June 27, 2013

TO: Robert W. Runcie
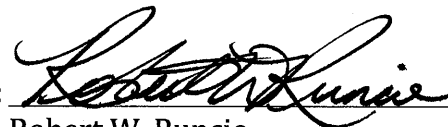   Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Dr. Leontine J. Butler, Executive Director
     Early Childhood Education Department

SUBEJECT: **BUSINESS PRACTICE BULLETIN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) GUIDELINES FOR INFANT, TODDLER, AND PRE-K PROGRAMS**

Please see the attached Business Practice Bulletin Early Childhood Education Guidelines for Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K Programs.

This document has been vetted and approved by SLT, Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Auditor. Your signature is required for approval of this item to be placed in SAP.

Approved By: _____
       Robert W. Runcie
       Superintendent of Schools

LJB:jrk

SUBJECT: **BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE) GUIDELINES FOR INFANT, TODDLER AND PRE-K PROGRAMS**

TOPICS IN BULLETIN:
   I.   GENERAL INFORMATION
   II. CRITERIA FOR OPENING PROGRAM
   III. ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
   IV. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES
   V. QUALITY ASSURANCE

I   GENERAL:

A PURPOSE: The purpose of this Business Practice Bulletin is to provide guidelines and procedures for Broward County Public Schools Early Childhood Education infant, toddler, and Pre-K programs, birth to age five, including elementary schools, high school early learning labs, adult high schools, and community schools, through a variety of funding models:

- **Fee-Based**

- **School Readiness**

- **Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)**

- **Funding Combinations**

    o   **Fee-Based/VPK**

    o   **Title One/VPK**

    o   **Fee-Based/School Readiness**

B DEFINITIONS

1   Early Childhood Education – Programs serving children birth – 3rd grade.

2   Infants and Toddlers - Programs serving birth to 2-year-old children.

3   Pre-K Programs – Programs serving 3 and 4-year-old children.

4   Fee-Based Program – ECE programs where parents pay established fees for services.

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5 **School Readiness** – State funding offered to subsidize early care services for families that meet eligibility requirements.

6 **Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) -** State funding for children four years of age by September 1 to participate in 540 hours of Pre-K instructional time during the school year or 300 hours instructional time over the summer.

7 **VPK Extended Day -** Scheduling of the 540 hours of state-funded Pre-K instructional time during an extended day from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This model is implemented as an extended day to a current full day Pre-K program or VPK/fee-based program. The use of the VPK 540 hour (3 hours per day) voucher can occur as morning or afternoon instruction.

8 **Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)** – Electronic ongoing monitoring tool 3 X a year.

C **FORMS/DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO OPEN A PRE-K FEE-BASED PROGRAM IN *ECE PROCEDURAL MANUAL***

1 **Application for Early Care and Education Programs –** Schools interested in providing Pre-K services must complete the application process with the ECE Department. The application must include:

a **Name of School-Based Coordinator-**Contact Personnel at School-Site

b **Registration Process –** Timeline and description of the registration process

c **Classroom Placement-** Identification of projected classroom placement

d **Curriculum and Assessments-** Description of curriculum resources and assessment measures. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for research-based curriculum and assessment recommendations for infant, toddler, and Pre-K programs.

e **Funding Intent-** Fee-based, Fee-Based-Combination (VPK, School Readiness)

f **Non-acceptance Letter -** Copy of letter to parents not accepted into program

g **Acceptance Letter -** Copy of letter distributed to parents. Include:

(i) Hours of Operation

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      (ii) Program Description

      (iii) Fee Schedule

II CRITERIA TO OPEN PROGRAM

A FACILITIES AND CLASSROOM SETTING

1 Schools must have the capacity to absorb additional classrooms.

2 Standard elementary/primary classroom facilities must be used to host the Early Childhood programs.

3 Classrooms must be in compliance with Health and Safety Department facility requirements for early childhood programs and meet Early Childhood age level facility qualifications prior to opening a program:

  a All classrooms must have an in-room bathroom, sink, and drinking fountain. Classroom may be within the main building or in modular/portables that provide the above referenced standards.

  b Classroom must meet the minimum square footage requirement of 35 square feet per child.

  c Outdoor play area must meet the minimum square footage requirement of 45 square feet per child.

4 For programs with Infants and Toddlers, Broward County Child Care Licensing and Enforcement guidelines must be met. For additional information, see www.broward.org.

B PERSONNEL (HIRING AND TEACHER CREDENTIALS)

1 Schools will coordinate the hiring of a teacher and paraprofessional for each Early Childhood classroom with support from the ECE Department.

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2 **Infants and Toddlers Early Care Providers:** Early Care providers are required to have a high school diploma and a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential with an infant and toddler endorsement, or an Associate's Degree (or higher) in early childhood education. A teacher of record must be assigned to the infant and toddler programs.

3 **Pre-K Three and Four Year Olds Teachers:** Teachers are required to hold a Florida Educator's Certificate with certification in Preschool Education (Birth to Four-Year-Old) or Pre-K/Primary (Age 3 to Grade 3). Specific programs may require additional credentialing, such as Montessori and/or Primary Years Programme (PYP).

4 **Pre-K Three and Four Year Olds Teacher Assistants:** Paraprofessionals are required to have a high school diploma and Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential or an Associate's Degree (or higher).

5 Additional teacher credentials must be met for specific funding programs (VPK, School Readiness). Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for additional information.

6 Job Descriptions are available in the *ECE Procedural Manual*.

III ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL MANGEMENT FOR FEE-BASED PROGRAMS
The following explains internal Treasury procedures and record keeping requirements for Early Childhood Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K programs. Refer to Broward County Public Schools Standard Practice Bulletin I-414, I-301, and I-302 for collection procedures.

A FEE STRUCTURE

1 **During the school year and summer term, fees are collected by the school-based coordinator or designee per the Fee Schedule.** Each time a child is registered for the program, a registration fee will be collected.

2 Failure to pay fees by the due date will result in the child being withdrawn from the program.

3 Re-entry into the program after withdrawal will require a new registration and a re-registration fee.

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4 If Full Time Equivalent (FTE) funds are received for specific students (i.e. students receiving part time ESE or speech services) then the student's fee rate must be adjusted based on the FTE collected. Contact the Office of Exceptional Student Education and Support Services for additional information.

5 Funding for programs operating using VPK funds will be distributed through the Early Childhood Education Department. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for information about applying for VPK funding, receiving VPK funding, administrative fees, and working with the ECE Department VPK Coordinator.

6 Subsidized funding for students receiving School Readiness will be distributed through the Early Childhood Education Department. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for information about becoming eligible to receive School Readiness students, administrative fees, and the School Readiness Funding process.

7 Programs funded with VPK and School Readiness funds will pay a pre-determined administrative fee to the Early Childhood Education Department.

8 Funds generated from the Early Childhood Education Programs will be used at the school site in the ECE program to fund teacher salaries, curriculum, assessments, resources, basic equipment, and operating costs.

9 Balance of funds generated from Early Childhood Program will be used at the school to create scholarship opportunities for students demonstrating financial need (sliding scale of fees for students qualifying for free and/or reduced priced lunch). Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for information about creating scholarship opportunities.

B FEE COLLECTIONS

1 PAYMENT CYCLE

a As per School Board Policy 3411 and the Constitution of the State of Florida, Article VII, Section 10, ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE PRIOR TO THE START OF ATTENDANCE PERIOD.

b Payment dates will be established by the ECE Department and will follow a twenty-day payment cycle (nine payment periods throughout the year). Refer to the ECE Procedural Manual for schedule of payments.

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    c All School Board operated ECE programs will accept the following forms of payment:

      (i) Cash, Money Orders and Cashier's checks

      (ii) Credit cards (MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Debit cards with a MasterCard/Visa logo)

      (iii) On-line Bill Pay

    d If locations are interested in the on-line payment option, contact the Business Support Center at 754-321-0600.

2 RECORD OF PAYMENTS

    a All collections will be recorded in the ECMS program by the school-based program coordinator using the school location and personnel number, as a unique identifier for auditing purposes.

    b Payments may be recorded on the Program Receipt Form if the ECMS system is inoperable. (NOTE: Make sure all required information appears on the school form.) Information that needs to be recorded is:

      (i) Name

      (ii) Date of payment

      (iii) Payment Amount

      (iv) Receipt number

      (v) Payment Period

      (vi) Full Fee Amount

      (vii) Authorization code or BC-40P

C SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

    1 The school shall maintain all records necessary to document compliance to all sections of the Early Childhood Education Business Practice Bulletin. All records must be kept on file for five years.

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2 The Early Childhood Management System (ECMS) will be used to document Early Childhood Education fee collections.

3 The School-Based Program Coordinator or Payment Designee will:

a Collect all fees as detailed in the ECE Procedural Manual fee schedule and receipt funds (The bookkeeper may not collect nor receipt funds).

b The BC‑40P Departmental Receipt Book will be used for all cash fees, cashier checks, or money orders that are deposited in the bank.

(i) Parents must receive a terminal receipt for all credit cards processed electronically or a BC-40P receipt for deposited items placed in the Dunbar deposit bag, for the bank.

(ii) The receipt must stipulate a breakdown of the fees collected.

(iii) For cash sales, the white copy of the BC-40P receipt should be given to the parent. The green and yellow copies should remain in the book until turned in to the school bookkeeper.

c The supervisor or payment designee will place money received for deposit in the appropriate Dunbar bag with the Dunbar receipt for collection when received (no later than the next school day).

d All money should be transferred to the bookkeeper no later than the next school day.

e All online payments must be noted in the ECMS each day.

f Monies and receipts must be reconciled before remitting to the bookkeeper/business support center representative. In addition, a breakdown of the Total Collection must be completed each day money is reconciled.

D BOOKEEPER/BUSINESS SUPPORT CENTER DESIGNEE (BSC) RESPONSIBILITES:

1 Run a machine tape on all BC‑40P receipts included in the collections and collection breakdown.

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2 Verify that cash remitted equals BC‑40P receipts. If the monies and receipt amounts do not equal, the payment designee must be notified before official receipting is done.

3 If a loss of funds should occur, issue a receipt for the amount of funds being remitted. A detailed explanation (Certificate of Loss Form signed by the principal) must be attached to the inside cover of the receipt book.

4 Receipt the amount of collections into the appropriate trust accounts.

5 Notate the BC‑40P receipt beginning and ending numbers that cover the collection.

6 Remove green copies of BC‑40P receipts and attach to bookkeeper's or BSC designee Official Receipt and Fee Collection Total Breakdown Form.

7 Complete information on the front cover of the BC‑40P Departmental Receipt Book

8 Return the BC‑40P Departmental Receipt Book, green BC‑40P copies stapled to the Official Receipt and Total Breakdown Form to the school-based coordinator or payment designee.

9 Prepare Bank Deposit(s) and deposit money into Child Care Trust Account Daily as per School Board Policy 6301.

   a An adding machine tape should be attached to the bookkeeper/BSC designee's copy of the deposit slip

10 Remittance of Fee Collections to the Treasury Department

   a Bookkeeper remits all Fee Collections to the Treasury Department at the end of the collection period.

   b A check payable to the School Board of Broward County must be drawn on the Child Care Trust Accounts for the full amount of Child Care collections.

   c Bookkeeper completes the appropriate Transmittal Form and forwards the check and Transmittal Form to the Treasury Department. **NOTE: THERE ARE TO BE NO EXPENDITURES MADE FROM THE CHILD CARE TRUST ACCOUNT OTHER THAN REFUNDS AND REMITTANCES TO THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT; UNLESS, OTHER EXPENDITURES ARE SPECIFIED AND APPROVED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.**

11 Maintain a fee summary by school and by revenue account for funds remitted.

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E   TREASURY DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1   Upon receipt of the ECE Transmittal Form and check from the school, the Treasury Department will deposit the check in the appropriate accounts.

2   Compete the Treasury Department section of the ECE Transmittal Form from school.

3   Record cash receipt financial transactions in SAP based on ECE Transmittal Form.

F   REFUNDS FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM (ALL ECE PROGRAMS)

1   A student who has paid in advance for the month and withdraws from the program during that month will be entitled to a refund for the number of remaining days in the period that he/she did not attend the ECE program. **NOTE: The Registration fee will not be refunded.**

2   If a student withdraws from the program during the payment cycle, his/her name will be noted in the ECMS as withdrawn. The school-based coordinator or payment designee will also note the withdrawal from the program on the ECMS receipt and the amount of the authorized refund.

3   A Refund Request form will be completed and submitted to the school's bookkeeper or Business Support Center Designee for refunds required

   a   Name of School & Date of Request

   b   Refund Classification

      (i) Child's Name

      (ii) Parent's Name & Address

      (iii) Explanation

      (iv) Refund Check Number & Date Mailed

      (v) Authorizing Person's Signature

   c   The bookkeeper/BSC designee will complete an Internal Accounts Expense Reimbursement/Payment Request Form, attaching the refund request form.

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    d The principal will sign the internal accounts check requisition and the bookkeeper/BSC Designee will issue a check to the parent.

IV OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

A STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS

1 Schools will follow the following requirements for adult/child ratios:

    a Classrooms serving children 6 weeks old to 35 months old, 1 adult per every 4 children with no more than 8 children per classroom

    b Classrooms serving 3-year-old children, 2 adults per every 17 children

    c Classrooms serving 4-year-old children, 2 adults per every 20 children

2 Ratios must be maintained at all times throughout the day, including rest time, lunch, and outdoor play.

B APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

1 The age level classifications for entry into programs, depending on programs being implemented at specific school sites

    a Infant Program: Children ages 6 weeks to 12 months

    b Toddler Program: Children ages 24 months to 36 months

    c Pre-K-3 Program: Children 3-years-old prior to September 1

    d Pre-K-4 Program: Children 4-years-old prior to September 1

2 Students will follow standard District registration and enrollment procedures, including registration into TERMS and creation of students' identification (FSI) numbers.

3 Immunizations must be up-to-date for children to remain in the program.

4 Students will apply during a designated application window period. After the window closes, a randomized selection process will occur of all applicants.

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5   Students not selected will be placed on a waitlist in order of lottery assignment and accepted into the program as additional seats become available.

6   Preference will be given to children of staff members, children of other School Board employees, siblings of current students at the school, and to those residing within the established school boundaries for fee-based programs only.

C ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

1   The school calendar and hours will be consistent with the standard school program in place at the designated site.

2   Attendance guidelines will follow standard K-5 attendance expectations. Excessive absences may result in a child being removed from the program with the seat being given to the next child in the randomized selection process.

3   Attendance requirements, guidelines, and end-of-year procedures vary per program (i.e. school readiness, VPK, etc.). State funding directly depends on attendance. Refer to the ECE Procedural Manual for additional information.

4   Non-attendance will not waive parent fees for fee-based programs.

D MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

1   The basic equipment list provided by the ECE Department will be used as a guide for setting up the classroom and purchasing and/or acquiring furniture and materials. See the *ECE Procedural Manual* for basic equipment list of recommended materials.

2   Schools will be responsible for acquiring all basic equipment.

E CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

1   The overall room setup and design must foster interaction and engagement for learning to support students' social and emotional development and cognitive learning. For additional support with design of the infant, toddler, and Pre-K

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classroom environment, including setup checklist and sample classroom layout, refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual*.

2   Age-appropriate materials and learning centers are essential for implementation of a high quality early childhood program. At a minimum, classrooms must be divided into developmentally appropriate centers such as art, housekeeping, blocks, science, manipulatives, and library.

3   The Classroom Environment Implementation Checklist and ECE Classroom Guidance Tool, available in the *ECE Procedural Manual*, will be used for review and support in maintaining a developmentally appropriate infant, toddler, and Pre-K classroom environments.

F   CURRICULUM

1   Schools will utilize a standard research-based curriculum recommended by the ECE Department that addresses all areas of the Child Development and Early Learning Framework (Literacy and Language, Social and Emotional Development, Cognitive Development and General Knowledge, Physical Development, and Approaches to Learning) and is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. See the *ECE Procedural Manual* for curriculum guidelines and list of recommended program materials for infants, toddlers, and Pre-K students.

2   Schools will utilize a standard research-based social and emotional curriculum recommended by the ECE Department. See the *ECE Procedural Manual* for social and emotional curriculum guidelines and list of recommended program materials.

3   Schools with specialized thematic programs (Montessori, Primary Years Programme, etc.) may opt out of the standard curriculum to implement the specialized program with fidelity.

4   Schools are responsible for purchasing all curriculum materials.

5   High quality early childhood programs need to have appropriate materials and supplies to create a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities. These activities must include meeting the growth and development needs of the whole child,

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including gross and fine motor, art, music, drama, dance, technology, and academic curriculum areas.

G ASSESSMENT

1 Schools will implement research-based developmentally appropriate universal screening assessments to assess students' levels of academic, physical, and social and emotional development in order to design instruction and create opportunities for growth. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for the comprehensive universal screening guidelines for infants, toddler, and Pre-K students.

2 Schools will utilize standard research-based developmentally appropriate ongoing assessments and implementation guidelines recommended by the ECE Department, including the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System for students, birth to Age 5. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for additional assessments information and guidelines for infants, toddlers, and Pre-K students.

3 The ECE Department will provide training with the implementation of the required assessments. The school will be responsible for purchasing assessment tool licenses and fees (if applicable).

4 Classes operating using VPK funds will administer the state required VPK Assessment three times a year and enter results into the Florida Bright Beginnings Online Reporting System. Additional information will be provided through the Broward Schools VPK Coordinator.

H PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1 Early Childhood Education program teachers and assistants will have opportunities to participate in professional development offered through the ECE Department. Information will be distributed through the ECE Department to the School-Based Coordinator, Administrator, and Teacher at each school site. Professional Development opportunities will include, but not be limited to:

a Curriculum Implementation and Assessments

b Social and Emotional Support

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    c   Planning Essentials for Pre-K

    d   Building the Foundation for the Common Core State Standards

2   Schools will be responsible for funding substitutes as needed for professional development.

3   Teachers operating in programs utilizing VPK funds will be required to participate in additional professional development offered by the ECE Department (Florida Developmental Standards for four-year-olds) and the State Of Florida (Early Literacy Online Training). Additional information will be provided through the Broward Schools VPK Coordinator.

I   RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)

1   RtI for students above age 2 years 6 months should be structured to align with the Collaborative Problem-Solving process currently in place at K-5 Elementary sites so that the transition is seamless. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for RtI resources, including suggested interventions for typical situations that occur with students of this age.

2   RtI for children younger than 2 years 6 months will be implemented through the Early Steps Process. Refer to the *ECE Procedural Manual* for additional information about RtI implementation with infants and toddlers.

3   Schools will use the TSG Comprehensive Assessment system as part of the RtI process.

    a   Collection and organization of meaningful data, including online portfolios

    b   Creation of a developmental profile for each student

    c   Analysis of data

    d   Identification of students for interventions, enrichment, additional screening, and/or further evaluation

    e   Customized reports for comparison

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4 Schools will follow the standard Broward County Public Schools Discipline policy for students within the Early Childhood Programs.

J PARENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

1 Each school will provide quarterly parent education/ training activities with expectations that all parents will attend. Schools will enter information about the parent engagement activities (number of participants, training focus, materials provided, research-base, and follow-up).

2 Schools will provide needed childcare during training activities.

3 Parents will be provided with opportunities to volunteer at the school as deemed appropriate by the site's administration and teachers.

4 Parent and community partnerships will include emphasis on activities that support parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, decision-making, and ongoing collaboration.

5 Community agency resources will be provided to the school in order to provide referrals for families, as necessary.

6 The TSG Comprehensive Assessment program will be used during parent teacher conferences as a measure for sharing student progress. Parents and families will have access to the TSG Program for ongoing interactions with the system.

K QUALITY ASSURANCE

1 The ECE Department will monitor classrooms for purpose of state, district and program compliance and implementation of high-quality program standards.

a The ECE Program Visitation Form will be used as a guide for department visits and a measure for providing feedback to administrators. This will include review of classroom environment, student enrollment, attendance records, classroom materials, and assessment data.

b The Classroom Environment Checklist will be utilized at the school-site to ensure the classroom environment meets high-quality program standards. Supportive assistance and coaching for improvement will be provided by the ECE Department based on these monitoring results.

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    c   The Missouri Infant/Toddler Responsive Caregiver Checklist will be implemented annually in the Infant and Toddler classrooms at the school-site. Data will be used to support teachers' unique professional development and coaching needs and set teacher, classroom, and school-wide goals.

    d   The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) observation tool will be implemented annually in Pre-K classrooms by reliable observers from the ECE Department. Data will be used to support teachers' unique professional development and coaching needs and set teacher, classroom, and school-wide goals.

2   Schools receiving VPK funds will be evaluated by the state based on the Florida Readiness Kindergarten Screener (FLKRS) results and the state readiness rate. Schools will be classified as "Good Standing" or "Low Performing Provider" based on these results. Schools classified as a Low Performing Provider for three consecutive years will no longer be able to participate in the VPK program.

3   Business Operations will be reviewed for compliance with financial management procedures, programs policies/procedures, record keeping, and personnel.

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