Purpose of the 2024-2025 High-Quality Curricular Materials Rubric

To help more children gain foundational skills, the Indiana Department of Education will annually publish a list of high-quality curricular materials for early learning (infant to age five). This list is designed to help early learning programs as they select local curriculum. All core curricula included on this list will be pre-vetted to ensure alignment with science of reading, Indiana Early Learning Standards, and any applicable state laws and community standards. The review process will also consider age appropriateness of materials.

To be added to this list, below is an overview of the process that vendors will follow to submit their curricular materials for review and consideration.

1. Vendor obtains an independent review by a credible **third-party research** entity.
   a. Curricular materials must satisfy all <u>required</u> criteria in Sections I, II, III, and IV below to be deemed high-quality.
      i. If there is a "Yes" for all required criteria, materials receive an overall "Yes" for that section.
      ii. If there is a "No" for any of the required criteria, materials receive an overall "No" for that section.

2. Vendor submits curricular materials, including evidence of their completed independent review, to IDOE for further review and consideration.
3. IDOE reviews the information submitted by the vendor and completes a subsequent review of the vendor-submitted materials, alongside committee members.
   a. Details about each vendor's rating completed by the independent **third-party research** entity must be submitted with the corresponding documentation for review in addition to evidence supporting other required criteria.
   b. Anecdotes or research beyond what the curricular organization explicitly provides will not inform ratings.

4. IDOE provides an initial determination (i.e., approved or not approved).

5. Vendors have an opportunity to provide additional evidence in support of any criterion that yields a "No" response before a final determination is made.
6. Selection of core materials are local decisions and should be vetted at the local level to assure consistency with the advisory list and alignment with community standards.

Submissions are evaluated on the extent to which they meet all criteria noted below. The term "materials" is used throughout the evaluation tool to refer to instructional materials used by the educator or provided to students, unless otherwise noted.

Referenced vocabulary is defined in Appendix A. Review IDOE's [High-Quality Curricular Materials Advisory Lists webpage](#) for additional information.

Section I: Early Learning Required Criteria for Alignment with State and Federal Law

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section I.

Criteria	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
Curricular materials can be reproduced in large type, Braille, and audio format in accordance with Sections 612(a)(23)(A) and 674(e)(4) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.).	Select Ran… ▾	
The content of the material does not provide any instruction to a student in prekindergarten through grade three on human sexuality (IC 20-30-17-2).	Select Ran… ▾	
The content of the material does not contain **obscene matter or matter harmful to minors** (IC 35-49-2-1).	Select Ran… ▾	
The content of the material does not contain **matter or performance harmful to minors** IC 35-49-2-2.	Select Ran… ▾	
The content of the material is age-appropriate.	Select Ran… ▾	

Section II: Early Learning Required Criteria for Instruction

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section II.

Criteria	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
Curriculum includes at least 85% alignment with the 2023 Indiana Early Learning Standards.	Select Rank… ▾	
At least 95% of materials and activities provide opportunities and experiences for children to meet the Indiana Early Learning Standards while fostering development across each of the domains listed below: ● Approaches to Play and Learning	Select Rank… ▾	

Criteria	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
- English/Language Arts - Math - Science - Social Studies - Student Wellbeing - Physical Health and Growth - Creative Arts		
Instructional framework addresses all age levels in a manner that is **systematic and sequential.** The framework has a comprehensive **scope and sequence.** Content includes a direct order in which skills are presented and allow for continued practice to build automaticity, skills building from the simple to more complex, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across age levels.	Select Rank… ▾	
Third-party research studies demonstrate the effectiveness of the program in early learning domains.	Select Rank… ▾	
At least 95% of lessons include **differentiated support** to meet the needs of all students including, but not limited to, students with special learning needs and English learners (e.g., linguistic scaffolds).	Select Rank… ▾	
All materials and activities focus on **responsive** caregiving (infant/toddler), relationships, interactions, and connections.	Select Ra… ▾	
All materials and activities provide guidance for routines that support the **health and safety** of children.	Select Rank… ▾	
All materials and activities are provided through both **teacher-directed and child-initiated** experiences (e.g., children are given substantial opportunities to choose interest areas/learning centers and activities within each).	Select Rank… ▾	
All materials and activities allow for opportunities for frequent practice of skills using **interactive and hands-on approaches** that directly connect to daily	Select Rank… ▾	

Criteria	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
learning and are initiated by the child (e.g., does not support practice through the use of worksheets).		
All materials and activities are **reflective of differences** including race, family relationships, ethnicity, gender, economic background, and ability. ● Literature ● Posters ● Music ● Art ● Thematic units ● Family engagement activities *Example:* Curriculum builds throughout the unit/year that allows opportunities for families to share their cultures.	Select Rank… ▾	
All materials and activities are incorporated throughout a **variety of settings** (indoor/outdoor), including whole group time, centers/ activity or interest areas, cooperative play, small group, and individualized attention.	Select Rank… ▾	
All materials and activities optimally support children learning at **different developmental stages** (e.g., security for infants, exploration for mobile infants, identity for toddlers, language and literacy for preschool).	Select Rank… ▾	
Applicable to Ages 0-3 Infant and toddler language and early literacy development is prioritized through resources and activities that support (where developmentally appropriate): ● Frequent talk and conversations during daily routines (e.g., diapering and transitions) ● Social interactions and use of gestures, sounds, words, phrases, or simple sentences to communicate ● Open-ended questions ● Use of texts, including rhymes, finger plays, and music/songs, that are appropriate for each developmental stage	Select Rank… ▾	

Criteria	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
● Regular and repeated read-alouds (i.e., with close repetition) of texts related to a theme or topic (e.g., animals, cities, weather) in order to accelerate background knowledge and vocabulary development ● Pre-writing skills (e.g., holding objects and scribbling or drawing/painting to convey a message) ● Print awareness (e.g., exploring, touching, and holding board books)		
Applicable to Ages 3-5 Language and early literacy development is prioritized through resources and activities that support the following: ● Regular read-alouds of appropriately complex narrative and informational texts related to a theme or topic (e.g., animals, cities, weather) in order to accelerate children's background knowledge and vocabulary development ● Repeated read-alouds build from enjoyment of the story and basic/literal comprehension to discussion of inferential questions and drawing or writing to express understanding ● Pacing and time-estimate of the given literacy lessons are appropriate for the targeted age group ● Print awareness and letter knowledge (e.g., discusses print conventions in texts, identifies letters and sounds in print) ● Phonological awareness activities that demonstrate understanding of different units of sound and language to the appropriate degree as stated by Indiana Early Learning Standards ● Early stages of writing (e.g., form shapes and letter like symbols) using a variety of tools, materials, and surfaces ● Regular opportunities to communicate through appropriate written representation, symbols, and letters	Select Rank… ▾	
Cognitive development and executive functioning is prioritized, where developmentally appropriate, through resources and activities that support: ● Understanding of basic math concepts (e.g., counting, comparing size, spatial relationships songs) ● Development of scientific inquiry (e.g., observe, ask questions, predict, make comparisons, conduct scientific investigations, and	Select Rank… ▾	

Criteria	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
simple experiments ● Perseverance and persistence to solve problems ● Curiosity and exploration ● Creative thinking (e.g., pretending, make-believe play, role playing) ● Awareness of rules and responsibilities		
All **math** materials and activities are devoted to the development of understanding numbers, ways of representing numbers, and relationships between numbers and quantities consistent with the Indiana Early Learning Standards and to the development of understanding of data analysis, geometry, and measurement. All adhere to the following indicators of quality: ● Promote children's acquisition and use of the language and vocabulary of math ● Promote conceptual understanding of math content and ● Promote children's development of perseverance ● Persistence in solving problems	Select Rank… ▾	
All materials provide a variety of **family engagement** activities to strengthen children's learning and development, including: ● Aligned activities ● Virtual portals ● Stories/books ● Learning extensions to be completed at home	Select Rank… ▾	
Materials reflect content that is presented in a manner reflecting consideration of community standards.	Select Rank… ▾	

Section III: Early Learning Required Criteria for Assessment

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section III.

Key Element Required	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
Explicit guidance for all assessments includes scoring guides and student work examples for teachers and administrators to evaluate student performance.	Select Ran… ▾	
Assessments consistent with the Indiana Early Learning Standards are provided through a variety of appropriate methods (e.g., anecdotal observations/notes, photographs, checklists, work samples, and family perspectives).	Select Ran… ▾	
All materials and activities promote an ongoing process that includes observation, documentation, reflection, and adaptation to meet each child's interests and developmental needs in a variety of settings within the daily schedule.	Select Ran… ▾	
Assessment assures that current knowledge of each child's development is accurate. Ongoing assessment materials provide educators with developmental-stage resources.	Select Ran… ▾	

Section IV: Early Learning Required Criteria for Professional Development & Educator Support

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section IV.

Key Element Required	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
At least one day of professional development opportunities and explicit guidance for implementation, coaching, and evaluation is provided.	Select Ran… ▾	
Explicit teacher language is outlined in all materials, including concise and specific teacher language to introduce, define, or explain new skills through demonstration and modeling before students are asked to practice newly-learned skills.	Select Ran… ▾	
All materials have clear and direct instructions that connect all curricular resources. All reading selections are centrally located within the materials and the center of focus.	Select Ran… ▾	
All teacher edition materials include lesson annotations and support for engaging students in the materials as well as support for implementing ancillary and resource materials and student progress components.	Select Ran… ▾	
All materials are accessible in a variety of formats (e.g., braille, audio, large print/print, and digital).	Select Ran… ▾	
All lesson scripts are provided with explicit guidance to teach each concept in a systematic, cumulative way.	Select Ran… ▾	

Section V: Early Learning Required Criteria for Student Wellbeing & Intentionality

Evidence must meet all criteria noted in Section V.

Key Element Required	Determination: Yes/No	Notes/Evidence
Materials and activities are suggested that appeal to children's interests in order to deepen motivation, enjoyment, and learning by ensuring suggestions are age-appropriate and reflective of differences including race, family relationships, ethnicity, gender, economic background, and ability.	Select Ran… ▾	
Activities include use of safe and appropriate intentionally-selected toys and manipulatives (e.g., play dough, dolls, toy trucks/cars, stacking rings, nesting cups, blocks, puzzles, plastic animals, puppets, rattles and musical instruments, art materials, dress-up clothes, props, realistic toys that represent items such as food) that can be used in a variety of ways to help children practice and develop new skills (e.g., fine motor, memory, listening, self-control, language, problem-solving, relationship-building, physical, spatial relations) and require the most action on the part of the child.	Select Ran… ▾	
Materials are available in appropriate formats (e.g., vinyl books and board books) and a variety of formats (e.g., print and non-print such as videos, art, music, charts, pictures).	Select Ran… ▾	
Activities are flexible and allow for adjustments according to children's needs and interests.	Select Ran… ▾	
Student wellbeing (as detailed below) is emphasized in materials and activities. ● Self awareness and confidence ● Identification and expression of emotions ● Self control ● Conflict resolution ● Relationship skills	Select Ran… ▾	
Materials are age-appropriate in alignment with Indiana Early Learning	Select Ran… ▾	

Standards based on child need for the respective age level.		
Materials reflect content that is presented in a manner reflecting consideration and collaboration of community standards.	Select Ran… ▾	

Appendix A: Required Criteria for Alignment with State and Federal Law

Legislation	Definition
IC 35-49-2-1 Obscene matter or performance	Sec. 1. A matter or performance is obscene for purposes of this article if: (1) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, finds that the dominant theme of the matter or performance, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest in sex; (2) the matter or performance depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct; and (3) the matter or performance, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.
IC 35-49-2-2) Matter or performance harmful to minors	Sec. 2. A matter or performance is harmful to minors for purposes of this article if: (1) it describes or represents, in any form, nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse; (2) considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest in sex of minors; (3) it is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable matter for or performance before minors; and (4) considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

Appendix B: Glossary

Term and/or Rubric Item	Definition/Clarification
Curriculum includes at least 85% alignment with the 2023 Indiana Early Learning Standards.	Curriculum aligns with at least the following number of standards: ● English/language arts - 8 ● Mathematics - 9 ● Science - 8 ● Social Studies - 7 ● Student Wellbeing - 4 ● Approaches to Play - 4 ● Physical Health and Growth - 7 ● Creative Arts - 5
At least 95% of materials and activities provide opportunities and experiences for children to meet the Indiana Early Learning Standards while fostering	At least 95% of the total content of materials and activities within the curriculum must provide opportunities and experiences for children to meet the Indiana Early Learning Standards while fostering development across each of the domains: ● English/language arts

development across each of the domains.	- Mathematics - Science - Social Studies - Student Wellbeing - Approaches to Play - Physical Health and Growth - Creative Arts Children are defined by the age of the curriculum: infant/toddler, preschool, or mixed age. Vendors should provide percentages and examples to show materials and activities that meet at least 95%.
Third-party research studies demonstrate the effectiveness of the program in early learning domains.	A third-party is defined as a *research entity team members conducting the review must have significant demonstrated experience in curriculum/standards alignment and evaluation and hold advanced degrees in curriculum and instruction, educational measurement, or a related field.* The third-party study should include an analysis of the program as well as research showing the effectiveness of the program in instruction, assessment, and children's learning of each developmental domain.
At least 95% of lessons include **differentiated support** to meet the needs of all students including, but not limited to, students with special learning needs and English learners (e.g., linguistic scaffolds).	Vendors should provide percentages and examples to show at least 95% of lessons include differentiated support.
All materials are accessible in a variety of formats (e.g., braille, audio, large print/print, and digital).	Accessible formats, sometimes called alternate formats, are ways of presenting printed, written, or visual material so that people who do not read print can access it. These are examples of accessibility formats. This is not an exhaustive list. A vendor may be approved for the advisory list with some of the examples.
Materials are available in appropriate formats (e.g., vinyl books and board books) and a variety of formats (e.g., print and non-print such as videos, art, music, charts, pictures).	These are examples of appropriate formats. This is not an exhaustive list. A vendor may be approved for the advisory list with some of the examples. Materials are available for the setting, objectives, and desired results of the activity. Activity formats (e.g., didactic, small group, interactive, hands-on skill labs) should be chosen based on what the provider hopes to change as a result of the education.