

Hillsboro Early Childhood Programs Curriculum

The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) and the Creative Curriculum provide the framework for our curriculum in the Hillsboro Early Childhood Programs classrooms. The Creative Curriculum, Fourth Edition is research based, and widely used in the early childhood community across the nation.

Creative Curriculum aligns with our belief that all children are capable and competent; early relationships matter; a child's early learning and development is multi-dimensional; expectations for children must be guided by knowledge of child growth and development; children are individuals who develop at various rates; children are members of cultural groups that share developmental patterns; children exhibit a range of skills and competencies within any domain of development; children learn through play and the active exploration of their environment; and parents are children's primary and most important caregivers and educators.

Concepts and skills related to Language Arts, Math, Science, physical growth, health and social/emotional milestones are developed through instructional units draw from the interests of the children in each classroom. Children will acquire skills through a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated learning opportunities. Children are taught in small group, large group and individualized settings which promote independence, problem-solving, cooperative learning, and self-confidence. Even transition times to restroom, playground, and bus have educational goals.

Philosophy of Our Curriculum

1. Children learn through play in both their learning experiences and their environment.
2. Daily routines and meaningful experiences enhance children's learning.
3. Children develop every day in five main areas of development: health and physical development, social and emotional development, language development and communication, approaches to learning, and cognition and general knowledge.
4. Literacy and language development are encouraged daily in the classroom.
5. Opportunities for exploration and discovery encourage children to love learning.
6. A strong classroom community—learning environment enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills.
7. The teaching staff use developmentally appropriate practices in the classroom and take advantage of teachable moments.
8. The teaching staff makes adjustments in their teaching to meet the strengths, needs and interests of individual children.
9. Positive reinforcement and guidance is necessary for building relationships with children.
10. Parent partnerships are a key ingredient to child care/school success.

Individualized Instruction and Progress Monitoring

Each child's individual progress is monitored using a portfolio system of drawings, photos, writing samples, and anecdotal observations aligned with the IELDS. The evidence collected is valuable information for teachers in developing the scope and sequence of instruction, and sharing progress with parents in the form of narratives and checklists.

In addition we use the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs), a norm referenced progress monitoring tool. IGDI measures early math, literacy, and language skills three times a year to ensure instruction is effective. This information allows teachers to differentiating small group instruction and provided individual intervention that will ensure success for all levels of learners.