short story, and memorizing rhymes and finger-plays
 - c. Providing opportunities for auditory association by beginning to pair letter names with phonetic sound
2. Visual Development
 - a. Providing opportunities for visual discrimination
 - b. Providing opportunities for visual (sequential) memory
 - c. Providing opportunities for visual association such as positions, patterns, etc.
 - d. Providing visual motor activities including eye-hand coordination and left to right sequencing
3. Linguistic Development
 - a. Listening to stories, poetry, etc.
 - b. Telling stories, poems, etc.
 - c. Participating in creating group stories
 - d. Dictating stories to an adult
 - e. Using complete sentences which include descriptive language, correct syntax and grammar, and age-appropriate articulation
 - f. Participating in group discussion
 - g. Developing an awareness of sequence
 - h. Participating in dramatizations, puppetry, finger-plays
 - i. Increasing vocabulary development

C. Math Readiness Development

1. Providing manipulatives for teaching concepts relating to size and number relationships
2. Providing readiness activities to develop understanding of numerals and numbers including:
 - a. Identifying numerals
 - b. Classifying objects
 - c. Ordering numerals and objects
 - d. Recognizing quantity and size
 - e. Comparing and rearranging numerals
 - f. Ordering sets
 - g. Measuring
 - h. Patterning
 - i. Counting using one to one correspondence
 - j. Graphing

D. Science Development

1. Participating in physical science experiments (experiential-based)
2. Caring and feeding of classroom animals
3. Providing opportunities to study plants, including some indoor or outdoor gardening experience
4. Developing understanding of the five senses through exploration

E. Social Studies Development

1. Continuing awareness of community helpers
2. Continuing awareness of self and family
3. Continuing awareness of others
4. Developing an awareness of cycles, such as process of getting food from the farm to the table, or paper from the tree to the classroom
5. Celebrating appropriate holidays and birthdays with songs, stories, etc.
6. Developing an awareness of other cultures.

F. Music Development

1. Providing group singing opportunities
2. Participating in rhythmic activities
3. Participating in musical games
4. Creatively expressing music through body movements
5. Providing opportunities for a rhythm band
6. Exposing students to a wide variety of musical styles

G. Arts Development

1. Providing opportunities for art appreciation experiences
2. Providing opportunities for experimentation with various media

H. Physical Development

1. Providing opportunities to develop gross motor skills through running, climbing, kicking, throwing, swinging, etc.
2. Providing opportunities to develop fine motor skills through pouring, bead-stringing, cutting, building with small blocks and other manipulatives, sand and/or water play, writing first name, etc.
3. Providing opportunities for body awareness and control of movement
4. Providing health and safety units including:
 - a. Healthy food choices
 - b. Daily schedule of sleeping, eating, physical activity, etc.
 - c. Hygiene such as bathing, brushing teeth, washing hands, covering mouth when sneezing, etc.
 - d. Safety rules in class and outside

Program and Curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 3

The program for kindergarten – third grade should be varied and flexible, emphasizing academic readiness and social interaction. It should be planned with a balance of play, discovery, manipulation and participation, and take into consideration the different developmental levels and needs of the individual child. A balance of active and passive activities is recommended.

The curriculum shall include all of the areas of development that are listed and shall provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate use of technology. The guidelines below each area of study are not mandatory, but are suggestions that should be considered. Comparable activities may be substituted. Each developmental area should be taught in a manner that is consistent with the mission of the school.

A. Social Development

1. Learning to transition from home to school easily
2. Developing discipline within the group
 - a. Accepting guidance of teachers and showing respect for authority figures
 - b. Working and playing cooperatively with other children
 - c. Showing concern for the feelings of others and learning courtesy and manners
 - d. Expressing appropriate responses to feelings of anger, fear or frustration
 - e. Developing appropriate work habits
3. Developing self-discipline
 - a. Respecting rules and regulations, following oral directions
 - b. Showing growth in self-control
 - c. Accepting responsibility for own actions
 - d. Working independently
 - e. Participating in group discussions and activities cooperatively
4. Developing self-esteem and a positive self-image

B. Reading/Language/Literacy Development

1. Connecting oral and written language by
 - a. Listening to stories read daily
 - b. Dictating group or individual stories
2. Developing and expanding vocabulary
3. Decoding instruction
4. Building individual word banks including phonetic and sight words
5. Experiencing involvement and excitement in reading:
 - a. Developing comprehension, including understanding of main idea and supporting details
 - b. Discussing characters and feelings
 - c. Using context clues
 - d. Creating alternate story endings
 - e. Predicting events, and extending information
6. Dramatizing stories and making book
7. Developing Library Skills

C. Fine Motor Development

1. Developing eye-hand coordination, including proper pencil grasp
2. Developing left to right directionality
3. Developing spatial orientation (position in space) of letters
4. Writing upper and lower case letters, numbers
5. Writing first and last name properly

D. Mathematics Development

Manipulatives should be used as much as possible when introducing these concepts:

1. Sequencing numerals
2. Using one-to-one correspondence and numeration
3. Adding and subtracting with basic concepts
4. Using measurement
5. Telling time: hour and half hour
6. Recognizing value and names of coins
7. Solving mathematical problems

E. Science Development

Experiential and discovery activities should be used as much as possible in introducing these topics:

1. Developing an understanding of our body
2. Introducing health and safety procedures
3. Observing weather and temperature
4. Categorizing animals, including mammals, fish, birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians and learning about their life cycles
5. Investigating various plant life
6. Experimenting with cooking and understanding the role of nutrition

F. Social Studies Development

1. Studying seasons
2. Celebrating holidays
3. Developing an awareness of self/family/group
4. Developing an awareness community helpers
5. Developing an awareness of other cultures

G. Music Development

1. Developing music appreciation
2. Participating in group singing
3. Participating in rhythmic activities
 - a. Using instruments
 - b. Expressing music through body movements

H. Arts Development

1. Developing an appreciation for the arts
2. Experimenting with various media: scissors, paste, glue, chalk, pastels, crayons, paint, pencils, cloth, clay, sand, paper
3. Developing an awareness of colors and color mixing

I. Physical Development

1. Body awareness and control
2. Developing balance and coordination
3. Providing opportunities for running, skipping, jumping, hopping
4. Providing opportunities to develop perceptual motor skills
5. Providing equipment to develop gross motor skills, including: balls, hoops, jump ropes, beanbags, etc

J. Technology

1. Providing opportunities for developmentally appropriate use of technology

Suggested Daily Schedule (For Eighteen-Month Through Five-Year-Old Programs)

- A. Arrival, including greeting each child, roll call, job chart, etc.
- B. Circle time, including group activities of manners/courtesy, show and tell, specific lessons for current units or themes, etc.
- C. Free choice of activities in centers incorporating the following:
 1. Listening and auditory skills
 2. Tactile, fine-motor skills
 3. Arts and crafts
 4. Language development
 5. Visual/perceptual skills
 6. Spatial relationships and comparison, number concepts
 7. Science discovery
 8. Daily living activities (housekeeping center/role play)
- D. Story time (including reading, dramatization, discussion, etc.)
- E. Music and rhymes
- F. Snack time (lunch time, if full day)
- G. Quiet time (rest time, if full day)
- H. Clean up time and good byes
- I. Dismissal (goodbye to each child individually)

Program and Curriculum for Elementary School Children

The elementary school should be designed to provide age appropriate learning experiences for children in:

- Basic skills and understandings in reading, oral and written communications and mathematics
- Essential knowledge in the field of natural and social sciences to include an awareness of other cultures
- Habits conducive to wholesome development in the areas of physical growth and health
- Recognition and appreciation of moral, spiritual and patriotic values
- Appreciation in the fields of art and music and some skill in artistic expression

- Independent thought and action and ability to do independent work requiring research techniques
- Constructive attitude toward obligations and willingness to accept responsibility
- Ability to live and function in a social setting and to establish wholesome relations with peers and adults
- There should be ample evidence of recognition of individual differences.
- There should be evidence of opportunity for leadership, responsibility, self-expression and creativity.
- Guidance and counseling should be an integral part of the program.
- The school must be actively working toward the goals stated in its philosophy and curriculum guide. Areas usually covered include:
 - a. Language arts (covering reading, writing, listening and speaking)
 - b. Mathematics
 - c. Natural sciences
 - d. Social sciences
 - e. World languages
 - f. Health and physical education
 - g. Art, music, and drama
 - h. Integrated computer technology

References:

- ¹ <http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dtl/curriculum>: *A Guide to Curriculum Development, Purposes, Practices and Procedures*
(Modified on website 11/3/06)

General Evaluation Procedures

E.1 The procedure for schools applying for initial accreditation and those preparing for re-accreditation are the same.

E. 2 Upon request, the FKC state office will send a copy of the bylaws and accreditation standards to any school interested in applying for accreditation. A preview visit is in order before the application is submitted. If it appears the school is ready for the evaluation procedure, the application is filed. The application is valid for a twelve-month period. The school must wait at least six months for the evaluation committee's visit to allow time for the completion of the self-study.

E. 3 Schools applying for initial accreditation or re-accreditation are informed of the name of the chair of their evaluation committee in August. The committee chair and the school head set the date for the evaluation. While the Associate Director for Accreditation is responsible for selecting the committee, suggestions from the school head for expertise in a particular area are welcome.

E.4 The committee shall be large enough in number to ensure that each teacher will be visited during the evaluation. The size of the committee varies with the type of the school. The expertise of the committee should be appropriate for the size, grade level and philosophy of the school. Committee members will be from different schools and geographical diversity will be sought.

E.5 The number of committee members will follow these guidelines:

	<u>Minimum Committee</u>	<u>Length of Visit</u>
Preschool	3	Visit: 1-2 Days (dependent on number of classes)
Preschool and Elementary	4	Visit: 1-2 Days (dependent on number of classes)
Change of Head/Program	2	Visit: 1/2 Day

Size and location (such as separate campuses) of the school will also be considered. The head of school has the option of declining any member of the committee. The Associate Director for Accreditation will notify the school of the names and addresses of committee members at least three weeks prior to the visit.

E.6 The school should start as soon as possible to conduct its self-study which must be completed at least two weeks prior to the evaluation. Copies of the self-study must be sent to all members of the evaluation committee and the FKC office at that time. If the school needs assistance with the self-study, the committee chair will be available.

E.7 Each committee member is to be provided a school map, teacher names and class assignments, schedule of classes and room numbers, student handbook, and any other information that will assist the committee. (see “Documents for Review”, p. 38)

E.8 The duration of the evaluation will be determined by the chair, taking into account the scope of the school’s program, the size of the faculty and student body, and any special factors, such as split campuses. Most schools will require 2 days of on-campus evaluation and the afternoon or evening before. The purpose of meeting before the day of on-campus visit is to determine logistical and financial aspects of the school so that valuable evaluation day time is not used for that purpose. The school normally plans a social time for the faculty to meet the evaluation team before the evaluation begins. This visit affords an opportunity for faculty and committee to become acquainted informally.

E.8 The school will make hotel reservations for the out-of-town members of the committee and team members should be notified of the accommodations when they receive copies of the self-study. The school should make arrangements to pay meals/lodging costs which are incurred during the time the committee is actually visiting. Possible travel costs include mileage, parking, taxi, tolls and airfare. Only when a school has reimbursed FKC for expenses will the report of the committee be presented to the board for their action.

E.9 The bylaws require that all expenses incurred by members of the visiting team shall be borne by the school being visited. Expense vouchers will be issued to the team by the chair, collected and sent to the FKC office for reimbursement. The school will receive a bill for committee expenses from FKC. In case of a joint FKC/FCIS evaluation, FCIS will bill the school for the expenses of all team members.

E.10 The school is to provide a private room on-campus for the committee to meet and discuss the evaluation. The school should plan a typical day with no standardized testing, field trips, guest speakers, etc. The school should provide lunch at the school for the committee.

E.11 The time for an exit interview should be determined by the chair and the head of school. The chair and committee will verbally offer the report to the head and whomever else he/she wishes to include. The chair and committee are not decision-makers with regard to the accreditation status of the school. Only the FKC Board of Directors is empowered to make a determination regarding accreditation.

E.12 The chair writes the final report, incorporating the reports of all team members, and presents it to the FKC board. The school is advised of the decision of the board and is sent the final report.

E. 13 The accepted school must complete an annual report form, pay annual dues and address, in writing within one year, all special recommendations of the committee.

Calendar Checklist

When Assignment is Received

- * Chair and school head set a date for the evaluation.
- * Chair should be available to head for consultation as needed.
- * School should begin/continue self-study.

Several Months Before the Visit

- * School head will be informed exactly what is expected in terms of the schedule for the visit, i.e., team room, observations, needed files and documents, exit interviews.
- * Associate Director for Accreditation will provide school with names and addresses with all evaluation team members three weeks prior to scheduled visit.
- * Make travel arrangements. Vouchers should be paid at end of visit. Lodging and meal arrangements are usually made by the school.

Three Weeks Before the Visit

- * Self-study, map and welcome letter is be mailed to each committee member and to the FKC Office.

One Week Before the Visit

- * Chair and head will communicate to ensure everything is in place for the visit.

Following the Visit

- * Chair should arrange for the exit interview.
- * Final report and committee expense vouchers will be completed and sent to the FKC Office **at least three weeks** before the next board meeting. School will receive an invoice for committee expenses.
- * Chair will attend the next board meeting to present the report in person.
- * School will be notified of the board's decision within two weeks following the meeting at which the report is presented. A copy of the report will accompany the notification letter.

Guidelines for Writing a Self-study

The self-study can be the most valuable part of the accreditation process. It is an in-depth evaluation by the school of all aspects of the school's programs. Are the school's stated purposes the same? Has the school's mission changed? Do policies need to be updated?

A template is available on the FKC website (www.fkconline.org)

1. To begin the self-study procedure, determine a time-line to allow the completed document to be mailed to the evaluation team chairperson, committee members and FKC Office at least two weeks in advance of the date of the evaluation. At least six months' time should be given to the self-study process.
2. Divide the faculty and staff into committees to research, review and evaluate the following areas. Write a few paragraphs about each area, including what is working and what needs attention. Refer to the FKC bylaws and standards for compliance.

Areas for Analysis:

1. School's Philosophy and Mission
2. Finance and business operations (Financial Review must be sent to the Chair)
3. Records
4. Academic organization, faculty and administration
5. Faculty teaching conditions and professional development
6. Student Discipline and Morale
7. Student Admissions and Qualifications
8. Academic Program
 - a. Early Childhood
 - b. Lower School
9. Health and Safety
10. Plant, Facility and Equipment (including playgrounds)
11. Library/Media Center
12. Technology
13. Physical education/extra-curricular activities
14. Student Services – Guidance, Food Services, Transportation, Academic Support
15. Special education program (if applicable)
16. Governing and advisory board/parent organization
17. Development and Marketing
18. School's Disposition of Previous Accreditation Recommendations
19. Strategic Plan

The committees should meet frequently and report to the full faculty for input. The total faculty will want to review the mission, philosophy and purpose of the school and state it clearly in the self-study. Teachers at each level are to submit a copy of the completed *Curriculum Evaluation by Faculty* for that level. All faculty should meet together to submit one copy of the *Total School Program Evaluation by Faculty* form.

3. A representative of FKC will be appointed as chair of the evaluation committee for your school. The chair and the Associate Director for Accreditation will be available to advise you in any way needed as you complete your self-study process.
4. Complete the self-study forms on statistics, faculty and documentation (available on FKC website). Add paragraphs of areas to be evaluated. Include school's disposition of recommendations of the last five year evaluation committee. Document as needed.
5. Complete all of the above in a professional looking report with appropriate dividers and tabs. A copy can be mailed or sent via flash drive to the chair, each committee member and the FKC Office. All faculty members should be familiar with the self-study and the school should keep a copy on file.

Documents for Review

Please provide the following documents for review by the visiting team.

- Textbooks/workbooks for all classes (Grades 1-3)
- Sample student work
- School publications – yearbooks, newsletters
- Admissions materials – brochures, application, guidelines
- Curriculum guides – Curriculum maps/scope & sequence for all grades being evaluated
- Student handbook
- Faculty handbook
- Parent handbook
- Campus map
- Faculty Qualifications Data profile sheets
- School calendar
- Administrative organizational chart (if not in self-study)
- Job descriptions
- Development/marketing plan
- Crisis management plan
- Professional development plan (if not in self-study)
- Nutrition policy; other campus-wide policies
- Strategic plan (may be shared with Chair only)
- Board policy manual (if applicable)
- Hard copies of the self-study (2 – 3)
- Daily schedules for teachers
- List of faculty/staff as a sign-off sheet for observations
- Schedule for the team visitation
- Computers with school web site available for review
- Printer capability within the team workroom
- Computer/Internet access --- find out if team members will bring their own laptops or if you will need to set up access to school laptops or computer lab
- Office supplies – pads of paper, pens, pencils, stapler, post-it notes, paperclips, folders
- Water, coffee, tea, snacks (you may want to check with the individual team members in advance to get their specific drink/dietary requests)

RESOURCES

The following links to the Florida Statutes, Florida State Regulations and Florida Administrative Codes provide current information regarding State of Florida Guidelines.

Florida Statutes - <http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes>

Title XLVIII K-20 Education Code Chapters 1000 – 1013

Information regarding:

- Attendance
- Fingerprinting requirements
- Requirements for middle grades promotion
- Requirements for high school graduation
- Middle and high school grading system
- State scholarship programs (VPK, McKay, Corporate tax)
- Virtual school programs
- Participation in FHSAA
- Student health and immunization
- Transportation codes; bus driver training
- Student records

Florida State Regulations of Private Schools

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/RegPrivSchl/florida.html>

Florida Department of Children and Families

Child Care Regulation

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/childcare>

Florida Administrative Codes - <http://flrules.org/gateway/browse.asp>

Information regarding:

- Building codes
- Immunization requirements
- Safety and sanitation standards
- Radon and asbestos laws
- Fire safety
- Compulsory attendance
- Transfer of high school credits

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) <http://www.ice.gov>

- Independent schools that plan to participate in a foreign exchange program, or enroll students or hire faculty who are not United States citizens will find full information at this web site.

Department of Education contact information www.floridaschoolchoice.org

Information on: Nonpublic schools and Scholarship programs

NOTES