

Linking Preschool Curriculum, Instruction and Child Assessment

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The Journey Begins Here!



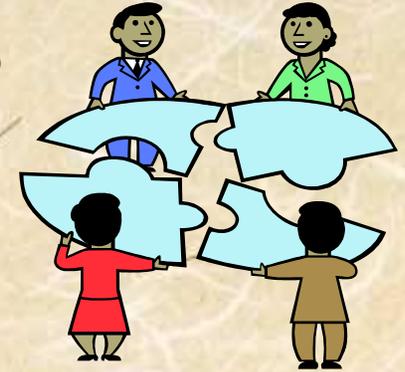
- The early years come only once for a child
- The early years are critical to long term development
- Teachers are the keys to making programs high quality
- Teachers and administrators can learn from data about children

Know the Destination before you Begin

“If you don’t know where you
are going, any road will get
you there.”



Making Connections and Making Sense

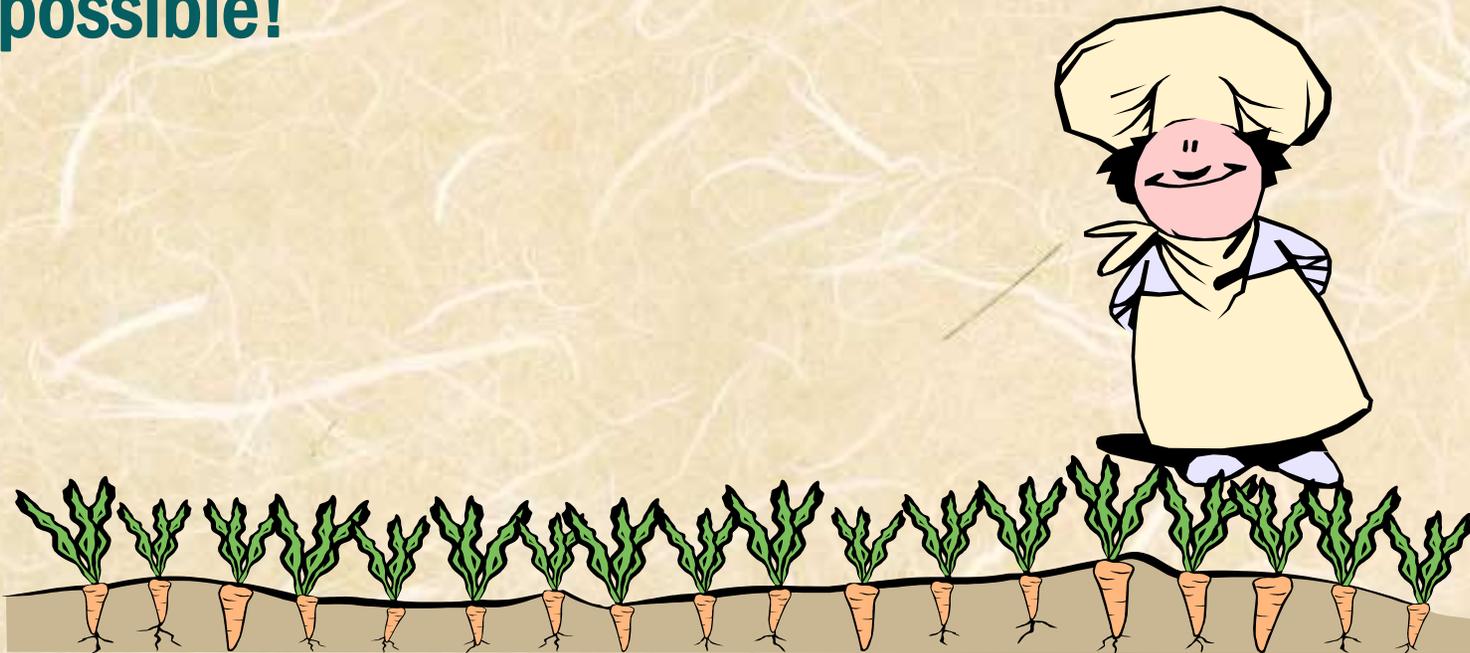


- ***Standards*** –the shared vision of what children should know and be able to do
- ***Instruction*** -engaging, intentional and differentiated
- ***Assessment***-formative and linked to differentiated instruction
- ***Home/School Connections*** -meaningful links to home that build understanding and support

(Strickland, 2008)

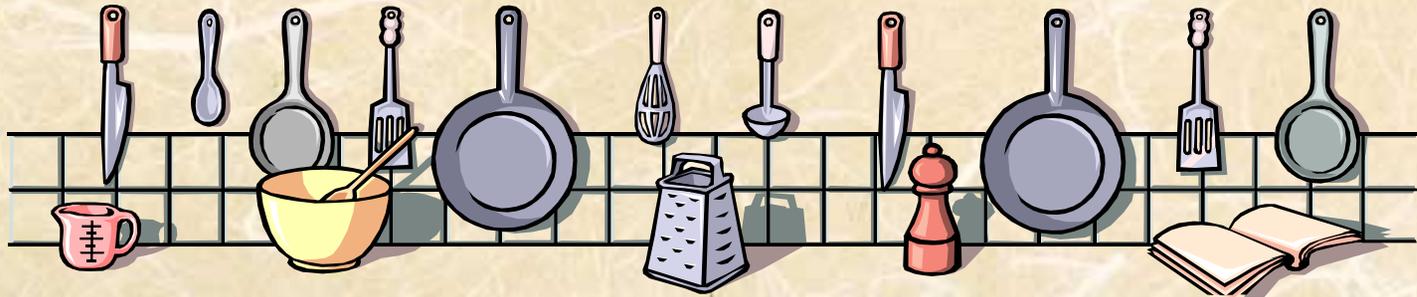
To align means: “to line up.” (Webster’s)

Try to make it as coherent as possible!



What Are We Aligning?

- Early Learning Standards and Guidelines
- Curriculum
- Instructional Practices
- Assessment



Keys to a Successful Journey

- Alignment between standards, assessment systems and curricula
- All are guided by the same framework
- All arise from standards about quality and outcomes
- All must yield accurate evidence of program quality and child learning

(NRC, 2008)



There are many different types of standards

Program Standards

- Licensing Standards
- Head Start Performance Standards
- State Program Guidelines
- Accreditation Standards

Child-related Standards

- Early Learning Standards
- Child Outcome Standards (Head Start Outcomes Framework)
- Curriculum Standards and Objectives

In Massachusetts



Early Childhood Program Standards

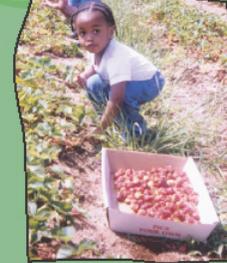
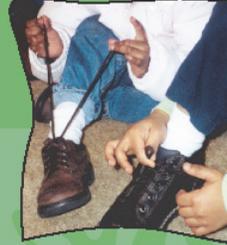
For Three and Four Year Olds



Early Childhood Advisory Council
to the Massachusetts Board of Education



Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences



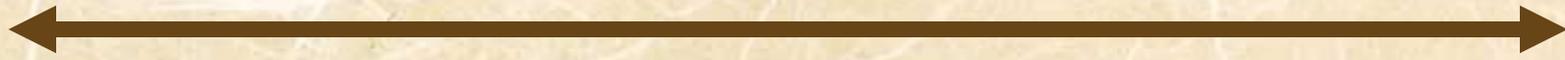
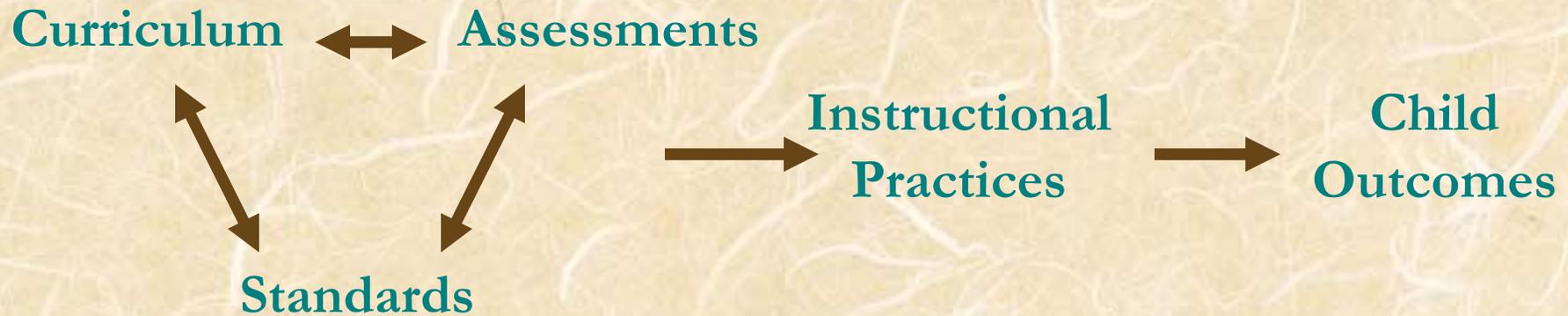
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Purposes of Early Learning Standards

- To guide instruction and professional development
- To guide child assessment and information sharing
- To frame program accountability and evaluation
 - *What is the quality of the early education program?*
 - *How well are young children progressing in learning and development?*

Scott-Little, C. (2006)

Make Early Learning Standards Part of A Coherent System



Horizontal Alignment

(Smart Start, 2006)

Vertical Alignment

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks



Early Childhood Program Standards for 3 & 4 olds

Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences



(currently under development)

Vertical Alignment

- **Helps create a sense of how programs fit together**
- **Can facilitate communication between programs**
- **Can facilitate a smooth transition between programs**

Strategies Used to Collect Assessment Data

- Standardized tests
- Criterion-referenced tests
- Teacher observations
- Reports
- Family Interviews
- Demographic Data (Ethnicity, gender)

Program-level Data

Teacher-level Data

Child-level Data



Curriculum

- What are we using?
- How does it fit with MA preschool learning experiences and your child assessment system?
- What can we change to strengthen the links?
 - Short term or immediate changes
 - Long term changes



Massachusetts Preschool Experiences

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- History and Social Science
- Health Education
- Arts



Curriculum and Instruction

- 1. What do our current instructional practices for children look like?**
- 2. How do these practices link to the Guidelines and what we know about children's interests, strengths and challenges?**
- 3. What do we need to know, explore, learn, and be able to help children achieve the desired outcomes?**
- 4. How and where will we get this information and skill?**
- 5. What resources will we need?**

Feeling Overwhelmed?



- Where do you start?
- How do you make time for the work?
- How do you build skills in aligning curriculum, assessment and standards?
- How do you maintain momentum in the face of the other demands in your program?

Child Development is a Journey

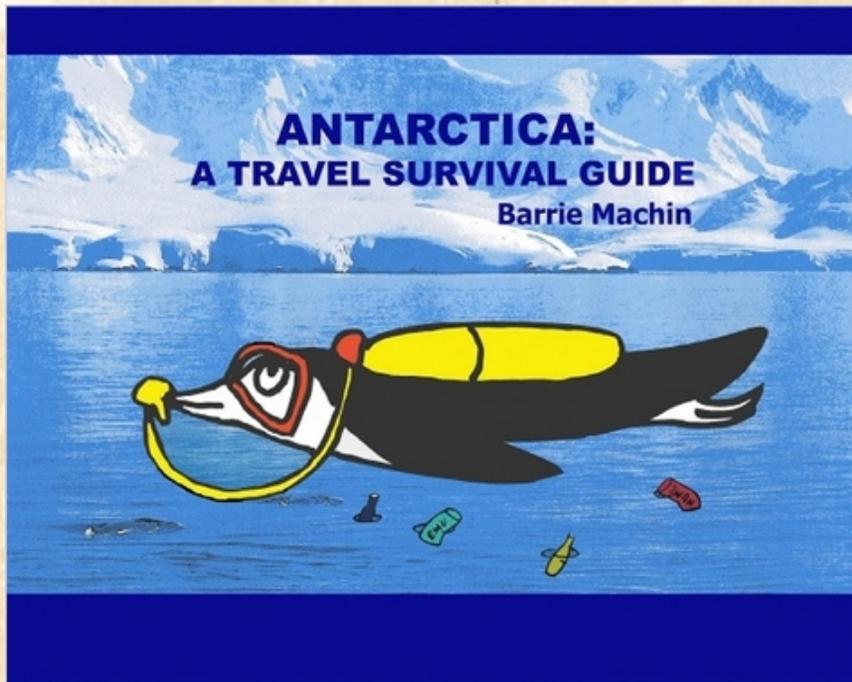
- Not a race



- So think about when you travel, what you take



Early Learning Standards=Guide Book



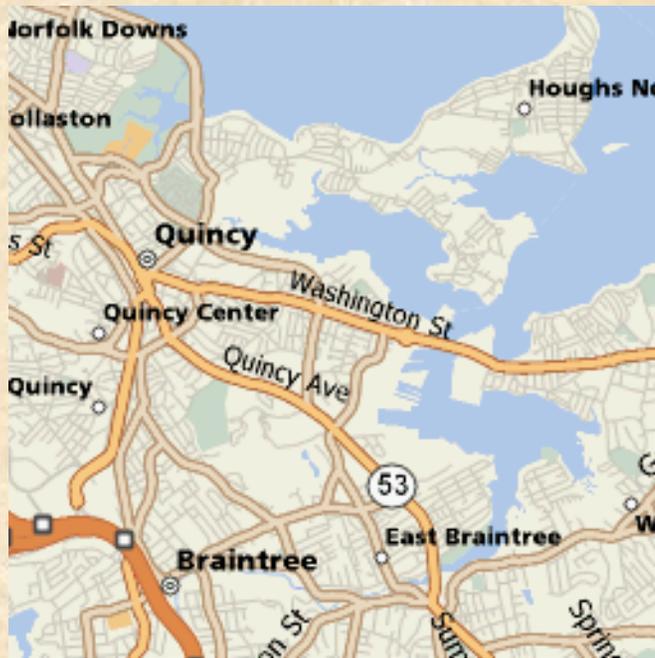
- Like a guide book, Early Learning Standards:
 - Show you many of the sights that you will see as a child grows, develops and learns
 - Describe many of the things you can do while traveling together with a child on the journey
 - Help to answer the questions: *“Where are we going? What might it look like? and What might we do?”*

Curriculum=Map



- A good curriculum is vitally important!
- The curriculum or curricula that you use in the classroom (e.g., *Creative Curriculum*, *OWL*, *High Scope*) is the map that helps you to transport children to that place of learning and development.

Ongoing Assessment = Street Map with Specific Directions



- Ongoing assessment helps you to develop specific goals and target areas for each child. The specific directions and strategies gleaned from assessment help each child to have a safe, enjoyable and successful journey in development

The Curriculum Map

- Identifies the standards, knowledge & skills the children need to learn
- Describes the strategies and experiences children need to learn knowledge and skills



Set Priorities based on:

- **Frequent opportunities to practice in natural environment**
- **Skills needed in current and next environment**
- **Teacher/classroom expectations**
- **Skills predictive of later success**

Environmental Assessments

- ECERS (and other environmental assessments and facility licensure: Your guides to creating the best possible learning environment.
- In our travel analogy, think of them as hotel guides



Child Development is a Journey

- **Use Early Learning Standards as a travel guide to help you know where you and your children are going, what you might see and what you might do**
- **Use curricula as the road maps to help you know how to get there**
- **Use assessment to ensure that each and every child reaches their destination**
- **Use environmental assessments and facility licensure to ensure the best possible learning environments**

(Smart Start, 2006)

Intersecting Interests

What do you see
children doing?

What do you see
in the
environment?

What do you see
adults doing?

EXPLICIT Connections

The Planning Template

What is your role in a child's journey?

Early Childhood Planning Template for Working with Early Childhood Programs

Areas	Already in Place	Potential Areas to Develop	Next Steps	Resources
<p>A. Leadership</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate importance of alignment between preschool and K-12 achievement 2. Identify professional development and other resources needed to support high quality 				
<p>B. Setting Standards and Expectations for Children's Learning and Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that staff are aware of and use state early standards 				
<p>C. Research-Based and Effective Instruction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement curriculum consistently in all classrooms 2. Receive training/orientation to curriculum 3. Provide instruction in domains along a developmental continuum 				

Reflection

**A thought going
around in
my head**

**Some ideas that square with
my thinking**

**Three points I would like to
remember**