

# **CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MEMPHIS**

## **PreK – K Practical Life Academic Content Standards and Indicators with Educator Support**

### **FORWARD**

The mission statement of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Memphis is:

The Catholic Diocese of Memphis, Tennessee, System of Catholic Schools is committed to quality education in the spirit of Christ in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Working in partnership with parents and families, we are dedicated to providing a safe and nurturing environment while preparing our students for the future through spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and moral formation.

The above mission statement requires that each school provide relevant, meaningful, and quality instruction, not only in the Catholic religion, but also in all academic subjects.

In promoting the implementation of the mission statement, the Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Sr. Angela T. Lydon, SBS, PhD, researched current trends in education and developed a curricular process and plan to involve principals and teachers.

A volunteer committee of principals was formed to establish curricular parameters. Utilizing the research of professional educational organizations, the committee agreed on the following curricular guidelines. The curriculum would be: systemic, Gospel-based, standards-based, flexible, usable, and adaptable to the needs of individual schools. The principal's committee also suggested the adoption of academic content standards and indicators for all grade levels, PreK – 12. We are sincerely grateful to the following principals for the initial input:

**Kathy Brooks, Richard Bush, Sr. Trudy Foster, Gail Fox, Denise Mason, Sr. Noelita McDermott, Darren Mullis, Richard Orians, Barbara Pettit, Jim Pohlman, Sr. Lynn Marie Ralph, Br. Mark Snodgrass, Karen Stimart, George Valadie, and Patricia Wyckoff.**

Throughout the 2004-2005 academic school year, curriculum meetings were held at each school. The sessions detailed what curriculum is, how curriculum is developed, what process would be used, and general information about contemporary objectives in curriculum. Soliciting input was foundational to the meeting structure. All were encouraged to volunteer for the initial core committee that would develop the curriculum during the summer.

The next step in the process was to choose the standards and indicators best suited to our needs. The standards and indicators developed by the State of Ohio for its PreK – 12 schools were selected. The Ohio State Academic Content Standards are coherent and rigorous. They provide a set of clear expectations for students and teachers and they are user-friendly for parents and others. The standards and indicators delineate expectations at each grade level and facilitate the integration of subjects during instruction. Even further, standards and indicators promote educational equity and opportunity for all students.

Developing a systemic curriculum is an enormous undertaking and requires the commitment, hard work, and dedication of skilled professionals who possess a strong knowledge-base in multiple disciplines. The present curriculum document is testimony to this reality and affirms the dedication of the Catholic school educators who gave freely of their time to align the standards, organizers, and grade-level indicators with realistic classroom instructional modes. We extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the dedicated

educators of the Diocese of Memphis who gave of their time, energy, and expertise to undertake this curriculum project. We cannot thank them enough.

They are:

**Jean Rae Bowers, Catherine Mary Brickhill, Alicia A. Brown, Maureen Conley, Sandra S. M. Dawkins, Sr. Judy Franz, SBS, Nancy Gronostaj, Teddi Niedzwiedz, Linda D. Padawer, Barbara Pettit, Susan S. Powell, Jennifer Styers, and Lou Tansey.**

We also wish to thank **St. Benedict High School and Christian Brothers High School** for their assistance in helping us complete this project. They willingly shared expertise and resources with us. For their gracious and generous help, we are greatly indebted.

In August of 2005, elementary and middle schools received draft copies of the PreK – 8 language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science curricula. Grade-level meetings at each school were held in September and October. The purpose of these meetings was to explain the curricular format, answer any questions, and solicit input from the teachers and principals. A process for teacher and principal input to take place in the spring of 2006 was developed at these meetings.

During the 2005-2006 academic school year, a process for developing a standards-based curriculum for the high schools was formulated. High school chairpersons and teachers met to structure and plan a standards-based curriculum for required courses. At present, a draft curriculum has been formulated and will be used during the 2006-2007 academic school year. Input and evaluation will be ongoing as part of the process. We are most grateful for the hard work and dedication of the high school teachers and thank each of them. We thank especially the following chairpersons:

**Adrien Alsobrook, Betsy Baker, Sr. Mary Louis Baltz, OP, Cornelius Barnes, Sr. Mary Brigid Burnham, OP, Wesley Corzine, Annette Dabaldo, Jack Grannin, Eileen Huey, John Juniker, Frank Maranise, Loretta McGrail, Patsy Rush, Sam Sharpe, and Peggy Steffan.**

The curriculum project of the Diocese of Memphis is truly in its beginning stages. More meetings will occur and more committees will be rallied. The ultimate goal of the project is to provide systemic academic content standards in all major areas of learning -- religion, math, language arts, science, social studies, technology, foreign language, speech, art, music, library and physical education. Agreed upon standards, organizers, and indicators guiding standards-based teaching plans and outcome reporting will change how we deliver instruction and how we assess learning.

As a living document, the curriculum of the Diocese of Memphis will continue to develop and evolve. Above all, it will challenge educators to rethink curriculum and more appropriately meet the needs of the community of children and families we serve in the Diocese of Memphis.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The following is general information which may be helpful in understanding our curriculum and the terminology used.

**Standards** are general statements of content that all students should know in order to be considered literate in a discipline or subject. (In our curriculum document, the standards are in bold print and numbered in Roman Numerals)

**Organizers** categorize the standards; they break down the standards into smaller subgroups. (In our curriculum document, organizers are italicized)

**Indicators** are grade-level specific statements of knowledge that all students should demonstrate at their particular grade level. Indicators serve as checkpoints; they monitor progress for each grade level. (In our curriculum document, the indicators are numbered in Hindu-Arabic numbers)

**The standards for Language Arts, mathematics, social studies and science are listed below.**

**Language Arts has 10 standards; Mathematics has 6 standards; Social Studies has 7 standards; Science has 6 standards; and Practical Life has 5 standards.**

### LANGAUGE ARTS STANDARDS

Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition, & Fluency

Acquisition of Vocabulary

Reading Process: Concepts in Print, Comprehension Strategies, & Self-Monitoring Strategies

Reading Application: Informational, Technical, & Persuasive Text  
Reading Application: Literary Text  
Writing Process  
Writing Application  
Writing Convention  
Research  
Communication: Oral & Visual

## **MATH**

Number, Number Sense, and Operations  
Measurement  
Geometry and Spatial Sense  
Patterns, Functions, and Algebra  
Data Analysis and Probability

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

History  
People in Society  
Geography  
Economics  
Government  
Citizenship Rights  
Social Studies Skills & Methods

## **SCIENCE**

Earth & Space Science  
Life Science  
Physical Science  
Science and Technology  
Scientific Inquiry  
Scientific Ways of Knowing

## **PRACTICAL LIFE**

Social Development

Emotional Development

Self-Help Skills

Motor Skills

Computer Skills

## **CONTENT STANDARDS**

The early learning content standards for the Catholic Diocese of Memphis describe essential concepts and skills for young children to learn and do in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and practical life. These standards and indicators serve as a framework for designing and implementing meaningful curricula and intentional learning experiences within all preschool and child care settings. Based on research, these achievable indicators serve as checkpoints for the specific knowledge, understandings and skills children can demonstrate as a result of their learning at the end of the preschool years. Therefore, educators must understand the range and scope of content represented by the indicators.

The **design of these standards is a continuum** from which 3-year-old and 4-year-old preschool educators can implement curricula – taking into account the wide variability of children’s learning experiences, pace of learning, learning styles, knowledge, etc. – **to meet the needs of all preschool children no matter where they fall on the continuum.** The 3-year-old educator must start with a very basic interpretation of the indicators which sometimes involves no more than exposure or introduction to a concept. Thus, a firm foundation is formed on which the educator can then build as the children’s knowledge grows. The 4-year-old educator adds detail and complexity to building children’s knowledge as a higher level of interpretation of the indicators is explored in the curriculum. Through varied learning experiences and opportunities, educators support individual children’s construction of conceptual knowledge and skills along their developmental path of learning from the point of entry into the content toward the point of performance levels in the indicators.

It is essential for any successful preschool program that 3-year-old and 4-year-old educators work together in an effort to create a comprehensive and fluid curriculum from the standards. The purpose of this document is to assist early childhood educators in the

design and implementation of meaningful curricula and intentional early learning experiences and practices aligned to standards based indicators. The list of strategies and ideas to support young learners is not comprehensive but serves as a starting point for thoughtful curriculum design and teaching practices.

Example of continuum:

1. Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency Standard.

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

- ❖ Identify matching sounds and recognize rhymes in familiar stories, poems, songs, and words.
  
- ❖ Explore rhyming words by making up silly, simple rhyming songs.
  
- ❖ Read The Cat in the Hat - introduce cat and hat as words that rhyme.
  
- ❖ Give children a word and see if they can come up with a rhyme.
  
- ❖ Identify rhyming words in a read-out-loud story.

## Practical Life Standards for PreK 3, PreK 4, and K

The Learner Will	The Educator May Support the Learner
<p><b><u>I. Social Development</u></b></p> <p><i>Manners</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate appropriate use of manner phrases in social situations, such as please, thank you, excuse me, etc.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate appropriate phone etiquette.</li> <li>3. Learn to play cooperatively and share toys, etc.</li> <li>4. Learn to take turns without supervision.</li> </ol> <p><i>Behavior Management</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Demonstrate respect for property, others, and self.</li> <li>6. Begin to have an awareness of right and wrong behavior.</li> <li>7. Learn to follow directions and rules.</li> <li>8. Exhibit discipline of self by controlling behavior and taking responsibility for personal business and actions.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>II. Emotional Development</u></b></p> <p><i>Emotions</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore different emotions, such as happy, sad, frustrated, embarrassed, etc.</li> <li>2. Be aware of others' emotions by facial expressions and actions.</li> <li>3. Be able appropriately to express emotions.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>III. Self-Help Skills</u></b></p> <p><i>Table Etiquette</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn appropriate behavior for sitting down to eat, such as setting the table, using a napkin, etc.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read, sing, and role-play with children.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for dramatic play and puppeteering.</li> <li>• Encourage children to use polite words during cooperative play activities, such as games, centers, outdoor play, etc. and throughout the day.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for role-playing and dramatic play.</li> <li>• Incorporate rules and expectations into the daily classroom routine.</li> <li>• Make it possible for children to be able to put up their own backpacks, jackets, etc.</li> <li>• Allow children to clean up their own messes, whether they are materials during center time or spills at lunch.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have children practice expressing emotions.</li> <li>• Provide an opportunity for children to role-play.</li> <li>• Read books to children about emotions.</li> <li>• Point out the pictures in books and ask children how they think the characters are feeling based upon the pictures.</li> <li>• Engage children in games that involve guessing or matching emotions.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow opportunities for dramatic play using a restaurant or tea party theme.</li> <li>• Take a field trip to a restaurant.</li> <li>• Practice proper etiquette everyday at snack and lunch.</li> </ul>

*Safety Skills*

2. Learn the appropriate action to take during an emergency.
3. Identify safety signs, such as stop, etc.
4. Learn environmental and personal boundaries.
5. Exercise personal safety.

*Self-Reliance Skills*

6. Demonstrate good health habits by using appropriate personal hygiene.
7. Learn how to dress self.

*Personal Data*

8. Identify personal information.
  - a. full name
  - b. address
  - c. phone number
  - d. birthday
  - e. age

**IV. Motor Skills**

*Gross Motor*

1. Use large muscles, such as arms and legs to move.

- Conduct disaster drills –fire, tornado, earthquake.
- Practice stop, drop, and roll.
- Practice crossing the street or walking in the parking lot with adults. ing 911 on a play phone.
- Have guests in the classroom who deal with safety, such as police officers, firefighters, etc.
- Use safety signs as part of the environmental print in the classroom.

- Use songs to stress healthy habits.
- Use posters in the classroom that deal with health.
- Go over proper hand washing procedures and when to wash their hands, coughing and sneezing into hand, use a tissue to blow nose, etc.
- Practice with snaps, buttons, zippers, latches, tying shoelaces, etc.

- Name games, songs, labeling their spaces role-playing.
- Allow children to practice dialing their own phone number – create a classroom phone book to aid in finding and learning their own number.
- Use the child’s full name when calling the roll.
- Dismiss children from circle time, etc. using age, address, phone number, name and birthday.

- Practice rolling, throwing and catching a ball.
- Allow for outdoor and free play.
- Allow children to practice skipping, standing on one foot, jumping, hopping, running, etc.
- Children can build with big blocks.
- Have children use hula hoops, jump ropes, balance beams, parachutes, etc.

*Fine Motor*

2. Develop muscle control of hands and fingers for fine motor activities.

**V. Computer Skills**

*Basic Skills*

1. Learn to use a mouse and keyboard.
2. Learn to navigate age-appropriate computer games.
3. Identify the basic parts of the computer; mouse, CPU, monitor, keyboard, mouse pad.

- Incorporate dance into the curriculum.
- Use various manipulatives – Legos, Duplos, small blocks, stringing beads, lacing, Unifix cubes, puzzles, etc.
- Allow children opportunities to color, write, glue, and use scissors.
- Have activities with playdough, clay, sand, water, painting, etc.
- Use materials that allow children to practice buttoning, zipping, tying, latching, etc.
- Incorporate arts and crafts activities and opportunities to use musical instruments into lesson plans.
- Allow children to have access to computers in order to play age appropriate games.