

ISSA Pedagogical Standards

for Preschool and Primary Grades



International Step by Step Association

Information about ISSA and copies of this document as well as other resources may be ordered from:

International Step by Step Association

Rakoczi ut 22. IV./24.
H-1072 Budapest, Hungary
Telephone: (361) 266-3463
Fax: (361) 344-5947
E-mail: coordinator@issa.nl

International Step by Step Association

400 West 59th Street
New York, NY 10019
Telephone: 1 (212) 547-6918
Fax: 1 (212) 548-4610
E-mail: info@issa.nl
<http://www.issa.nl>

ISBN 1-931854-02-5

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Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data.
A CIP catalog record for this book is available upon request.

Printed in Hungary.

Foreword

This second edition of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards reflects the learning from our five-year experience developing and implementing international standards in a network of 30 countries. Several changes have been made to the ISSA Pedagogical Standards that were first published in 2001. First, additional Examples were added to the document to adapt it for use in primary classrooms (grades 1–4). Second, standards make an important statement about the values that we use to assess quality in early childhood programs and their teaching staff. Initial implementation of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards demonstrated a shortcoming in measuring teacher performance in addressing issues of diversity in the classroom. In this second edition, a new Standard—Standard 7, “Social Inclusion”—has been added to require that teachers seek opportunities to open the hearts and minds of children to the cultures in their community.

Ensuring consistent high quality is one of the greatest challenges in early childhood education systems worldwide. Within the context of a new united Europe, the ISSA Pedagogical Standards, implemented across 30 countries, provide an interesting example of how experts from many countries can agree on core indicators for quality early childhood teaching, allowing for contextual variations. Moreover, the ISSA Pedagogical Standards’ focus on democratic approaches is consistent with the current emphasis internationally on a rights-based approach to early childhood education and care issues. ISSA welcomes the opportunity to work with partners to adapt and implement the Standards in new countries and new contexts.

The International Step by Step Association wishes to thank members of the Standards Advisory Board and the Pilot and Quality Task Forces for volunteering their active participation and engagement throughout the arduous process of developing and launching these Standards. We also wish to thank the Open Society Institute for supporting the development and publication of this second edition of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards.

International Step by Step Association



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Slavo Ilavsky, Wide Open School Foundation
Slovakia

Biljana Maslovaric, Pedagogical Center of
Montenegro
Montenegro

Oksana Ruda, Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation
Ukraine

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Education
Lithuania

Mirka Skardova, Step by Step
Czech Republic

Tatjana Vonta, Developmental Research Centre for
Educational Initiatives, Step by Step Slovenia



Quality Improvement Task Force 2004

Dina Aidzhanova, Public Community Soros
Educational Step by Step Center
Kazakhstan

Cornelia Cincilei, Programul Educational Pas cu Pas
Moldova

Stefka Dinchiyska, Step by Step
Program/Foundation
Bulgaria

Sanja Handzar, Center for Educational Initiatives,
Step by Step
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mimi Howard, University of Colorado at Denver
USA

Valentina Lungu, Programul Educational Pas cu Pas
Moldova

Marine Mkrtchyan, Step by Step Benevolent
Foundation
Armenia

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Ukraine

Natalia Sofiy, Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation
Ukraine

Dawn Tankersley, Consultant
USA

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Foundation
Armenia

Kate Burke Walsh, French American School
USA

Gulbadan Zakaeva, Public Community Soros
Educational Step by Step Center
Kazakhstan

Deborah Ziegler, Council for Exceptional Children
USA

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Introduction

Background to the ISSA Pedagogical Standards

Establishing the Task Force on Standards was one of the first activities undertaken by the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) after it was founded in 1998 by non-governmental organizations implementing the Step by Step Program. Step by Step is a comprehensive early childhood education reform program serving children between the ages of birth and 10 years old and their families. Step by Step's extensive training and resource materials for early childhood teachers, parents, and faculty members are based on a child-centered approach and community and family participation. Since its initiation by the Soros Foundation Network in 1994, it has spread to 30 countries in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Baltics, Haiti, Mongolia, and Argentina. Between 1994 and 2004 the Step by Step Program grew from being implemented in 200 classrooms to over 50,000 classrooms, based on local demands. In 1999 the International Step by Step Association asked the question: How can the integrity and quality of the Step by Step Program be maintained, given such rapid expansion? Drawing on current thinking in the international early childhood community, an international task force of experts from 10 countries was formed to develop Standards for Step by Step Programs and Teachers. The results of their work, the first edition of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards, were published in 2001.

Since 2001, ISSA has concentrated on implementing the ISSA Pedagogical Standards, and it is these Standards—revised and reprinted here in this updated second edition—that have been used as the foundation document for the development of ISSA's comprehensive Quality Early Education Initiative. The Quality Early Education Initiative provides a framework for teacher development, offering professional trainings and manuals designed specifically for teachers, mentors, and certifiers. The system promotes teachers' self-directed learning under the guidance of trained professional mentors. Mentors conduct classroom observations using the ISSA Pedagogical Standards and assist teachers with differing levels of experience in the development of individual plans that build on teaching strengths and address any identified weaknesses. Teachers who believe that they meet all of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards can seek recognition by applying for international certification.

The ISSA Pedagogical Standards promote the idea that processes—how programs and relationships are structured—are as important as outcomes. Developed by early childhood experts from countries transitioning to democracy, the Standards offer a unique perspective on the connections between early childhood education and open society. These materials have particular relevance for programs seeking to use early childhood education opportunities to foster democratic principles and actions in teaching staff, young children, their families, and their communities. Emphasized throughout these pages are ISSA's core principles (see inset). The ISSA Pedagogical Standards can be used to assess the practices of

teachers in center-based early childhood education programs that follow these core principles.

Core Principles of the Step by Step Programs:

- Equal access to education and care opportunities
- Child-centered, individualized teaching and learning
- Development of skills for life-long learning and participation in a democracy
- Teachers as facilitators
- Parent involvement
- Community engagement in public education
- Culturally appropriate learning environments and approaches
- Ongoing professional development

Who Should Use the Standards?

The ISSA Pedagogical Standards provide a framework for discussions about quality teaching and learning in preschool and primary school settings. A variety of stakeholders, including teachers, teacher assistants, school administrators, program directors, ministry representatives, university professors, families, and community members will find this booklet useful. Educators and community members can use the Standards to stimulate discussion about what constitutes quality teaching. The ISSA Pedagogical Standards can be introduced at a series of informational meetings for parents and community members. They can be used by universities and pedagogical institutes to illustrate the connection between theory and practice. Non-governmental organizations may use the Standards as a framework for professional training. Program



managers can use the Standards to provide a basis for evaluation and assessment of programs.

The main users of the Standards will, of course, be teachers who are seeking to improve practice, their supervisors, and professional mentors.

Teachers can use the Standards to self-assess practice and to observe the practices of other teachers, using the results to stimulate interesting peer discussions. Professional mentors can conduct classroom-based observations using the Standards and then use this information as the basis for working with teachers to set goals for professional growth and to develop quality improvement plans.

It is important to be clear about the use of the term “mentor.” The ISSA Quality Early Education Initiative promotes the use of professional trained mentors to help teachers expand their repertoire of skills, strategies, and knowledge to react to different teaching situations and settings.

The mentor’s primary role is to develop the capacity in the teacher **over time** to make his/her own informed decisions, to enrich his/her own knowledge, to sharpen his/her own skills, and to become self-reliant. It is the teacher, not the mentor, who assesses what is effective or appropriate about a lesson and makes recommendations for improvement. The mentor provides feedback to guide the teacher toward more effective decision making and planning. This is done through questioning and conversation, not specific advice.

The ISSA Pedagogical Standards that are published in this booklet are part of a comprehensive system for professional development, which includes:

- Manuals and trainings for teachers
- Manuals and trainings for mentors
- Manuals and trainings for certifiers

The purpose of this booklet is to provide information about the ISSA Pedagogical Standards and their potential application in educational settings. The observation forms provided here offer readers an opportunity to test out the ISSA Pedagogical Standards in various settings. International Certification for teachers is provided by a limited number of Step by Step organizations. Readers interested in setting up a comprehensive system of quality improvement or in international certification based on the Standards should contact ISSA (info@issa.nl).

How This Booklet Is Organized

This booklet provides a complete updated version of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards and

their corresponding Indicators. These Standards and Indicators are the foundation of the ISSA Quality Early Education Initiative and are not modified across contexts. To assist observers who use the instrument, each Indicator is followed by descriptive Examples of teaching practice, which if observed provide evidence that an Indicator has been met. These Examples can be modified to adapt to specific national and cultural contexts.

The booklet is divided into several sections. The main document contains:

- Descriptions of each of the seven ISSA Pedagogical Standards;
- A summary page with the seven Pedagogical Standards listed for easy reference;
- A detailed observation form, containing the complete Standards, Indicators and sample Examples;
- A glossary of relevant terms.

Appendix A provides information about the International Step by Step Association. Appendix B is a complete resource list of materials that define and support the Step by Step Program. Organizations that provide training based on the ISSA Pedagogical Standards are listed in Appendix C.

How to Use the Standards-Based Observation Form

The Standards-based observation form is organized according to the seven Standards. Several Indicators are listed for each Standard. For each Indicator, several Examples of observable practice that meet this Indicator are provided. Each Standard is identified by a number and followed by corresponding numerical Indicators. The observation form is designed as a working assessment of current teaching practices. Student teachers and professionals in training can conduct observations to help them understand the intricacy of good child-centered teaching practice. The form can be used by mentors or peers to structure classroom observations and provide feedback to teachers.

In cases where the observation is being used to provide feedback to teachers the observer should be familiar with the teacher’s professional goals, using the results of the observation to identify both strengths and weaknesses and to help the teacher translate this information into a concrete plan of action. The objective of this process is to create a positive professional development experience for teachers enhancing the quality of practice. Therefore it is important for observers to talk to teachers about the observation process and ensure that they are familiar with the standards before

conducting an observation. This is a strengths-based approach to professional development and it is critical that the observer take detailed notes during the observation, including both positive and negative interactions. The ratings and information on the Standards-based observation form should be delivered to teachers in a way that will best help them identify goals for improvement and recognize strong teaching practice already occurring. Whenever possible a written report and personal consultation should take place between the observer/mentor and teacher following the completion of the observation form and written report.

Rating Key

The observer rates each Indicator using the following scale.

- **Consistently Evident:** The Indicator is met. There is a great deal of evidence that this statement accurately describes the program or teacher throughout the day.
- **Sometimes Evident:** The Indicator is partially met. There is some evidence that this statement accurately describes the program or teacher throughout the day.
- **Rarely Evident:** The Indicator is not met. There is little evidence that this statement accurately describes the program or teacher.

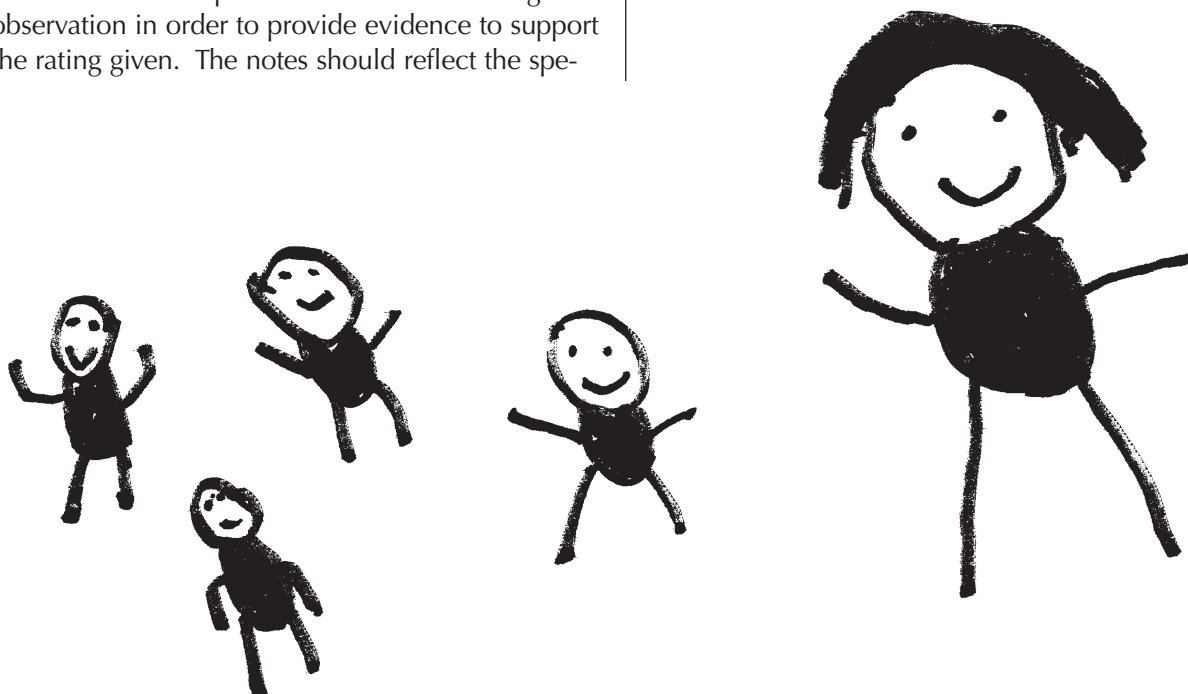
The observer circles the specific letter C, S, or R as she or he observes the Indicator.

Comments: It is important to take notes during the observation in order to provide evidence to support the rating given. The notes should reflect the spe-

cific activities and interactions that occurred during the observation. It will not be possible to rate all Indicators based on observed practice. However all Indicators should be rated on what happens typically. The rating should not be based on what is desirable or may be planned for the future. Following the observation, the observer can ask open-ended questions to obtain information about the Indicators that require further clarification. An open-ended question— for example, “What types of communication occur with parents at the beginning of the school year?”— is one that does not suggest possible answers. It is important that observers not base their ratings on the philosophy of the program or what they believe ought to happen in a classroom. When the rating is based on what a teacher says rather than what is observed, write “report” on the form.

Frequency of Observation

It is suggested that the Standards-based observation form be used initially as a tool for quality improvement, rather than certification, and be completed at least twice per year, with a minimum of three months between observations. It is important to ensure that enough time is given for teachers to implement a professional development plan based on the results of the first observation before conducting a subsequent observation.



Overview

Descriptions

Observation Form



Overview

ISSA Pedagogical Standards

1. Individualization

Teachers use their knowledge of child development and their relationships with children and their families to understand the diversity of each class and to respond to each child's unique needs and potentials.

2. Learning Environment

Teachers promote a caring, stimulating, and inclusive classroom by organizing the environment in ways that best facilitate children taking learning risks, practicing democracy, and working both cooperatively and independently.

3. Family Participation

Teachers build partnerships with families to ensure optimum support for children's learning and developmental needs.

4. Teaching Strategies for Meaningful Learning

Teachers design and implement varied strategies to promote conceptual understanding and to encourage innovation, creativity, independent inquiry, social cooperation, and exploration within and across the disciplines.

5. Planning and Assessment

Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

6. Professional Development

Teachers regularly evaluate and strengthen the quality and effectiveness of their work and collaborate with colleagues to improve programs and practices for young children and their families.

7. Social Inclusion

Teachers model and promote values and behaviors that support human rights, social inclusion, and the foundation of open democratic civil societies, including protection of the rights of all minorities.



DESCRIPTIONS

ISSA Pedagogical Standards

The ISSA Pedagogical Standards are intended to establish quality guidelines for early childhood educators working toward providing an exemplary educational experience for children and their families. The standards represent the essential knowledge, skills, strategies, dispositions, and commitments of teachers who support the philosophies and goals of the Step by Step Program. In all areas the standards strive to reinforce child-centered teaching practices that facilitate learning in ways that are consistent with children's growth and development. While in sum the standards may require long-term modification of teaching practices, they can in part inspire teachers at all levels to make small but effective improvements in their work. The rating component can facilitate documentation of those standards individual teachers have achieved and those they are seeking to meet. Accomplished educators in the Step by Step Program who consistently perform at these high standards have the potential to dramatically enhance educational experiences for children and positively impact the future of society.

Individualization

Standard: Teachers use their knowledge of child development and their relationships with children and their families to understand the diversity of each class and to respond to each child's individual needs and potentials.

Young children vary considerably in the pattern and pace of their growth, thinking, language, and social capacities due to individual differences, cultural persuasions, and special learning and developmental needs. Accomplished early-childhood teachers understand how young children develop and learn, know the attributes of the individual children in their care, and familiarize themselves with the culture, history, and values of the families they serve. Through regular, positive interaction with individual children, teachers develop nurturing relationships and discover the many unique qualities, both academic and personal, of each child. Teachers show that they value these differences by acknowledging and accommodating them in the classroom setting.

Learning Environment

Standard: Teachers promote a caring, stimulating, and inclusive classroom by organizing the environment in ways that best facilitate children taking learning risks, practicing democracy, and working both cooperatively and independently.

The structure of the learning environment deeply influences each child's educational experience. Teachers carefully consider how to design and adjust the physical space, providing opportunities for safe movement during both group and individual activities. When necessary this space and the learning materials are modified to meet the needs of different age groups and/or individual children. The social and emotional climate of the learning environment is established upon the promotion of democratic values by including children as active participants in setting clear expectations, developing rules, and determining consequences. Additionally, teachers continually foster children's capacity to make choices and work as independent learners, as well as create situations in which children can work cooperatively, taking turns and helping one another toward a positive outcome.

Family Participation

Standard: Teachers build partnerships with families to ensure optimum support for children's learning and developmental needs.

The engagement of parents and families in their children's education is of inestimable value to the accomplished early childhood teacher. These teachers view their student's families as partners in their work, and regularly communicate with them in a variety of ways to keep them informed and to solicit support for their child's learning. Furthermore, families are invited to contribute to the program by sharing interests, hobbies, cultural backgrounds, and special skills in order to help teachers meet their objectives. Outside the classroom, teachers extend assistance to families in supporting children's learning and development at home and obtaining services and resources for their children's individual needs.

Teaching Strategies for Meaningful Learning

Standard: Teachers design and implement varied strategies to promote conceptual understanding and to encourage innovation, creativity, independent inquiry, social cooperation, and exploration within and across the disciplines.

Teachers recognize the need for a variety of teaching approaches to accommodate the different learning styles, temperaments, and personalities of individual children. When teachers adapt instructional materials for new uses and encourage children to make their own learning choices in the classroom, they respond to each child's needs, interests, and diversities. Using a variety of grouping arrangements, teachers design cooperative learning activities to enable children to achieve higher levels of understanding, to maintain collaborative relationships among peers, and to develop interpersonal skills. Additionally, teachers use a range of developmentally appropriate activities, experiences, and materials to allow children to begin to construct their own knowledge and to create their own meaning about the world around them.

Planning and Assessment

Standard: Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

Teachers recognize the standards set forth in the national curriculum as they develop thoughtful instructional plans that reflect both curricular goals and the interests of individuals and groups within the class. Through long-term and short-term planning teachers seek to provide a variety of activities within the daily plan to accommodate the diversity of learning styles and abilities of individual children and are prepared to modify routines when necessary. Regular observations, records, and documents of each child's progress are collected and assessed by teachers individually or as a team. This information is then used to develop further educational plans for individuals and the group.

Professional Development

Standard: Teachers regularly evaluate and strengthen the quality and effectiveness of their

work and collaborate with colleagues to improve programs and practices for young children and their families.

Accomplished teachers continuously reflect, self-assess, and evaluate the effectiveness of their practices. They learn to build on their strengths and plan for improvement where needed. In order to continue growing as professionals in the field, teachers must actively pursue opportunities to acquire new knowledge through literature, organizations, resources, and training. Children benefit greatly when teachers work cooperatively, increasing the overall quality of instruction and effectiveness of their work.

Social Inclusion

Standard: Teachers model and promote values and behaviors that support human rights, social inclusion, and the foundation of open democratic civil societies, including protection of the rights of all minorities.

Teachers nurture the habits, abilities, feelings, and knowledge that are needed in open democratic civil societies. They model and teach concern for the rights of all students, regardless of their gender, race, ethnic origin, native language, religion, family structure, socioeconomic class, age, or physical and cognitive abilities. Teachers help children learn to respect themselves and others. Teachers design activities that encourage students to think about ethical issues and conflicts from multiple perspectives. Teachers develop in their students the ability to think critically, to work collaboratively with others, and to express their differences respectfully. Teachers help students to recognize discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes, when they occur, and to actively address these practices in their school and community.

REFERENCES

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (1995) *Early Childhood Generalist Standards for National Board Certification* Washington, DC

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1998) *Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC



ISSA Pedagogical Standards Observation Form

Teacher or grade level being observed _____

Number of children in group _____ Age of children in group _____

Number of staff present _____ Number of volunteers present _____

Observer name _____

Observation date _____ Time began _____ Time completed _____

Instructions

1. Read over this form before beginning to rate the classroom.
2. Spend 15 minutes becoming familiar with the teacher before beginning to assign ratings. During this time remind the teacher that not all indicators will be observable and a time of approximately 30 minutes will be needed to ask questions once the observation is complete.
3. Most indicators can be rated by observing the teacher and the classroom activities. Items should be based primarily on what is observed in the classroom during the observation.
4. The indicators on the form do not need to be completed in order. Some indicators are rated more easily than others and these can be rated first. For example, observers may choose to start with the Learning Environment.
5. Please remember that the listed examples are just examples of how the teacher might meet an indicator. While the teacher must meet the intent of each indicator, the teacher does not have to exhibit the example exactly as written.
6. Be sure to take good notes to record the actions of the teacher and thus make a case for how the teacher met the indicator and achieved the subsequent rating.

7. Carefully observe teachers as they move among children and learning centers. Rating should be based on the quality of interactions between teacher and children.
8. If the teacher is scheduled to move to a different group of children, follow the schedule with the teacher.
9. Ratings should be based on the overall picture of all the teacher's interactions with children. Try not to rate an indicator too quickly. Take time to observe and gain a sense of what is happening.
10. Quality as defined in this instrument refers to the ISSA Teacher Standards and the criteria outlined that are essential to best practice in early childhood education.
11. When there is no evidence of an indicator during the observation and the interview, note this on the observation form. In reporting to the teacher, be prepared to articulate the importance of implementing all indicators. Each indicator is a component of quality child-centered learning and none can be ignored.
12. When observing programs serving children with disabilities, it is necessary to use developmental levels to determine the appropriateness of the teaching practice, rather than chronological age.



1 Individualization

Teachers use their knowledge of child development and their relationships with children and their families to appreciate the diversity of each class and to respond to each child's unique needs and potentials.

Quality Indicators and Examples

1.1 Teachers promote positive self-concept by interacting with individual children in a way that is consistent with their knowledge of child development.

- Interact frequently with each child, showing affection, interest, and respect.
- Talk in a friendly, courteous and respectful, manner to children at their eye level, using individual children's names.
- Make positive non-verbal connections with children.
- Be aware of the strengths of each child's personality and his/her accomplishments over time; identify and acknowledge each child daily for their individual skills and achievements, ensuring that every child gets recognized.
- Communicate with families about their children's achievements (sample activities: letters, telephone, etc.).
- Demonstrate knowledge in developmental theory by matching learning strategies and expectations with developmental capabilities.

Continued on next page.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



1 Individualization

Teachers use their knowledge of child development and their relationships with children and their families to appreciate the diversity of each class and to respond to each child's unique needs and potentials.

Quality Indicators and Examples

1.2 Teachers understand that young children vary considerably in the pattern and pace of their growth, thinking, language, and social capacities due to individual differences and cultural persuasions.

- Serve as facilitators, supporting individual growth according to each child's rate of development.
- Treat children of all races, ethnicity, religions, family backgrounds, socio-economic levels, cultures, and both sexes equally with respect and consideration.
- Provide children with equal opportunities to take part in all activities.
- Recognize the individual needs of children, including those of children with disabilities; create and modify learning experiences to meet those needs.
- Develop tasks taking into account individual learning styles of students (sample activities: an interview, posters for visual learners).
- Present opportunities for choice and allow time for students to work independently in self-selected groups.

Continued on next page.

Rating Key

- C:** Consistently Evident
 - S:** Sometimes Evident
 - R:** Rarely Evident
- Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



1 Individualization

Teachers use their knowledge of child development and their relationships with children and their families to appreciate the diversity of each class and to respond to each child's unique needs and potentials.

Rating Key

- C: Consistently Evident
 - S: Sometimes Evident
 - R: Rarely Evident
- Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

1.3 Teachers learn about the culture, history, values, and attributes of the families and individual children they serve.

- Engage individual children in conversations about people, places, and things that are meaningful to them and provide opportunities to share their ideas with other children.
- Recognize and support contributions of ethnic groups, particularly groups represented by children in the classroom.
- Use materials and equipment that reflect the diversity of the children and families served in the classroom.
- Develop and engage in ways of regularly recognizing the culture and traditions of children and their families.
- Facilitate students' creating books, newspapers, and magazines that tell the history and values of various ethnic groups.
- Provide opportunities for children and parents to develop educational materials reflecting national traditions and customs, etc.
- Promote involvement of children as organizers of festivals/holiday events, exhibitions, sports competitions, excursions, newspaper development, and other learning activities; all reflecting the variety of cultural backgrounds of the families and communities.

Rating

C S R

Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



2 Learning Environment

Teachers promote a caring, stimulating, and inclusive classroom by organizing the environment in ways that best facilitate children taking learning risks, practicing democracy, and working both cooperatively and independently.

Rating Key

- C: Consistently Evident
 - S: Sometimes Evident
 - R: Rarely Evident
- Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

2.1 Teachers understand the developmental influence of the physical setting on children.

- Introduce activity centers that allow children to move safely around the classroom and encourage children to make choices and actively learn.
- Provide individual space for children to keep their personal belongings.
- Present developmentally appropriate materials, including teacher and child-made materials, that reflect diverse racial, gender, and age attributes, and that can be adapted for use by all children.
- Encourage play, experimentation, and exploration with multi-purpose, open-ended materials.
- Attractively display children's work at their eye level, in the classroom, and on bulletin boards for all to see.
- Modify the physical space to meet the needs of different age groups, individual children and/or content focus; evaluate changes in needs over time as children grow (mentally and physically).
- Provide educational materials, which motivate students to conduct independent searches for information (e.g., vocabularies, encyclopedias, etc.).
- Extend educational resources by using community resources (libraries, factories, clubs, community members, etc.).
- Develop learning materials with children that are individualized for a learning activity or student needs.
- Share responsibility for the learning environment and classroom resources with students by having students make announcements, initiate activities, and have job responsibilities.

Continued on next page.

Rating _____ Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Learning Environment

Teachers promote a caring, stimulating, and inclusive classroom by organizing the environment in ways that best facilitate children taking learning risks, practicing democracy, and working both cooperatively and independently.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
 Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

2.2 Teachers model, encourage, and offer possibilities for children in the classroom to form and practice democratic values.

- Model an empathetic attitude and positive ways of communicating, with an emphasis on problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Involve children in setting clear expectations for behavior and participation in classroom activities by having them help develop classroom rules and consequences.
- Show respect for the thoughts and judgments of each child.
- Model and encourage positive interactions between teacher and children, between and among children, and between teachers and other staff.
- Recognize and create opportunities for children to make choices.
- Clearly communicate expectations, ideas, and goals.
- Use situations in school and community life to help children distinguish discrimination, biases, and stereotypes and to discuss ethical aspects of inequality.
- Provide opportunities to make joint solutions and develop joint rules (e.g., debates and negotiations).
- Create opportunities (e.g., use morning meetings) and take advantage of situations for students to practice compromise and consensus building.

Continued on next page.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



2 Learning Environment

| |
|--|
| Rating Key C: Consistently Evident S: Sometimes Evident R: Rarely Evident Circle the appropriate choice below. |
|--|

Teachers promote a caring, stimulating, and inclusive classroom by organizing the environment in ways that best facilitate children taking learning risks, practicing democracy, and working both cooperatively and independently.

Quality Indicators and Examples

2.3 Teachers facilitate cooperative learning by creating and modeling expectations for behavior during cooperative work.

- Apply principles of fairness and equity when grouping children, recognizing competence, effort, and performance.
- Create situations in which children cooperate, take turns, and help one another toward achieving a positive outcome.
- Facilitate the progress of self-regulation in children by providing materials, time, and appropriate room arrangement for children to select and plan their own activities.
- Formulate clear expectations towards students' participation and behavior during cooperative work.

| Rating | Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.) | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <table border="1"> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>S</td> <td>R</td> </tr> </table> | C | S | R | |
| C | S | R | | |

Teacher's Name _____ Observation by _____ Date _____



3 Family Participation

Teachers build partnerships with families to ensure optimum support for children's learning and developmental needs.

Rating Key

- C:** Consistently Evident
 - S:** Sometimes Evident
 - R:** Rarely Evident
- Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

| | Rating | Comments |
|---|---------------------|----------|
| <p>3.1 Teachers welcome parents and family members into the classroom to participate in the educational process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post signs welcoming families to the classroom and school. • Prepare and make written information available to visiting parents to guide their involvement. • Inform parents about long-term and short-term curriculum plans. • Provide information about opportunities for how busy parents can be involved in the classroom. | <p>C S R</p> | |
| <p>3.2 Teachers regularly communicate with parents and families to enhance support for children's learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and familiarize families with the program's philosophy, goals, methodology, and operating procedures through written materials and open house presentations. • Greet parents and families at drop-off and pick-up times. • Conduct parent-teacher conferences to talk about individual children's progress, accomplishments, and difficulties, and to solicit information regarding parent expectations, goals, concerns, and needs. • Individualize communication with families. Possible communication methods include visiting children and their families at home, writing notes and exchanging notebooks for communication between home and school, and telephoning parents to relay information regarding day-to-day happenings and changes in a child's physical or emotional state. • Write progress reports for each child. <p><i>Continued on next page.</i></p> | <p>C S R</p> | |

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Family Participation

3

Teachers build partnerships with families to ensure optimum support for children's learning and developmental needs.

Quality Indicators and Examples

- Maintain a portfolio for each child with written information and samples of the child's work.
- Request parents' contributions for evaluation criteria.

3.3 Teachers collect information about family members' interests, hobbies, cultural backgrounds, and professions and encourage them to contribute to the program in various ways.

- Encourage parents to contribute to meaningful learning by initiating themes, coming as experts, and sharing artifacts and other materials.
- Use a parent survey to determine areas of expertise and willingness to become involved.
- Use a variety of written information (e.g., bulletin boards, personal invitations, and classroom newsletters) to educate families about projects and events in the classroom and to invite them to participate.
- Encourage family members to organize field trips, visits, excursions, sports events, drama performances, camps, and summer or winter holidays for children.

3.4 Teachers share responsibilities with families in the decision-making process concerning their children's education.

- Share information about child development and learning that parents can apply at home.
- Provide resources that parents can use to extend and complement classroom-learning activities.
- Organize interactive workshops modeling problem solving.
- Seek parents' goals for their children.

Continued on next page.

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____

Rating Key

- C:** Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
 Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

C S R



3 Family Participation

Teachers build partnerships with families to ensure optimum support for children's learning and developmental needs.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
 Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

3.5 Teachers provide opportunities for parents to learn and share knowledge about care, development, and education.

- Discuss child-rearing practices and child development, including cultural influences, in order to provide consistency for children.
- Hold family socials during evenings, with discussions that promote exchange of customs and child-rearing practices.

C S R

3.6 Teachers help families to obtain support and services for their children.

- Promote parent advocacy for children's educational rights by offering parental programs.
- Seek to establish contacts with important institutions in the community to receive resources for children and their families.
- Assist families in engaging peers and networks for information and support.
- Regularly inform local media of school events and needs.

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Teaching Strategies for Meaningful Learning

4

Teachers design and implement varied strategies to promote conceptual understanding, and to encourage innovation, creativity, independent inquiry, social cooperation, and exploration within and across the disciplines.

Rating Key
C: Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
 Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

| | Rating | Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.) |
|---|---|--|
| <p>4.1 Teachers recognize the need for a variety of teaching approaches to accommodate the different learning styles, temperaments, and personalities of individual children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt materials and teaching approach to reflect individual children's developmental needs, interests, and diversities. • Allow individual children to make choices within the classroom, and to plan what they will accomplish each day. • Provide relevant enrichment activities, assignments, and choices, structured to extend learning for students who complete their task ahead of time. • Use different techniques and visuals to meet diverse educational needs (e.g., posters, time-charts, video-tapes, tapes, hands-on materials, manipulatives, etc.). | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> C S R </div> | |
| | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> C S R </div> | |
| <p>4.2 Teachers create and implement cooperative learning activities to enable children to achieve higher levels of understanding, to maintain collaborative relationships among peers, to develop interpersonal skills, and to foster the capacity to work as independent learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children the responsibility of working together and problem solving to achieve a common goal. • Provide situations in which children are encouraged to take turns, listen to one another, and share materials. • Organize children in diverse groupings (pairs, small clusters, or large groups) in order for them to gain a broader perspective through the sharing of knowledge, ideas, and opinions. • Show respect towards rules/norms established in the classroom, thus modeling and encouraging the students to do the same. | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> C S R </div> | |

Continued on next page.

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Teaching Strategies for Meaningful Learning

Teachers design and implement varied strategies to promote conceptual understanding, and to encourage innovation, creativity, independent inquiry, social cooperation, and exploration within and across the disciplines.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

- Keep different materials posted in the classrooms, regulating collaborative efforts of children (e.g., scored discussions, criteria for group work, definitions of various roles, etc.).
- Apply principles of fairness and equity when grouping children, recognizing competence, effort, and performance.
- Arrange furniture so children can work individually, in small clusters, or in a large group.
- Articulate clear expectations for students' participation and behavior during cooperative work by defining specific roles to promote cooperation.
- Make necessary adjustments and accommodations to enable successful participation of all children in cooperative work.

4.3 Teachers use a range of developmentally appropriate activities, experiences and materials that are selected to engage children in active, meaningful learning, and to achieve the following goals:

- Foster positive self-identity and sense of emotional well being
- Develop social skills and knowledge.
- Encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment.
- Stimulate language and literacy development.
- Enhance physical development skills.
- Provide materials that reflect differences in the classroom in terms of gender, culture, religion, and learning differences, and incorporate them into various activities (e.g., family books, etc.).
- Organize group work, and encourage debate among students through discussion of controversial issues.
- Encourage children to lead, run, and facilitate group activities.

Continued on next page.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Teaching Strategies for Meaningful Learning

4

Teachers design and implement varied strategies to promote conceptual understanding, and to encourage innovation, creativity, independent inquiry, social cooperation, and exploration within and across the disciplines.

Quality Indicators and Examples

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Provide different situations for students to present to the group, to share and to draw conclusions (e.g., book selling, author's chair, writer's notebook).
- Use different energizers for transitions.
- Provide materials that promote problem solving.
- Select materials that are culturally sensitive to promote social inclusion.

4.4 Teachers value and create opportunities for informal learning in the classroom during transition times, clean-up, classroom job time, etc.

- Post a job chart.
- Collect children's reflections and feedback on various activities such as taking care of animals in the classroom, organizing lunchtime, regulating outdoor activities, etc.
- Organize opportunities (non curriculum based instruction) related to development of social skills (e.g., expressing feelings, taking turns, etc., through dramatization, puppet making, drawing, painting, etc.).
- Model desired behavior informally, joining the children at snack and encouraging them by participating in conversations.

Continued on next page.

Rating Key

- C:** Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
 Circle the appropriate choice below.

| Rating | Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.) |
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| C S R | |

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Teaching Strategies for Meaningful Learning

Teachers design and implement varied strategies to promote conceptual understanding, and to encourage innovation, creativity, independent inquiry, social cooperation, and exploration within and across the disciplines.

Quality Indicators and Examples

4.5 Teachers create integrated units to help children see the interrelationships between and among learning concepts and everyday experiences.

- Use both teacher-selected and child-initiated topics to create thematic units throughout the school year.
- Present activities that build on children's previous skills and knowledge. (For example, implement KWL model.)
- Encourage use of different sources of information for students' learning (e.g., encyclopedia, books brought from home, family stories, picture albums, Internet, and resources within the community).

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating

C S R

Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



5 Planning and Assessment

| |
|--|
| Rating Key C: Consistently Evident S: Sometimes Evident R: Rarely Evident Circle the appropriate choice below. |
|--|

Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

5.1 Teachers recognize the importance of thoughtful, long-term planning.

- Create lesson plans that include national standards aligned with curriculum, active learning methodology, and multiple measures for demonstrating competence.
- Create plans to address all areas of child development.
- Create plans that reflect the whole-child approach, addressing concurrently the physical, cognitive, language literacy, social, and emotional aspects of children.
- Prepare thematic units and projects based on children's interests.
- Identify basic concepts, ideas, and skills for children to acquire that align with required teaching goals.
- Develop a plan with examples that include:
 - What will happen when the children first come to school?
 - How and when will rules and routines be established?
 - How will families be involved?
 - How will special events and holidays be celebrated?
 - Which developmental milestones will be achieved?

Continued on next page.

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Planning and Assessment

Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

5.2 Teachers, often in collaboration with colleagues, develop short-term plans for projects and learning.

- Include a variety of activities within the daily plan to accommodate the diversity of learning styles and abilities of children.
- Modify plans according to class dynamics, unexpected environmental or schedule changes, and/or an individual child's special needs.
- Provide a balance between quiet and active periods, indoor and outdoor activities, individual, small and large group activities, and structured and unstructured learning.
- Use a variety of sources to design learning activities that extend beyond the classroom and inspire ongoing inquiry.
- Use assessment measures that are sufficiently comprehensive and include levels of Bloom's taxonomy (analyze, synthesize, evaluate, generalize, etc.).
- Integrate knowledge from multiple subjects.
- Ensure lesson plans reflect alignment with standards, curriculum, methodology and assessment.
- Reinforce cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and student-to-student interaction.

Continued on next page.

Rating

C S R

Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



5 Planning and Assessment

| |
|--|
| Rating Key C: Consistently Evident S: Sometimes Evident R: Rarely Evident Circle the appropriate choice below. |
|--|

Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

5.3 Teachers involve children, families, and other professionals in the planning process.

- Use children's interests as a guide for presenting concepts in a meaningful way.
- Include special interests of families, staff, and other community members in planning to provide a more varied learning environment.
- Use children's reflections on their work, knowledge and experiences in the planning process.
- Activate prior student knowledge, incorporating children's interests.
- Solicit information (using interviews or other communication methods) from parents about their expertise to incorporate into lesson plans.
- Solicit information (using interviews or other communication methods) from parents about their expectations for their child, and incorporate this information into individual instructional/teaching/educational plans.

Continued on next page.

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Planning and Assessment

Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

5.4 Teachers use a variety of ongoing assessment strategies, avoiding biases and labeling.

- Gather information (e.g., anecdotal records, narratives, checklists, and conversations with children) regarding how children spend their time, interact socially, work with materials, use language, and problem solve.
- Collect children's samples of writing, artwork, audiotapes of oral reading, dictated stories, literature response logs, and records of group participation in projects.
- Demonstrate the benefits and limitations of different methods of evaluation, and justify the methods selected.
- Create informal tools for evaluation.
- Create alternate assessments that include individual accommodations and modifications (more time, read passages, assistive technology, etc.) for students with unique learning needs.

C S R

5.5 Teachers encourage children to become skillful at judging their own work and the work of their peers.

- Ask children to contribute to and receive comments on their work.
 - Ask children to contribute comments to peers' work.
 - Allow children to choose and explain their preferences for particular pieces of work.
 - Encourage children to listen critically in discussions and oral presentations.
- Continued on next page.*

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



5 Planning and Assessment

| |
|--|
| Rating Key C: Consistently Evident S: Sometimes Evident R: Rarely Evident Circle the appropriate choice below. |
|--|

Teachers create plans based upon national standards, program goals, and individual needs of children and use a systematic approach for observing and assessing each child's progress.

| Quality Indicators and Examples | Rating | Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.) | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that students are aware of evaluation criteria in advance and that students participate in the development of those criteria. Use rubrics and share criteria for evaluation on a regular basis with student involvement. | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>S</td> <td>R</td> </tr> </table> | C | S | R | |
| C | S | R | | | |
| <p>5.6 Teachers, individually or as a team, analyze collected information to assess and plan further steps for the individual progress of each child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include children and families in assessing the child's educational plan. Help students succeed by integrating approaches to test taking with normal classroom instruction. Keep written plans for children based on data from observations. Maintain documentation of child progress and planning (i.e. student portfolio, goal setting, and other collected data). Measure progress over time. | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>S</td> <td>R</td> </tr> </table> | C | S | R | |
| C | S | R | | | |
| <p>5.7 Teachers share information regarding children's progress with parents and together generate solutions for existing concerns and create short-term and long-term individual goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and build upon each child's strengths and interests to improve student outcomes. Review and implement plans developed for children who need extra support. Use assessments to gather information for instruction. | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>S</td> <td>R</td> </tr> </table> | C | S | R | |
| C | S | R | | | |

Teacher's Name _____ Observation by _____ Date _____



6 Professional Development

Teachers regularly evaluate and strengthen the quality and effectiveness of their work and collaborate with colleagues to improve programs and practices for young children and their families.

Quality Indicators and Examples

6.1 Teachers continuously reflect, self-assess, and evaluate the effect of their practices.

- Examine strengths and weaknesses of teaching practices, and formulate a plan for improvement where needed.
- Evaluate results of their work and seek input systematically from a variety of sources (e.g., student assessment data, peers, mentors, administrators, parents, and children).
- Welcome and experiment with new ideas when planning instructional strategies.
- Use a variety of written records to reflect on practice, both in subject matter and cross-curricular projects.
- Conduct action research and/or collaborate with educational researchers to examine teaching practices.
- Seek advice and feedback on their practices from colleagues on a regular basis through formal and informal discussions, class observations, and collective examination of student work.
- Review current research and, when appropriate, apply to practice in both content area and instruction.

Continued on next page.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



6 Professional Development

Teachers regularly evaluate and strengthen the quality and effectiveness of their work and collaborate with colleagues to improve programs and practices for young children and their families.

Rating Key

- C: Consistently Evident
 - S: Sometimes Evident
 - R: Rarely Evident
- Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

Rating

6.2 Teachers use all available resources to understand and appreciate each student they teach.

- Analyze information from parent/pupil/teacher conferences, parent/teacher conferences, and informal conversations with parents and family members.
- Analyze student test scores and other data to gain insights in order to make informed curricular decisions and apply appropriate instructional practices.
- Continuously seek new information about developmental characteristics of children in class and explore the role of their own cultural background, biases, and values.

C S R

6.3 Teachers recognize the importance of actively pursuing professional growth and development as life-long learners.

- Use professional literature, organizations, resources, training, and other opportunities to acquire new knowledge.
- Stay apprised of changing pedagogical and content issues that have curricular implications.
- Join focus groups concentrated on improvement of a particular area (e.g., social studies, science, art, etc.).
- Participate in workshops pertaining to social studies, science, art, etc.
- Use the resource library to access materials and ideas for planning classroom activities.
- Keep a professional journal of ideas and teaching experiences.

Continued on next page.

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



6 Professional Development

Teachers regularly evaluate and strengthen the quality and effectiveness of their work and collaborate with colleagues to improve programs and practices for young children and their families.

Quality Indicators and Examples

6.4 Teachers regularly work in cooperative teams to contribute to the overall quality of instruction.

- Give and receive support, advice, feedback, and criticism openly from each other.
- Respect team members for individual contributions.
- Work effectively as a professional team to achieve an overall goal, such as planning a thematic unit or developing an individual education plan.
- Mentor new teachers to improve both their own professional competence and that of the new teacher.
- Work in different teams such as cross-curricular or grade level teams to plan classroom activities and to discuss the quality of instruction.

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident

S: Sometimes Evident

R: Rarely Evident

Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Social Inclusion

7

Teachers model and promote values and behaviors that support human rights, social inclusion, and the foundation of open democratic civil societies, including protection of the rights of all minorities

Quality Indicators and Examples

7.1 Teachers use learning materials and activities that reflect the diversity that exists in their communities, countries, and the world. They promote respect and appreciation for differences in people including: gender, race, ethnic origin, native languages, religion, family structure, socioeconomic class, age, and physical and cognitive abilities.

- Create thematic units that address issues of diversity.
- Equip classrooms with pictures, books, games, and props that reflect diversity in a realistic and respectful manner, avoiding stereotypes.
- Provide all students (boys and girls; children from different cultural, socio-economic groups, linguistic groups; students of varying physical and cognitive abilities, etc.) with equal access to resources and materials.
- Provide all students with equal opportunities to show their competencies and express their ideas.
- Provide opportunities for students to interact with people from diverse backgrounds, such as those with disabilities or those from other social/ethnic groups, in a comfortable and empathetic manner.
- Utilize opportunities, especially “teachable moments,” throughout the day, to appreciate the positive value of differences.

Continued on next page.

Rating Key

- C:** Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
 Circle the appropriate choice below.

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



7

Social Inclusion

Teachers model and promote values and behaviors that support human rights, social inclusion, and the foundation of open democratic civil societies, including protection of the rights of all minorities

Rating Key

C: Consistently Evident
S: Sometimes Evident
R: Rarely Evident
Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

7.2 Teachers strengthen student capacities for cooperation, negotiation, and critical thinking by providing students with opportunities to gain experience with a variety of perspectives and by modeling respect for different points of view.

- Design activities and take advantage of situations that require students to think about ethical issues and conflicts from multiple perspectives.
- Intervene when children exclude others in their activities because of bias and stereotypes.
- Plan play and other activities that help students develop skills (i.e. respect for different ideas, sharing, accommodation, problem-solving, and conflict resolution) for living in democratic civil societies.

Continued on next page.

Rating

C S R

Comments (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Social Inclusion

7

Teachers model and promote values and behaviors that support human rights, social inclusion, and the foundation of open democratic civil societies, including protection of the rights of all minorities

Rating Key

- C:** Consistently Evident
 - S:** Sometimes Evident
 - R:** Rarely Evident
- Circle the appropriate choice below.

Quality Indicators and Examples

Rating **Comments** (Please number comments to correlate with appropriate indicator.)

7.3 Teachers develop their own awareness of inequalities that exist in their communities, how those inequalities impact education, and how to be advocates for those who experience inequalities.

- Read and discuss articles and literature from many sources including those written by people who have been traditionally excluded.
- Consider the implications of social exclusion in their teaching practice.
- Develop advocacy skills and knowledge in the area of social inclusion, human rights, and children's rights.
- Advocate for the development of a school environment that promotes the positive aspects of diversity and inclusion.
- Help families advocate for equal rights and access to quality education for their children.
- Make special efforts to include disadvantaged or marginalized parents in their child's education and to involve them in school activities.

C S R

7.4 Teachers develop their students' awareness of inequalities that exist in their communities and how to advocate for those who experience inequalities.

- Help children recognize and address discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes when they occur in the school or communities.
- Provide opportunities for students to advocate for disadvantaged or marginalized individuals or groups.

C S R

Teacher's Name _____

Observation by _____

Date _____



Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------------|---|
| A | |
| Action research | Systematic investigation by teachers of some aspect of their work in order to improve effectiveness and instructional practice. |
| Active learning | A teaching strategy that encourages students to learn by moving around and doing things. Active learning includes hands-on activities and engages learners by matching instruction to interests, understanding, and developmental levels. |
| Activities | Tasks, usually planned in advance, that are carefully designed for a specific group or individual and for a particular learning goal. |
| Alignment | The directness of the link among standards, local curriculum, instructional materials, instructional methods, and assessments. |
| All students | The group of students to whom standards apply without regard to gender; ethnicity, race, or culture; language spoken; socio-economic status; academic achievement; or previous access to the school. |
| Anchor | A term used to describe the certifiers who provide the base of reliability in the ISSA Teacher Certification process. The anchors are highly trained observers who help develop reliability policies and guidelines. |
| Anecdotal records | An observation/assessment technique. Teachers write short, informal descriptions of a student's behavior while engaged in classroom activity. |
| Anti-bias | An active approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, and bias. |
| Assessment | Measurement of the learning and performance of students and/or teachers. |
| Assessment plan | An individualized strategy for how learning and development will be measured and how the results will be used. |
| Authentic assessment | Assessment using methods that correspond closely to real-world experiences. |
| Authorization | The process by which an institution is recognized as meeting a specific set of criteria. The term authorization is used when talking about the process of recognizing Step by Step programs. |
| Author's chair | A chair at the front of the classroom where students sit when presenting their work to the class. |



| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| B | |
| Benchmark | A statement that provides a description of expected knowledge or performance at specific grades, ages, developmental levels, or levels of experience. |
| Bias | Attitude or set of beliefs that justifies the unfair treatment of an individual or member of a group. This attitude usually manifests itself in the unfair treatment of members of a subordinate/target group. |
| Bloom's Taxonomy | Classification of thinking skills from lowest level (knowledge and comprehension) to highest level (synthesis and evaluation). Used by teachers to determine the focus of instruction. (See also higher-order thinking skills.) |
| Brainstorm | Group process in which all ideas are accepted and recorded. |
| C | |
| Certification | The process by which an individual is recognized as meeting a specific set of criteria. The term certification is used when talking about the process of recognizing Step by Step teachers. |
| Certifier | Those individuals who have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and specific training to recommend teachers for certification in the ISSA Teacher Certification process. |
| Child-centered/ learner-centered | An approach to teaching in which students are encouraged to choose their own learning goals and projects. This method is based on the belief that students learn better when they focus on real-world tasks, benefit from interacting with others, and learn best when teachers understand and value differences in how each student learns. |
| Child outcomes | See Outcomes. |
| Civil society | Those institutions and efforts that encourage pluralism and public participation in democracies. |
| Classroom assessment | Evaluations that are ongoing and relevant to what is currently being taught. They are usually teacher-made, short, informal, and used to provide feedback on student progress and inform instructional practice. |
| Competencies | A set of identified characteristics considered critical to competent behavior in regard to a specific concept or skill. |
| Cooperative learning | A teaching strategy that allows learners working in teams or small groups to solve problems or complete tasks together. |
| Criteria | Guidelines, rules, characteristics, or dimensions that are used to judge the quality of teacher or student performance. Criteria indicate what is valued in responses, products, or performances. |
| Criterion-referenced assessment | A method of evaluation in which performance is compared to a set standard or objective. |

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Critical thinking | A process of constructing ideas, comparing them with alternatives, supporting choices with reasons, refining them as circumstances warrant, and transforming them into practical behaviors. |
| D | |
| Data | Information collected in an organized way for use in statistical analysis, scientific research, or as support for arguments. |
| Differentiated instruction | A form of instruction designed to address individual progress. In practice it involves offering several different learning experiences in response to interests, needs, and learning styles. |
| Disabilities | Mild/moderate/severe delays as measured by appropriate diagnosis. When referring to a child, the term disabilities includes one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, or adaptive development. |
| E | |
| Energizer | A group training or teaching technique used to engage learners by involving them in physical or interactive activities. |
| Evaluation | Judgment regarding the quality, value, or worth of a response, product, or performance based on established criteria. Evaluations are usually based on multiple sources of information. The terms “assessment” and “evaluation” are often used interchangeably. |
| Example | A concrete description of teaching practice. In the ISSA Teacher Observation Instrument examples are used to clarify indicators and offer certifiers relevant ideas about what might be seen during a classroom visit. |
| F | |
| Feedback | Any means by which a learner (teacher or student) is informed about the quality or correctness of his/her products or actions. Forms of feedback include formal assessment, written or oral guidance, or casual comments. |
| Focus group | A small group assembled for open discussion regarding members’ opinions about a particular subject or area. |
| G | |
| Guided practice | A teaching strategy that helps learners attempt things they would not be capable of without assistance. In classrooms, guided practice looks like a combination of individual work, close observation by the teacher, and short segments of direct instruction. |
| Guided reading | A structured approach to reading. After short passages are read, student interpretations are immediately recorded, discussed, and revised. |



| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| H | |
| Higher-order thinking skills | Thinking that goes beyond the recall of basic facts. Higher-order thinking skills help students retain and apply facts to solve real-world problems. (See also Bloom's Taxonomy.) |
| I | |
| Implementation Guide | The document produced with input from the Certification Quality Improvement Working Group. The document provides classroom teachers with tools and strategies for translating teacher standards into instructional practice based on the Step by Step methodologies. |
| Inclusion | The process of providing all students with opportunities to participate in the school community regardless of individual strengths or limitations. |
| Indicator | A measure that describes performance related to standards. An indicator must have a common, agreed-upon, consistent definition and a reference point or standard against which performance can be judged. An indicator must meet technical standards of quality such as measuring the relevant variables (validity) and measuring consistently (reliability). In the ISSA Teacher Observation Instrument, indicators are the criteria listed under each item (standard). |
| Integrated unit | A way of teaching and learning that does not depend on the usual division of knowledge into separate subjects. This technique is intended to help learners see the connections across areas of learning. |
| Interactive workshop | A training technique involving two-way communication and participation between trainers and participants. |
| Item | In the ISSA Teacher Observation Instrument, each standard is an item. |
| J | |
| Journal | A form of writing usually done in a notebook. It is used to encourage reflection and exploration of ideas. |
| K | |
| KWL model | KWL stands for "Know, Want to Know, Learn." Students identify what they know about a topic, list what they want to know, and after reading or instruction, identify what they learned or would still like to learn. |
| L | |
| Learning opportunities | Formal and informal interactions between students and teachers that help students to develop skills and knowledge needed to achieve instructional goals. Learning opportunities are often based on standards. |

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| M | |
| Manipulatives | Objects used in classrooms that allow students to make connections to concepts through touch (for instance, beans for counting or a microscope for science). |
| Mentor | A role model who offers support to another person. A mentor has knowledge and experience in an area and shares it with the person being mentored (often called a protégé). |
| Mentoring process | A set of formal and informal interactions over time between a mentor and the person being mentored. |
| Method | A set of teaching practices to promote student learning and development in a particular subject area. |
| Methodologies | Resources for caregivers, parents, teachers, and other early childhood professionals. These are hands-on guides that provide practical applications of child-centered, community-based philosophies in early childhood and primary education programs. |
| Modeling | Demonstrating to the learner (teacher or student) how to do a task with the expectation that the learner can copy the model. Often involves thinking aloud or talking about how to work through a task. The goal is imitation of the performance of an expert by the learner. |
| Morning meeting | A 15- to 30-minute group lesson to begin the school day. It is intended to build community, create a climate of learning, reinforce social and academic skills, and encourage communication. Usually consists of four phases: greeting, sharing, group activity, and news and announcements. |
| N | |
| Norm-referenced assessment | Students are compared to each other. Students with the best performance (on tests, presentations, etc.) receive the highest marks. |
| O | |
| Observation | A method used to assess performance or simply to gather informal information about needs and achievements. The ISSA Teacher Observation Instrument is a standards-based tool used by teachers, mentors, and others to measure standards implementation and classroom quality. |
| Open-ended task | A performance task in which students are required to find a solution or response to a problem when there is no single correct answer. |
| Open question | A question that has many possible correct answers and allows individuals to respond in a variety of ways. |
| Outcomes | Changes in behavior, knowledge, understanding, ability, or skills. |



| Term | Definition |
|---------------------------------|--|
| P | |
| Parent advocacy | The process of working with and/or for parents to acquire the supports, services, and resources they need. |
| Pedagogist | One who is well informed in the use of various instructional methods. Pedagogy, or the art of teaching, refers to the conscious use of a particular teaching strategy. |
| Peer tutoring | The process in which a student, with guidance from a teacher, helps one or more students at the same grade level to learn a skill or concept. |
| Performance assessment | Direct, systematic observation of performance by students or teachers, who then rate it according to certain predetermined criteria. The ISSA Teacher Observation Instrument is an example of a performance assessment. |
| Performance standard | The specific level of expected learning or performance by a student or teacher. |
| Portfolio | A purposeful, integrated collection of work by a teacher or student showing effort, progress, or achievement in one or more areas. |
| Process | The method or steps used to accomplish a task or develop a product. Teachers pay attention to the processes used by students to solve problems, find answers, or create something in order to understand the nature and quality of their thinking. |
| Professional development | The process, also known as staff development, of helping teachers build knowledge and skills. Teachers work with mentors, peers, and independently and pursue opportunities to acquire knowledge through training, technical assistance, research, and self-study. |
| Proficiency | Having a sufficient degree of knowledge or skill and demonstrating a level of mastery in a particular area. |
| Q | |
| Quality improvement | The expectation that educators will reflect on their own work or student work, examine pertinent data, determine what should be improved, and implement a plan for improvement. |
| Quality Improvement Plan | A school's or teacher's program for improving the performance of students, the teacher, or the school itself. Includes analysis of relevant data, identification of needs, clear goals and tasks, and defined roles and responsibilities. |
| R | |
| Read aloud | A method of instruction in which the teacher reads aloud to the class to improve comprehension, expose students to correct pronunciation, or to create positive feelings about reading or a particular book. |

| Term | Definition |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Reliability | An indicator of score consistency over time or across multiple evaluators. Reliable assessment is one in which the same answer receives the same score regardless of who is scoring or how and when the scoring takes place. |
| Rubric | A tool for showing clearly how work will be evaluated and what is expected. Rubrics focus on measuring stated objectives and contain specific performance characteristics arranged in levels indicating to what degree a standard has been met. |
| S | |
| Scaffolding | An instructional technique that provides temporary support until it is no longer needed. The teacher models a desired learning task or strategy, then shifts responsibility to the learner. Scaffolding builds on existing knowledge. |
| Scored discussion | An instructional strategy used with primary students. A small group conducts a discussion or solves a problem while the rest of the class observes and evaluates the quality using a set of predetermined rubrics. |
| Self-assessment | Learners (teachers or students) reflect on their own performance and assess themselves. |
| Shared reading | A teaching strategy employing oversized picture books that teachers read aloud to a group of children. |
| Stakeholder | Someone who is impacted by or has an interest in something. |
| Standards | Statements that identify the essential knowledge and skills that should be taught and learned. Essential knowledge includes the most important and enduring ideas, issues, dilemmas, principles, and concepts from all disciplines. |
| Standards Advisory Board | The group of experts that developed the ISSA Pedagogical Standards. |
| Standards-based assessment | Assessment of mastery of defined standards. |
| Standards-based curriculum | Curriculum designed on the basis of defined standards. |
| Strategies | Methods used to achieve a goal or objective. Teaching strategies should match the learning style and ability of the learner and consider the subject matter being taught. |



| Term | Definition |
|--------------------------|---|
| T | |
| Task | An activity, exercise, or problem given to learners to perform. |
| Teachable moment | Specific, often unplanned times when the teacher recognizes that important learning can occur and takes advantage of the opportunity by using that time to engage students. |
| Teacher assistant | One who supports the teacher in the classroom to reinforce instruction. |
| Thematic unit | A segment of instruction focused on a given theme or topic. |
| Transition | Times during the school day when there is a change in activity, place, pace, or level of instruction. Transition also refers to the change from one school level to another (e.g., kindergarten to primary school). |
| V | |
| Validity | An indication that an assessment instrument consistently measures what it is designed to measure. |
| Volunteer | A person who chooses to help without compensation. Classroom volunteers can be very helpful preparing materials, working with students, serving as guest speakers, etc. |
| W | |
| Writer's notebook | Individual student collections of writing used to demonstrate acquisition of certain literacy skills. |

Parts copied or adapted from Judy F. Carr and D. E. Harris, *Succeeding With Standards: Linking Curriculum, Assessment, and Action Planning*, ASCD, Alexandria, VA. 2001

Appendix A

INTERNATIONAL STEP BY STEP ASSOCIATION

Who we are

The International Step By Step Association (ISSA) is a non-governmental membership organization established in the Netherlands in 1999 to foster democratic principles and promote parent and community involvement in early childhood education. ISSA's vision is of an open society where the entire community helps children to reach their full potential.

ISSA unites the individual capacities of independent early childhood organizations into a powerful network devoted to promoting child-and-family-centered philosophies and advocating for equal opportunities for all children.

ISSA's network includes over 220,000 preschool and primary teachers as well as caregivers, parents, school directors, psychologists, community leaders and local and national education officials. Our programs currently reach well over 1 million children and their families.

What we do

ISSA's members cooperate to:

- **Advocate for policy to ensure that every child regardless of gender, race, religion, nationality or ability has the opportunity to develop to his or her full potential.** ISSA promotes the rights of all children to a quality education and reaches out to children of minority families, children with disabilities, Roma and refugee children, and children of families living in poverty.
- **Engage in Systemic Education Reform Projects** that work from the grassroots level up to achieve lasting policy reform. ISSA provides training and technical assistance to teachers and other education professionals, parents and communities, educational training institutions and policy makers.
- **Develop new teacher resources and early childhood education standards, provide high quality training, and encourage research.** ISSA offers training, consulting services and materials to lend support to teachers, parents, communities, teacher training institutions and policymakers.
- **Implement national, regional and international projects** through our network, in partnership with other organizations.
- **Provide a forum for early childhood educators, experts and policy makers.** ISSA provides opportunities to share knowledge and experience through our publications, our journal "Educating Children for Democracy," our website and ISSA events.



Where we do it

ISSA was established by non-governmental organizations implementing the Step by Step Program, an early childhood education reform project focusing on countries struggling to make the transition to a democratic society, which was created in 1994 by the Soros Foundations Network. ISSA's national members are located in 30 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Mongolia, Haiti, and Argentina.

ISSA's coordinating office and its network of National Members offer both professional capacity as well as infrastructure to implement early childhood projects in cooperation with other partners nationally, regionally and internationally. ISSA also facilitates cross-cultural collaboration in the field of early childhood education.

As the international voice of the Step by Step Program, ISSA offers its philosophy, programs and activities to benefit children, their families, and communities world wide.

Join Us

ISSA welcomes applications for membership from individuals and organizations that share our vision. For more information about our programs, membership, training and resources, please contact us by email at info@issa.nl or visit our website at www.issa.nl.

Coordinating Offices:***International Step by Step Association***

400 West 59th Street
New York, NY 10019
U.S.A.

Tel: 1 (212) 547-6918

Fax: 1 (212) 548-4610

Email: info@issa.nl

International Step by Step Association

Rakoczi ut 22. IV./24.

H-1072 Budapest

Hungary

Tel: (361) 266-3463

Fax: (361) 344-5947

Email: info@issa.nl

International Step by Step Association

Keizersgracht 62-64

1015 CS Amsterdam

The Netherlands

Tel: 31 (0) 20-520-7505

Fax: 31 (0) 20-520-7510

Email: info@issa.nl

Appendix B

Manuals and Training Materials

Methodologies

These resources for teachers, caregivers and parents and other early childhood professionals are hands-on guides, which provide practical applications on how to implement child-centered, community-based philosophies in early childhood programs. The foreign language editions have been specially adapted by professionals for local conditions in each of the countries participating in the Step by Step Program. Training modules supplement each methodology.

- Creating Child-Centered Programs for Infants and Toddlers
- Learning Activities for Infants and Toddlers: An Easy Guide for Everyday Use
- Creating Child-Centered Classrooms: 3-5 Year Olds
- Creating Child-Centered Materials for Math and Science (3-6 year olds)
- Creating Child-Centered Classrooms (6-7 year olds)
- Creating Child-Centered Classrooms (8-10 year olds)
- Creating Inclusive Classrooms
- Making a Difference: A Parent's Guide to Advocacy and Community Action
- Education and the Culture of Democracy: Early Childhood Practice

Training Modules

Training modules supplement the methodologies listed above. They are adapted by professionals to address country specific needs and circumstances.

Infant/Toddler Training Modules

- Using What We Know About Infants & Toddlers to Create Child-Centered Environments that Work
- Tuning in to the Individual Child
- A Holistic View of Infants and Toddlers
- Our Role in Supporting Children's Development
- Establishing Trust Between Caregivers and Babies
- Supporting Children in the Attachment/Separation Process
- Observing Infants & Toddlers
- Social Development
- Preparing the Environment of Infants & Toddlers

- How Babies Learn
- Play as an Essential Aspect of Development
- Establishing a Daily Routine with Infants & Toddlers
- Communicating with Infants & Toddlers
- Supporting Children's Physical Development
- Food Experiences
- Sensory Play Workshop
- Thinking of Babies Means Thinking of Parents
- Continuing Training and Support for Infant/Toddler Caregivers

Preschool Training Modules

- Learning to Play: Activity Centers
- Learning Through Play: Introduction to Individualization
- Learning Through Play: Environment
- Parental Involvement
- Involving Families in Programs for Young Children
- Block Workshop: Under Construction
- Story Dramatization
- Transition Information
- A Bridge from Assessment to Learning: Classroom Activities for 3-6 year olds
- Enhancing self-esteem and self-concept in Children
- Making Books With Young Children
- Teams Working Together

Primary School Training Modules (Grades 1, 2, 3, 4)

1st Grade:

- Introductory Training for the First Grade Methodology
- The Classroom Environment: A Training Workshop for First Grade
- Primary Workshop: Thematic Teaching
- A Balanced Reading Program Using Ongoing Assessment In The Classroom
- Mathematics for First Grade
- Morning Meetings
- The Writing Process
- Using Parents and Other Adults as Classroom Assistants
- Using Ongoing Assessment in the Classroom

2nd Grade:

- Make and Take-It Workshop
- The Roles of the Teacher in the Child-Centered Primary Classroom
- Cooperative Learning for Teachers of Primary Students



3rd Grade:

- Teacher/Child Interactions
- Individualizing, Multiple Intelligences, and Learning Styles In the Classroom
- Math for 8-10 Year Old Children
- Science for Students 8 to 10

4th Grade:

- Classroom Strategies Which Foster Reading Motivation
- Inquiry: Teaching Critical Thinking in Math and Science to 8 to 11 year-olds
- Teaching Writing to Children

Transition to Middle School (5th-8th Grade)

- Introduction to the Middle School Years
- Establishing a Partnership between Home and School
- Creating a Collaborative Teaching Team
- Learning Environment
- Integrating the Curriculum

Inclusion Training Modules

- An Overview on Creating Inclusive Classrooms
- Instructional Approaches for Children with Disabilities in the Preschool Classroom
- Instructional Approaches for Children with Disabilities in the Primary Classroom
- Creating Family-School Partnerships
- Observation of Children with Special Needs
- Assessment of Children with Special Needs
- Developing Individual Education Plans for Children with Special Needs
- Adapting the Classroom for Children with Disabilities
- Including Children with Mental Retardation (Draft)
- Building Opportunities to Include Children with Disabilities in Your Program

Other Specialized Training:

- Education for Social Justice - Part 1 (classroom activities)
- Education for Social Justice - Part 2 (training for adults)
- Advanced Cooperative Learning
- School Improvement
- Literacy
- Oral History
- Strategic Planning for NGO's
- Financial Management for NGO's

- Professional Mentoring
- Health Activities for Children in Child-Centered Classrooms

Training for Trainers

- Theory of Multiple Intelligences
- Training Leaders and Adult Learners
- The Participants and the Trainer
- Designing Trainings
- Developing Effective Workshops for Adults: Sample Training Activities
- Workshop for developing Skills of Primary Program Trainers

Advanced Training for Trainers

- Needs Assessment
- Workshop Development
- Group Facilitation
- Active Training
- Adult Learning
- Effective Trainers
- Evaluation

Professional Development Courses for Higher Education Faculty

Semester-length courses and curricular materials prepare early childhood teachers for child-centered teaching. The Step by Step Program organizes seminars for faculty from teacher training and re-training institutions to introduce child-centered, community-based philosophies and methods, and to offer practice designing interactive teaching methods to use with adult learners.

- Child-Centered Curriculum
- The Study of Children Through Observation and Recording
- School and Family Partnerships
- Individualized Teaching in Early Childhood Education
- Learning Through Play
- Applied Research in Early Childhood Education
- Classroom-Based Research in Early Childhood Settings
- Inclusion of Children with Disabilities
- Caring for Infants and Toddlers
- Creating a Successful Practicum Program for Student Teachers

Standards and Assessment Instruments

Developed through the work of an international task force of early childhood professionals, the Standards and Assessment instruments meet the best international standards for early child development. The standards outline core principles in assessing quality in early childhood programs, and provide clear, easy-to-use guidelines for staff and self-assessment. The instrument also provides methods for helping teachers and other caregivers observe and communicate information about children's development.

ISSA's comprehensive system of standards includes:

- Program and Pedagogical Standards for Preschool and Early Primary Grades
- Trainings and Manuals for Certifiers
- Trainings and Manuals for Teacher Trainers and Mentors
- Self Assessment Manuals for Teachers
- Standards for Trainers
- Step by Step Primary Assessment materials

Videos

Children Are our World colorfully illustrates how Step by Step programs in Haiti, Kazakhstan Latvia, Moldova, Mongolia and Ukraine are helping prepare children to meet the complex challenges of the 21st -Century. Emphasizing problem solving and independent thinking skills, SbS carefully transforms classrooms into dynamic centers of active learning. With the child at the heart of its work, the video illustrates how change at every level-from the classroom, the family and community, to teacher preparation and systemic reform-can be achieved.

The following country videos are also available:

Children With Special Needs: Step by Step in Ukraine demonstrates how children with special needs are learning along side children in regular classrooms.

Training Centers: Step by Step in Kazakhstan highlights how SbS training centers are bringing best practices to teachers across this vast and varied landscape.

Community Involvement: Step by Step in Haiti illustrates what can be accomplished when parents and the community efforts are fully engaged in all aspects of the school.

Multicultural Approaches: Step by Step in Mongolia reinforces how schools recognize and celebrate diversity and ensure that deeply rooted traditions are not lost.

Classroom Environment: Step by Step in Latvia is built on the premise that even toddlers learn best in environments that promote choice and creativity.

Problem Solving and Critical Thinking: Step by Step in Moldova illustrates how principles of independent learning and problem-solving have transformed primary school classrooms.

School Success for Roma Children, from the Czech Republic and Slovakia document a project which proved that Roma children placed in "Special Schools" for the mentally handicapped can achieve on the same level as children in mainstream education, and should be integrated.

Children's Books

In 2002, ISSA launched an initiative to provide high quality, developmentally appropriate children's literature in local languages. ISSA's members cooperate internationally, encouraging authors and illustrators from a variety of nations and cultures to develop new innovative works. The project has the short term aim of bringing good reading material into classrooms, but also the long term goal of developing children's book writers and illustrators in the region, as well as stimulating local publishing that meet children's developmental needs.



Appendix C

Step by Step Organizations

ALBANIA

Qendra Hap pas Hapi
Contact: Gerda Sula
E-mail: sbsal@interalb.net

ARGENTINA

Fundación Leer
Contact: Patricia Mejalelaty
E-mail: pmejalelaty@leer.org.ar

ARMENIA

Step by Step Benevolent Foundation
Contact: Ruzanna Tsarukyan
E-mail: ruzanna@sbsbf.am; office@sbsbf.am

AZERBAIJAN

Open Society Institute-
Assistance Foundation Azerbaijan
Contact: Ulviya Mikailova
E-mail: UMikailova@educationforward.org.az

BELARUS

Belorussian Parents' and Teachers' League "Step by Step"
Contact: Iryna Lapitskaya
E-mail: stbyst@open.by

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Center for Educational Initiatives
Step by Step
Contact: Radmila Rangelov-Jusovic
E-mail: radmila@coi-stepbystep.ba

BULGARIA

Step by Step Program Foundation/Bulgaria
Contact: Emil Buzov
E-mail: emil.step@bitex.com

CROATIA

Open Academy "Step by Step"
("Korak po korak")
Contact: Nives Milinovic
E-mail: nives@korakpokorak.hr

CZECH REPUBLIC

Step by Step Czech Republic
Contact: Lucie Rastocna
E-mail: lucie.rastocna@sbscr.cz

ESTONIA

Hea Algus
Contact: Ivar Männamaa
E-mail: info@heaalgus.ee

GEORGIA

Center for Educational Initiatives
Contact: Eteri Gvineria
E-mail: eteri@mega.osgf.ge

HAITI

Step by Step Program Haiti (Tipa Tipa)
Contact: Dominique Hudicourt
E-mail: hudivania@hainet.net

HUNGARY

Ec-Pec Foundation
Contact: Eva Deak
E-mail: deakeva@ecpec.hu

KAZAKHSTAN

Public Community Soros Educational Step by Step
Center
Contact: Dina Aidzhanova
E-mail: daidzhan@escape.kz

KOSOVA

Kosovo Education Center
Contact: Hana Zylfiu
E-mail: hzylfiu@kec-ks.org

KYRGYZSTAN

Center of Educational Initiatives "Step by Step"
Contact: Gulnur Sultanalieva
E-mail: gulnura@step.kyrnet.kg

LATVIA

Center for Education Initiatives

Contact: Zenija Berzina

E-mail: zenija@iic.lv

LITHUANIA

Center for Innovative Education

Contact: Regina Sabaliauskiene

E-mail: regina@uic.lt

MACEDONIA

Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives
in Macedonia

Contact: Suzana Kiranziska

E-mail: skiran@soros.org.mk

MOLDOVA

Programul Educational Pas cu Pas

Contact: Cornelia Cincilei

E-mail: hs@moldnet.md

MONGOLIA

Mongolian Foundation for Open Society

Contact: Narmandakh Adiya

E-mail: nmandah@soros.org.mn

MONTENEGRO

Pedagogical Center of Montenegro

Contact: Sasa Milic

E-mail: sasam@pccg.cg.yu

ROMANIA

Center for Education and Professional
Development

Contact: Carmen Lica

E-mail: carmenlia@stepbystep.ro

RUSSIA

Russian Foundation for Education Development
(RFED) "Soobschestvo"

Contact: Ekaterina Mokhovikova

E-mail: Ekaterina.Mokhovikova@rfro.ru

SERBIA

Centre for Interactive Pedagogy (Centar za
interaktivnu pedagogiju)

Contact: Milena Mihajlovic

E-mail: ciip-milena@sbb.co.yu

SLOVAKIA

Nadacia Skola dokoran

Wide Open School Foundation

Contact: Eva Konc'oková

E-mail: nsd@nsd.sk

SLOVENIA

Developmental Research Centre for Educational
Initiatives – Step by Step

Contact: Tatjana Vonta

E-mail: step.si@siol.net

TAJIKISTAN

OSI-Assistance Foundation – Tajikistan

Contact: Nazarkhudo Dastambuev

E-mail: peaks@osi.tajik.net

UKRAINE

Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation

Contact: Natalia Sofiy

E-mail: sofiy@ussf.kiev.ua or admin@ussf.kiev.ua

UZBEKISTAN

Open Society Institute – Uzbekistan

Contact: Khamida Akhmedova

E-mail: khamida@rambler.ru



International Step by Step Association

The International Step by Step Association (ISSA) is a non-governmental membership organization established in the Netherlands to foster child-centered approaches and promote parent and community involvement in early childhood education. ISSA's vision is of an open society where the entire community helps children to reach their full potential and where children are active participants in the learning process.

ISSA combines the strengths of 30 organizations in as many countries, reaching over 220,000 preschool and primary teachers as well caregivers, parents, school directors, psychologists, community leaders, and local and national education officials. Step by Step programs currently reach millions of children and their families. ISSA's members cooperate to advocate for equal access to quality education for all children; engage in national reform of early childhood education systems; develop new teacher resources, provide training and encourage research; implement national, regional, and international projects; and provide a forum for educators, experts, and policy makers to share knowledge and experience.

The ISSA Pedagogical Standards were developed by experts from the ISSA network and are intended for use by any teacher or early education professional committed to quality improvement in center-based programs. The Standards and Indicators provided in this booklet offer an evaluation framework based on child-centered practice and family involvement. Through modification of the Indicator Examples, ISSA Pedagogical Standards can be adapted to specific national and cultural contexts.

The revised Pedagogical Standards, offered in this second edition, serve as the foundation of ISSA's comprehensive Quality Early Education Initiative. The Quality Early Education Initiative provides a framework for teacher development, offering professional trainings and manuals designed specifically for teachers, mentors, and certifiers. The system promotes teachers' self-directed learning under the guidance of trained professional mentors. Mentors conduct classroom observations using the ISSA Pedagogical Standards and assist teachers in the development of individual plans, that build on teaching strengths and address any identified weaknesses. Teachers who believe that they meet all of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards can seek recognition by applying for international certification.

To learn more about ISSA or the Quality Early Education Initiative or to become a member, please visit our web site at <http://www.issa.nl>.

