

Classroom & Age: _____

Building A Strong Foundation for School Success: Kentucky's Early Childhood Quality Self Study

Introduction to Section 2, *Child Experiences in the Environment*

Environmental Standards are designed to increase the quality of early care and education programs and to support positive outcomes for young children and their families. The environments in which children spend time when away from home are critical to their overall development and Kentucky has developed a tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS) to address this. Environmental standards are included in KY All STARS which encompasses four major areas: Classroom and Instructional Quality, Staff Qualifications and Professional Development, Family and Community Engagement, and Administrative and Leadership Practices. KY All STARS is available to licensed early care and education programs and for licensed and certified family child care homes. Information about KY All STARS Quality Rating and Improvement System can be obtained at: <https://kentuckyallstars.ky.gov>

How to Read and Use the Sectional Grids

The five sections of the Self Study are formatted as a grid. The key area number and title appears on page one of each section, for example for the first area, 1. Program Structure and Personnel. The rationale for the area also appears on the first page of each new section. One every page of each section, the area title with the page number appears at the lower right corner. The pages are numbered within each section rather than consecutively for ease of use by programs.

Each standard is numbered first with the area, then with the indicator number following as the final digit(s). For example, to identify this sequence Area 2 is the section, Standard 1, and Indicator 2, the reader would look for 5.1.2.

The bulleted statements under the column titled **Examples** gives the reader an idea or suggestion of what the indicator might look like in practice. This is not an exhaustive list and for some indicators it is a very concrete example.

Following the examples are three columns for programs to place their **self-assessment decision** in the corresponding category code.

- **NOT MET** – The indicator is not met and there is little evidence that indicator accurately describes the program or classroom. An action plan to work toward this indicator is formulated.
- **IN PROCESS** – The indicator is partially met. There is some evidence that indicator accurately describes the program. An action plan to work toward this indicator is formulated.
- **MET** – The indicator is fully met. There is a great deal of evidence that the indicator describes the program or classroom. The evidence is noted in the action plan or evidence column.

For some indicators, it may be necessary to use **N/A with an explanation**, i.e. N/A; transportation is not a program component.

And the final column is the **Action Plan or Program Evidence of MET**.

- This area can be used to record next steps in meeting the indicator, describing who is responsible and the timeline for accomplishing; **OR**,
- This area can be used if the indicator was assessed as **MET**, to note the program evidence to support this code.

2. Child Experiences in the Environment

Rational:

The way in which the early childhood environment is set up is an illustration of the program staff's beliefs about how children learn and grow. The environment promotes child learning and positive development. Programs that are set up to help children flourish are programs that use the environment to promote independence, to protect and keep children safe, to affirm children's growing sense of self, and to promote caring and comfortable surroundings for children and for the adults who care for them. The environment encompasses more than simply how the program arranges indoor and outdoor space. The environment sets the overall tone and atmosphere of the program. When the environment is set up thoughtfully, children's challenging behaviors are lessened, cooperation is more frequent, and child learning and comfort becomes the program focus.

The environment includes:

- A physical facility that is set up to encourage good health practices, safe exploration and use by children, and adequate space for children and adults.
- Comfortable areas and clear access for all children with and without disabilities.
- Learning areas that promote a full range of play and learning opportunities of varying complexity across all developmental domains.
- Sufficient materials that are grouped and arranged to maximize cooperative and creative use and to minimize misuse or problems.
- Space for children to be alone and space to play in small and large groups.
- Spaces for the staff and parents in the program, separate from child areas.
- Displays of children's work to affirm the value of that work and to affirm each child.
- Opportunities for children to see and experience people of diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Limited access to passive media such as TV, computer games, and videos.
- Outdoor space that is safe yet challenging and that is part of the daily schedule year-round.
- Outdoor space that serves as an instructional environment to develop all learning domains, including a variety of physical skills.
- A positive social and emotional climate wherein children and adults may build constructive relationships.

The intent of this section of *Kentucky's Early Childhood Quality Self-Study* is to provide the details to help the user recognize and create a program environment in which all who participate are safe, comfortable, and enriched by the time spent there.

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<i>Standard 2.1: The physical facility provides a well-lit, well-maintained, safe space large enough for children to engage in developmentally appropriate activities.</i>						
INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.1.1	The facility is maintained for the safety and well-being of children and adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General maintenance of the building, roof, plumbing and electricity occurs. Materials and equipment are checked daily for loose bolts, splinters and loose materials. 				
2.1.2	Space for play is clutter free.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infants and Toddlers have space to move freely exclusive of cribs and routine care furnishings. All furnishings on which infants or toddlers may pull up to stand is sturdy and will not fall over. 				
2.1.3	The facility including all indoor and outdoor space is smoke free.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No smoking signs are posted inside/outside. The policy is stated in the policy and procedures for staff and families. 				
2.1.4	Exposed electrical cords and outlets are covered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cords are out of sight and reach of children. Unused outlets have plug covers. 				
2.1.5	Natural and artificial light are sufficient for each activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest areas such as books, science and nature have natural lighting. Sleeping area for the infant classroom can be dimmed or darkened for nappers, while awake infants can play in brighter lights. Controls for natural and artificial light are located within the classroom. 				
2.1.6	Individual classrooms contain windows where children can easily view the outdoors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windows are at child eye level. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET	
2.1.7 Facility and classroom entry/exits are controlled for the safety of all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A system is in a place to control/monitor entry and exit, e.g., a buzzer or bell sounds each time the classroom door is opened, card entry locks and/or security system exist for exterior doors. 				
2.1.8 There are two exits from each classroom and each building location utilized by children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Door handles are operable with limited use of hands. There is at least one door and one operable window within each classroom. Windows to be used for fire exits are inside classroom space. 				
2.1.9 Thermostat and control of windows is located within individual classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A temperature of 65°F-75°F is maintained during winter months. A temperature of 68°F-82°F is maintained during summer months. Space heaters and/or electric floor fans are never used. 				

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<i>Standard 2.2: The indoor learning environment is safe and arranged to facilitate healthy, active learning by all children.</i>						
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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.2.1	All areas of the room can be observed by an adult at any given time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff can see over dividers that separate the classroom space. • The diapering area is situated so that adults are able to view all children in care. 				
2.2.2	At least five (5) concept learning centers are clearly defined and are available to children on a daily basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check all presently used in the room: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Blocks/Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Computer <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic Play/Theatre <input type="checkbox"/> Gross Motor (active physical play) <input type="checkbox"/> Language/Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Books (language/reading) <input type="checkbox"/> Games and Puzzles/fine motor (hand toys, table games) <input type="checkbox"/> Music/Movement/Listening <input type="checkbox"/> Science/Nature (Discovery) <input type="checkbox"/> Sand and Water /Sensory table <input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking <input type="checkbox"/> Other 				
2.2.3	Area furnishings and materials are labeled with words and pictures easily understood by children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labels may include magazine pictures or photos of the toys, outlines of shapes and words accompanying each. • Labels are specific to the developmental level of children served and languages represented. 				

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2.2.4	There are clear pathways to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and crutches as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic patterns of the classroom allow mobility devices used to easily clear shelving and equipment. 				
2.2.5	Noisy centers, such as blocks, are separated from quiet areas, such as library or book corner or sleep area by using physical space and/or furnishings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical space and/or shelving separates noisy areas (dramatic play/theater) from quiet areas (books). 				
2.2.6	Noisy centers contain some sound cushioning materials, such as carpets or rugs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound absorbing material include cloth, cork boards, wall hangings, bean bags chairs, soft furnishings, carpet, etc. 				
2.2.7	There are some quiet and cozy areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas which contain cushions, pillows, or beanbags that can be easily washed or sanitized are available to children on a daily basis. 				
2.2.8	There are quiet spaces accessible at all times for a child to be alone, if (s)he chooses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clearly defined space with soft materials is available to children. Infants and toddlers are not placed in cribs to play or in play saucers for more than 5 minutes to play. 				
2.2.9	Space is available for children and adults to gather comfortably in a group for singing and movement activities story reading, and other group activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large group (circle time) area has a designated space and the children know where it is. Space can have dual use when large group activity is finished. Large group activities may take place in the block area or other area needing limited movement of furnishings. 				

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2.2.10 All equipment, furnishings and materials used by children are appropriately sized, individually appropriate and include adaptations for inclusion of children with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s feet rest on the floor when seated. Children’s knees should be able to fit under tables and elbows above the table. 				
2.2.11 Appropriate equipment is provided for all children including those with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate adaptive equipment chairs, bolsters, etc. are provided for children with physical disabilities. 				
2.2.12 All teacher only materials are stored neatly, out of reach and view of children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has accessible cabinets or high shelves that are inaccessible to children. Designated teacher only supplies are stored out of sight and reach of children. 				
2.2.13 All furnishings in children’s play space are used with and by children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no adult desks located in the play space. 				
2.2.14 Individual cubbies at children’s height are used for storing clothing and personal possessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coat hooks are spaced so that coats do not touch each other. Cubbies are labeled with name. 				

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2.2.15	All learning materials not in use are stored in organized spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games and/or toys used for rotation purposes are stored on high shelf or behind closed doors. 				
2.2.16	Play spaces, play equipment, and materials are accessible to all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sand and water table is raised to accommodate wheel chair, etc. Child using special chair can sit at table with other children. 				
2.2.17	By making accommodations, adapting activities, and using other strategies all children are integrated socially into the life of the program and are able to participate in all activities in the indoor environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity plans include adaptations for any children who may need to participate in different ways. Adult assistance is available to children who may need such assistance. Assistive technology is used. 				
2.2.18	In settings where rest is part of the schedule, mats/cots are stored for easy access (inside classroom space).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff do not have to leave classroom to retrieve mats or cots for nap time, if leaving causes adult: child ratio to fall below acceptable levels. 				
2.2.19	In setting where rest is part of the schedule, children’s bedding is kept separated from other children’s bedding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All bedding should be stored in such a manner that discourages cross contamination – bedding does not touch other bedding. Bedding is cleaned weekly or as needed. Bedding is labeled with each child’s name. 				

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2.2.20	In settings where rest is part of the schedule, mats, cribs, and cots are spaced at least 3 feet apart for napping unless separated by a solid non-porous barrier.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portable equipment such as pak n’ play should not be used for sleeping. Children should not be left to sleep in swings, bucket seat carriers, or anything other than a safe crib. 				
2.2.21	There is at least one crib on wheels located in each infant room.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate wheeled crib shall be used in case of emergency (fire). Evacuation crib is labeled. 				
2.2.22	Children’s art work and project materials are attractively displayed and exhibited at a level where <u>all</u> children can easily view those materials and are changed regularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s art work is displayed at child eye-level and in a safe manner e.g., no push pins or tacks. Children participate in selection of their work being displayed. Art work of infants and toddlers is displayed and protected from destruction by plexi-glass, lamination or in some other safe way. 				
2.2.23	An awareness of diversity among individuals in terms of gender, culture, race, family structure and job roles is reflected in other materials such as posters or pictures, regardless of group composition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Props representing diversity are included in various learning centers (i.e., different races of dolls in dramatic play, play people with varying abilities in blocks area, non-sexist role posters/pictures). 				

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2.2.24	Displays are balanced with blank wall space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered and uncovered wall space is maintained according to fire code. 				
2.2.25	Children's work predominates. Teacher-created displays are limited and relate to topics of current interest or focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual, creative art (use of multiple mediums) done by children is attractively displayed. There is limited use of teacher-directed projects that use a model, or pre-cut, pre-designed pieces or patterns. 				

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<i>Standard 2.3: Learning centers provide hands-on activities with real materials.</i>						
INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.3.1	A range of tasks of varying difficulty is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All interest centers provide materials of varying difficulty, e.g., pegged puzzles and flat puzzles, 4 piece and 15 piece puzzles. 				
2.3.2	On a weekly basis, staff rotate 3-5 materials in each center that promote discovery and problem solving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Base materials including but not limited to blocks, dramatic play, science/nature, and fine motor art supplies remain in place. Rotation decisions are made after considering whether ample time was allowed for children’s skill practice and mastery. 				
2.3.3	A balance of realistic and pretend toy materials are available in learning center areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A realistic child-size hammer is used rather than a plastic hammer. Realistic materials might include real pots and pans with lids, a tree stump with hammer and roofing nails, and real food packages. 				
2.3.4	Additional materials are added to centers to reinforce concepts introduced during class activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When using thematic, standards-based units or other curriculums, materials are added to interest centers to reflect and enhance children’s experiences with the themes, e.g., a farm unit is extended with the use of pretend and real materials in and out doors, cooking experiences, etc. 				
2.3.5	Each learning center contains materials that represent and/or promote cultural diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials in interest centers reflect at least one of the following: age variations, ability variations, non-traditional gender roles, race or culture variations. The above diversity is reflected in each of the following: pictures and photos displayed, books, puzzles, games, dolls, play people, puppets, music tapes/CDs, videos and computer software, art materials, clothing for dress up, house center cooking utensils and pretend food, musical instruments, and building materials. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET	
2.3.6	Children are allowed to use materials from one center to continue and expand their play in another center, as long as the materials are used in a safe manner and are returned when the child is finished.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wrench from the construction center may be used to “fix” something in the dramatic play area. 			
2.3.7	Age-appropriate risk taking is supported by program adults while simultaneously using safe boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sized safety goggles are worn while using real tools in the construction center. • Toddlers trying large motor skills and activities with physical and verbal cues are supported. 			

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<i>Standard 2.4: A sufficient quantity of appropriately-sized furniture in good repair is provided for routine care and play.</i>						
INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.4.1	All furniture is sturdy and in good repair and meets safety regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All legs on tables and chairs are sturdy. All doors and/or drawers are sturdy. 				
2.4.2	All seating is incorporated into the learning centers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no individual school desks in use by children. Small group tables accommodating 2 – 6 children are used and placed in interest areas. Tables are available to accommodate children with disabilities to play along side their peers. 				
2.4.3	Each child has an assigned “cubby” labeled with words and pictures for storing personal belongings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space allows room for “take home” materials as well as seasonal clothing as needed. Appropriate child sized furniture allows children’s feet to touch floor or support bar. Appropriate adaptive seating is available for children with disabilities to work or eat along side their peers. 				
2.4.4	There are enough child-sized chairs and tables to seat all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seating for infant and toddler could also include high chairs. 				
2.4.5	There are sufficient low shelves so that learning materials are stored uncluttered and accessible to all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelves contain labeled, see through bins into which materials are sorted. 				
2.4.6	Adult chairs are provided to ensure children’s needs are met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rocking chairs are available for rocking babies. Adult chairs close to cribs are available. 				

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<i>Standard 2.5: The use of passive media (TV, computer and/or video) is limited and is used only as curriculum enhancement.</i>						
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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.5.1	Passive media, TV, video, and/or computer software is limited to materials considered “good for children” and related to current units of instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All videos are rated G and are non-violent. TV/computer software encourages active involvement. Videos or computer software NOT meant for child viewing are not stored within view or reach of children. 				
2.5.2	Passive media material has been previewed by adults prior to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff knows the content of passive media material available for children’s use. Staff have specific objectives in using passive media related to child outcomes. 				
2.5.3	Alternative activities are always available/accessible during use of passive media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one other learning center is accessible during times that TV/video is used. Children are not required to participate in TV/video/ computer use. 				
2.5.4	Staff are actively involved with children to help children develop critical thinking skills whenever passive media is used during program time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff interact with children during the use of passive media asking questions to extend their involvement. Room arrangement and staff support children working together collaboratively. 				
2.5.5	Passive media is used as an infrequent event, rather than as a regular part of daily routines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TV/videos are used only occasionally to enhance themes, not as a routine “filler” or as background. Schedules and daily routines do not include TV/videos as part of program. 				
2.5.6	Computer software encourages creativity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drawing, painting, problem-solving are a part of the computer program. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET	
2.5.7 Time for TV/video viewing is limited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TV and video viewing is linked to written objectives and lessons plans for child learning Strategically planned viewing does not exceed 30 minutes. 				
2.5.8 TV/video/computer viewing as a planned activity is not used with children under age 3.					

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<i>Standard 2.6: Safe, well planned space is provided outdoors for physical activities appropriate for young children.</i>						
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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.6.1	Outdoor play space is provided for infants /toddlers and preschoolers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space and equipment for infants and toddlers is provided separate from that of older children. 				
2.6.2	Outdoor play space is checked for hazards daily, prior to children’s use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trash and other potential hazards are picked up and discarded in proper receptacles. A safety checklist is used. Metal and plastic equipment is checked for proper temperature before children use outdoor play space. 				
2.6.3	Program uses research resources for current guidelines on playground surfaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines are followed regarding type and depth. Sources include the U.S. Consumer Product safety Commission. Consideration for choice of cushioning materials includes safe use of climbing structure and wheeled toys. 				
2.6.4	Cushioning material is maintained to insure appropriate depth at all times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surfacing must be raked daily to insure appropriate depth of cushioning, particularly under equipment fall zones such as the bottom of slides or under swings. A rake must be available. 				
2.6.5	The outdoor area is surrounded by a safety fence at least four feet high with a working gate that locks and is wheelchair accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fencing should have vertical slats, if slats are used, rather than horizontal. Fencing should not have sharp points on top, splinters, or other protruding hazards. 				
2.6.6	Children do not walk through roads, drives, parking lots or other hazardous areas to reach the playground.					

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2.6.7	There is sufficient space for various activities such as climbing, running, throwing/catching, and using wheel toys in outdoor play space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities take place on a variety of hard, soft, and malleable surfaces that do not intersect or interfere with each other. • One large surface may contain both vehicle play and other play. • Basketball goal surface has sufficient space without interfering with wheeled toy space. • Equipment is placed 12’ apart. 				
2.6.8	Riding toys, such as tricycles, wagons, etc. are available with an accompanying appropriate hard surface for riding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tricycles, wagons, etc., of various sizes are available to meet individual needs. • Some riding toys are adapted for children with disabilities. • Safety helmets are available. 				
2.6.9	Hard surfaces have indicators for traffic flow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painted arrows or other indicator are used to show direction of traffic flow. 				
2.6.10	Playground is accessible to all children regardless of ability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground has accessible entry and exit. • Playground has accessible equipment for children with disabilities and play ground surface is wheelchair accessible. 				
2.6.11	Classroom has direct access to playground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct access refers to a doorway in the classroom leading to the playground. • A desirable goal is for children to be able to walk directly to outdoor play. 				
2.6.12	Outdoor gross motor space has a variety of surfaces permitting different types of play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are able to experience the use and feel of sand, blacktop, woodchips, etc. 				

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2.6.13 Outdoor area has some protection from the elements year round.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some shade is available. • Some protection from precipitation is possible. Trees do not count as protection if they lose their leaves in winter months. 				
2.6.14 Age-appropriate climbing equipment has written documentation that equipment meets Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines and ASTM 1292 standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written standards are available and are used to determine whether guidelines are met. • Infants and toddlers play outdoors in spaces designed for their use. 				
2.6.15 Landscaping is safe and non-toxic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only non-poisonous plants and shrubs are used in landscape. • Poisonous and toxic insecticide and herbicides are eliminated from play areas. • Tree limbs are trimmed to a height of 7 feet. 				
2.6.16 Toilet facilities are adjacent to the playground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child using these facilities does so within sight and sound of staff. 				
2.6.17 Storage facilities are available near play space to house outdoor equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage facilities are off limits as child play space. • Storage facilities are checked regularly for moisture, insects, etc. for safe storage of equipment. 				
2.6.18 Sand and water play areas are covered and protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When not in use by children the covers are in place. 				

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<i>Standard 2.7: The outdoor environment is an extension of the classroom where instructional activities occur daily.</i>						
INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.7.1	Age appropriate sensory materials such as sand, water, bird seed or gravel are available outdoors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infants and toddlers have access to sand and water, but not to gravel and birdseed. 				
2.7.2	Teachers use the outdoor classroom to introduce and conduct experiences that address the domains or content areas of the <i>Kentucky Early Childhood Standards</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults assist children in learning about and respecting plant life, animal life, insects, birds, and other living things in the child’s environment. Adults assist children in noticing aspects of nature such as weather, rocks, soil conditions, and sounds and smells in the outdoors. Infants and toddlers have direct access to outdoor experiences and surfaces and children are not confined to buggies or playpens. Buggy rides do not count as outdoor play. 				
2.7.3	Teachers use outdoor activities to conduct experiences in art, movement, dramatic play and literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Props for dramatic play outdoors, art materials, printed signs, large blocks, and other materials or activities are offered as choices for outdoor play. Infants and toddlers have age appropriate toys and materials to enhance outdoor play. 				
2.7.4	Adults are actively engaged with children outdoors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults do not use outdoor time as “break” time. Teachers are in close proximity to children and extend children’s play as needed to promote learning and participation. Adult: child ratios are maintained. 				
2.7.5	Children play outdoors daily when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside play takes place when weather is at or above 15° wind chill or the heat index is at or below 90° as identified by the National Weather Service. Children’s clothing is adjusted to the weather conditions and attention is given to sun protection. 				

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Standard 2.8: Staff promote a positive climate for learning and help children learn how to establish positive, constructive relationships with adults and other children.

INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET	
2.8.1 Adults’ communication with children shows respect for the child as a person, including non-verbal children or children whose home language is not English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults listen attentively, make eye-contact, treat children fairly, and do not discriminate. Adults put forth good effort in learning appropriate language (e.g., sign language, daily routine words in child’s first language) for communication. 				
2.8.2 Adults use non-verbal cues such as smiling and appropriate physical contact to nurture children’s emotional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult interactions with children are responsive to each child’s moods and needs (soothing tired child, reassuring frightened child, active with playful child). 				
2.8.3 Children and parents are greeted individually upon arrival and prior to departure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are greeted by names; parents are acknowledged in positive manner as well as being greeted by their names. Arrival and departure used as time to exchange information about the child’s day. 				
2.8.4 Parent or person responsible for the child at pickup is acknowledged prior to departure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff let responsible person know they are aware that the child is leaving and verifies their identity and permission to pickup. 				
2.8.5 Staff provide comfort and privacy for children as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those who are frightened or upset upon arrival or transition and/or those who have toileting accidents are comforted. 				
2.8.6 Staff consistently set clear limits and intervene to enforce consistent consequences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff follow through on classroom rules that are set with logical and natural consequences and congruent with child’s development level. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.8.7	Staff talk to the children frequently throughout the day, during both routines and play using conversation, open-ended questions and leading statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff talk with each child throughout the day including during diapering/toileting routines, meal times and during free play. Quality of the talk focuses on emerging language skills and provides expanded vocabulary, elaboration, etc. 				
2.8.8	Communication promotes professional and respectful relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative staff model respectful interactions. Administrative staff asks staff for input, listens, and makes staff aware of information. Staff show respect by sharing tasks for “greater good”. 				
2.8.9	Staff communication with parents promotes a caring community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing times at arrival/pick-up or conferences is respectful. 				
2.8.10	Staff maintain on-going communication and cooperation between teachers and administration at different programs to ensure the successful transitioning of all children including those with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff communicate with the next learning environment staff in order to prepare child for the transition with respect for confidentiality and sensitivity for family issues. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET	
2.8.11 Staff actively involve children in solving their own problems and conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff observe interactions of children and allow time for children to resolve conflict appropriately when possible. Staff provide children necessary tools for their developmental level (e.g., phrasing, compromise suggestions) for successful conflict resolutions. 				
2.8.12 Staff explain children’s actions, intentions, and feelings to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff label a child’s behavior not the child as inappropriate, – i.e., “hitting hurts”, “our rules are to keep our hands and feet to ourselves”, instead of, “only bad children hit.” Children are treated with respect and not humiliated. 				

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<i>Standard 2.9: Adults promote a climate for a positive social environment by employing strategies that allow children to be successful and recognize children’s attempts at socially acceptable behavior.</i>						
INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.9.1	Adults frequently use positive or non-judgmental comments instead of general praise when referring to children’s activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I see you are using lots of yellow in your picture,” instead of “What a pretty picture.” 				
2.9.2	Program is set up to avoid conflict and promote age-appropriate interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment and materials engage children’s interest and curiosity. Multiples of toys are available in infant/toddler rooms. 				
2.9.3	Staff redirect competitive activities initiated by children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child challenges, “I’ll be first to the fence.” Staff says, “Let’s all run to the fence together.” Staff limit competitive games and activities or use non-competitive games and activities only. 				
2.9.4	Staff meet the needs of individual children to encourage participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff give short, simple directions using words children understand. Activities planned and materials available invite children’s participation. 				
2.9.5	Adults give choices only when choices exist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Let’s all go to the door to go inside,” instead of, “Let’s go inside, ok?” 				
2.9.6	Attention is frequently given when children are behaving well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “You know how to be a friend. I saw you hand Sarah the glue stick.” 				
2.9.7	Staff use positive discipline methods effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of redirection is accompanied with follow-up observation and support of child. Teachers make guidance strategies based on child’s temperament, knowledge and behavior. 				

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INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.9.8	Time out is rarely used and NEVER used with children at a developmental age less than 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time out is not used as a substitute for redirecting, problem solving or as the preferred guidance approach. 				
2.9.9	If used by staff, time-out is brief, always paired with problem-solving and with teaching the child the appropriate behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking briefly with a child about what happened is essential. A child should only be in time out to gain control. Time-out should be a last and seldom used strategy in teachers’ techniques. 				
2.9.10	Upon completion of removal from group (time-out), staff help children to successfully re-enter the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Would you like to join Sarah in the science center or stay with me and read a book?” 				
2.9.11	Children with physical disabilities and/or special learning needs are included in the classroom socially and intellectually as well as physically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child with a wheelchair is able to successfully participate in movement or gross motor activity. Child with attention difficulty is placed next to staff in group activity and is reinforced for appropriate participation. Most therapy activities are conducted inside the classroom within sight and sound of regular staff. 				
2.9.12	Staff plan activities to ensure social success across all developmental and ability levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child with visual impairment is included in play activities with same age peers. Child with leg braces is included in outdoor play activities. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET	
2.9.13 Adults listen to each child to determine if stress is occurring in the child's life, which might be responsible for inappropriate behaviors, and staff intervenes when appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are appropriately trained to recognize signs of child stress. Training includes information on appropriate adult responses and referral sources when appropriate. Staff discuss with families any concerns about children's interactions. 				
2.9.14 Children have opportunities to make choices in activity selection and other daily routines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child decides what learning center to play in and when (s)he needs to take care of personal needs (toileting). 				
2.9.15 Relaxing sensory and expressive activities are provided to help children deal with stress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play doh, water/sand table, or sensory experiences are accessible daily. Storybooks that help children understand difficult themes are available for use with children. 				
2.9.16 Staff provide ample opportunities for children to plan and select many of their own activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child decides what learning center to play in and is encouraged to explore other learning centers. Children are not "rotated" in centers by timed amounts. Large blocks of uninterrupted time are available for child choice in learning centers. Adults are involved when children need activity direction or help in focusing. 				

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Standard 2.10: Personal self-care activities are promoted by appropriate facilities, materials and curriculum.

INDICATOR	EXAMPLE (What the indicator may look like in practice.)	CONTINUUM			ACTION PLAN (Use this space to record your plan to meet desired indicators or to note Program Evidence of those FULLY MET.)	
		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.10.1	Daily schedule includes time and opportunity to practice self-help skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time is sufficient at transition points; arrival/departure, snack/meal time, rest time, etc. for children to “do for themselves” and receive assistance as needed. 				
2.10.2	Warm running water, soap, and individual paper towels or automatic hand dryer are utilized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All materials for hand washing can be reached by the children. Hand sanitizer is not used as a substitute for hand washing. 				
2.10.3	A private area is accessible for changing diapers and is sanitized after each use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The diaper changing area is located out of traffic pattern and play space and situated such that visual supervision of the classroom is possible. 				
2.10.4	The diaper changing table is located in a private area within each classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private area must allow for supervision of other children if only one teacher is in classroom. 				
2.10.5	The diaper changing table is convenient to use for both children and adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The changing table is at a height between 28” and 32” for adults and for toddlers and older children have available convenient locking steps. 				
2.10.6	Changing tables are equipped with railings or barriers that extend at least 6” above the changing surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing pads with sides at least 6 inches high may be used. 				
2.10.7	Bathrooms and toilets are sanitized daily.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A solution of bleach and water that is made fresh daily or a hospital quality disinfectant that is safe to use around young children is used for sanitizing. 				

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		NOT MET	IN PROCESS	FULLY MET		
2.10.8 Non-porous gloves are accessible for adult use in situations where adults are exposed to any body fluids.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloves are worn at any time staff encounter any type of body fluid including but not limited to blood, mucous, saliva, urine, feces, vomit, etc. Staff take precautions not to contaminate any other surfaces with soiled gloves. Gloves are disposed of in covered lined containers after each use. Appropriate diapering techniques are used as defined in “Caring for Our Children”. 					
2.10.9 Toileting facilities are located within the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children do not have to leave classroom to use toilet facilities. 					
2.10.10 Toileting facilities are adapted to the child’s size and/or ability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toilets are low so that children’s feet can touch the floor. 					
2.10.11 Child-sized sinks are accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children can use sink area without the addition of steps or a stool. 					
2.10.12 Hand washing sinks in room are provided within arms reach of the caregiver to diaper changing tables and toilets, and are separate from sink used for food related purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand washing sinks adjacent to diapering area is not used for food related purposes. 					