



Selecting High Quality Instructional Materials for Early Childhood

Today we will cover the following.

- Program requirements for curricula
- KSDE's selection guidance for instructional materials
- Research behind Early Childhood Curriculum
- Considerations for selecting a Preschool Curriculum
- KELS Alignment Tool
- Supporting Staff with new curriculum
- Lessons Learned





KSDE Requirements for State Funded Preschool Programs

Research-Based



- Programs must implement a research-based preschool curriculum that includes literacy, math, and social-emotional components.

Approved by KSDE



- The curricula must be approved by KSDE and align to the Kansas Early Learning Standards.

Not required to be on KSDE “List”



- Unless districts are spending Kansas At-Risk Pupil Assistance Program funding to purchase preschool curriculum, a district's preschool curriculum does not need to be included on the KSDE approved list of Evidence-Based practices and Programs for At-Risk Programs.



The Research Behind Early Childhood Curriculum

RAND Study Findings



- 85% of teachers report using multiple instructional materials
- About three-quarters of teachers reported using a comprehensive instructional material covering multiple learning domains, and about three-quarters reported using materials focused on one domain.
- Among domain-specific materials, the use of language and literacy materials was most common, and the use of numeracy materials was rare.
- Only about half of pre-k teachers feel their materials adequately support diverse learners
- Many teachers turn to self-created resources to fill gaps

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA4412-1.html

RAND Study Recommendations



- State and district education leaders should provide clear policy guidance and professional learning to support the coherent selection and use of multiple instructional materials.
- Curriculum providers should revisit how well their materials support children with different learning needs.
- Education funders and policymakers should encourage the development and use of domain-specific pre-K numeracy materials.

NASEM- A New Vision for High-Quality Preschool Curriculum



Research shows that a high-quality preschool curriculum should:

- Incorporate diverse perspective, experiences, cultures, languages, strengths, and needs
- Include rich and meaningful content
- Include well-designed learning experiences
- Have a scope and sequence that follows children's way of thinking and learning
- Demonstrate effectiveness in positive learning and developmental outcomes

https://nap.nationalacademies.org/resource/27429/High-Quality_Preschool_Curriculum_Educators_Issue_Brief.pdf



Curriculum Selection Resources

KSDE Instructional Materials Selection Guidance



KSDE believes that:

- The selection and implementation of high-quality instructional materials, supported by ongoing professional learning, is a transformative school improvement measure.
- Decisions regarding curriculum and instructional materials should be made at the local level, with support and resources provided by the KSDE. These decisions should prioritize the expertise of educators while incorporating the perspectives of students, families, and the community.
- Instructional materials should be aligned to the Kansas Curricular Standards, attend to the vision for Quality Instruction, and be based on research.

KSDE recommends the selection occurs across three phases:



- Plan:
 - Determine your process.
 - Develop your lens.
 - Build skill.
- Study:
 - Know and narrow your choices.
 - Investigate the materials.
- Act:
 - Make a decision.
 - Plan for implementation.

National Institute for Early Education Research's How to Choose a Preschool Curriculum

2025 Policy Brief

*-Barnett, W.S. & Espinosa, L.M. (2025).
How to choose a preschool curriculum.
Policy Brief. New Brunswick, NJ:
National Institute for Early Education
Research.*

- What is a Curriculum?
- How Goals Guide Curriculum Selection and Why it Matters
- What Makes a Preschool Curriculum High Quality
- Supporting Strong Curriculum Implementation
- A Checklist to Guide Curriculum Choice: Issues to Consider when Choosing a Preschool Curriculum



National Center on Quality Teaching & Learning



- [Considerations for Selecting a Preschool Curriculum](#)
- [Curriculum Webpage](#)
 - Early Childhood Curriculum Resources

What Matters Most for Pre-K Instructional Materials

Student
Achievement
Partners

<https://learnwithsap.org/high-quality-pre-kindergarten-instruction/>

- Learning Environment
- Social-Emotional Development
- Building Knowledge through Content-Rich Instruction
- Oral Language and Vocabulary Development
- Asset-Based Practices
- Supporting Multilingual Learners
- Understanding and Supporting Students' Learning
- Families as Partners
- Educator and Implementation Supports



Curriculum Review Websites



Evidence for ESSA



- evidenceforessa.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Evidence for ESSA website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'About', 'Who We Are', 'FAQs', and 'Contact Us', along with a green 'Search' button. Below this is a horizontal menu with categories: 'MATH', 'SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL', 'ATTENDANCE', 'SCIENCE', and 'FAMILY ENGAGEMENT'. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'Find Evidence-Based PK-12 Programs' and a subtext: 'Your standard for the most up-to-date and reliable information on programs that meet ESSA evidence standards.' A button at the bottom of the banner says 'LEARN MORE ABOUT ESSA >'. The background of the banner is a photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, smiling and engaged in a learning activity with colorful beads on sticks.

EVIDENCE
for **ESSA**

About Who We Are FAQs Contact Us Search

MATH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ATTENDANCE SCIENCE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Find Evidence-Based PK-12 Programs

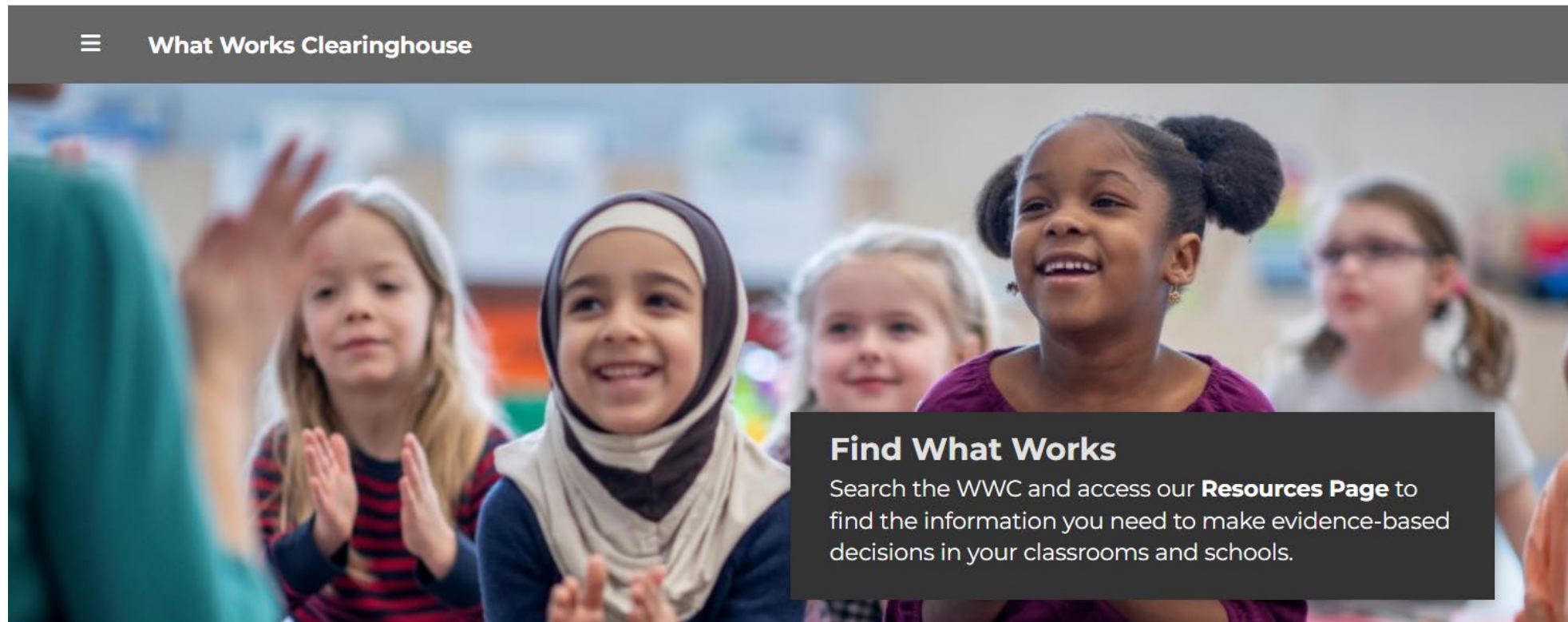
Your standard for the most up-to-date and reliable information on programs that meet ESSA evidence standards.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ESSA >

What Works Clearinghouse



- <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>



National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning

Curriculum Consumer Report

NCECDTL

Curriculum Consumer Report



- Evidence base for child outcomes
- Research Based Curriculum
- Scope and Sequence
- Alignment with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework
- Learning Goals for Children
- Ongoing Child Assessment
- Parent and Family Engagement
- Professional Development and Materials to Support Implementation
- Learning Experiences and Interactions
- Learning Environments and Routines
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Linguistic Responsiveness
- Individualization for Children with Disabilities, Suspected Delays, or other Special Needs
- Individualization Based on Interests, Strengths, and Needs



CASEL Program Guide

- pg.casel.org



 Program Guide

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 CASEL Websites



[Identify Your Goals](#) [Align to CASEL Criteria](#) [View All Programs](#) [Compare Programs](#) [About the Program Guide](#) [FAQs](#) [For Providers](#)



 Reduce motion

Program Guide

The CASEL Program Guide is designed to help educators and school administrators select an evidence-based SEL program that best meets the needs of their community.

Ed Reports



- edreports.org

A screenshot of the edreports.org website. The header is dark blue with the edreports logo on the left and navigation links (Explore Reports, Our Process, Resources, Impact, About Us) and a search bar on the right. The main content area features a large image of a teacher and students working on a project. Overlaid on this image is the text "Materials Matter" and a description of the service. There are also buttons for "Browse reports" with sub-categories (ELA, Math, Science, Pre-K) and an "Explore All Reports" button. A search bar for reports is at the bottom left of the main content area.

edreports

Explore Reports ▾ Our Process ▾ Resources ▾ Impact ▾ About Us ▾ Search

Materials Matter

We provide free reports that help you evaluate instructional materials because high-quality content matters to teachers, to kids, and to our collective future.

Search our reports

Browse reports

ELA Math Science Pre-K

Explore All Reports

Ed Reports cont.



- Rates on 3 gateways

■ Meets Expectations ▲ Partially Meets Expectations ● Does Not Meet Expectations ◆ Not Eligible

- Gives Ratings Snapshot for each Gateway
- Provides details on each of the indicators within each of the criteria within the Gateways.

Ed Reports Review Tools



- 3 Gateways

1. Is the curriculum designed to meet the needs of all students?
2. Does the curriculum have high-quality, developmentally appropriate content?
3. Does the curriculum support teachers and encourage student learning and development?

Curriculum Alignment



KELS.KSDE.GOV

- Order printed copies of the KELS
- Training
- Resources
 - Crosswalks and Alignments
 - Alignment Documents from publishers
 - KELS Curriculum Alignment Toolkit



KSDE Curriculum Data



What tools are being used?



- Screeners, Assessment, and Curricula used in Kansas Preschools
 - Literacy
 - Math
 - Social Emotional Learning

Who is using it?



- Which schools are using specific tools
 - Screening
 - Assessment
 - Curricula

Other Things to Consider



Professional Development



- What PD is offered?
 - Is it “one and done” or continuous?
 - What coaching supports are available?
 - Live or Virtual?
 - Can PD be combined with K-12?

Alignment to K-12



- Is there a K-12 version ?
- Does the curriculum support what is being used in K-12?
- Does vocabulary align?

What are neighbors using?



- Coordinate
 - Observations
 - Training
 - Coaching
 - Mentoring
 - PLC's

Supporting Staff



Supporting Staff Following Adoption



- Mentoring
- Coaching
- PLC's



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