



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

August 30, 2013

Dear Early Care and Education Community,

The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) is nearing final publication and dissemination of the new 2013 Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS). The document content has been finalized, and is now available online for immediate use within your program by visiting:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/EarlyLearningStandards.aspx>. A suggested process for transitioning to the new standards has also been created and is included along with this letter.

These newly revised standards now address learning goals for Infants, Toddlers, and Dual Language Learners. In addition, the standards document now incorporates the latest research on what children should know and be able to do along this Birth to 5 developmental continuum.

RIDE anticipates the RIELDS Standards being printed and distributed within the next several weeks. Please stay tuned for additional communication from RIDE, in which we look forward to sharing the completed 2013 Standards document, poster and enhanced web resources.

I wish you a wonderful start to the school year and should you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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Transition to the 2013 Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards

We are pleased to present the new 2013 RI Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS). This guide will serve to support your transition from the previous 2003 Early Learning Standards to the new 2013 Standards.

What are the RI Early Learning and Development Standards?

The RI Early Learning and Development Standards provide developmental expectations and key early learning benchmarks for children from birth through to sixty months of age. The Standards are intended to provide guidance for families, teachers and early care administrators on what children should know and be able to do in the early years to best prepare RI's youngest children for kindergarten.

Why are we adopting new Standards?

Since the 2003 Early Learning Standards document was completed, the field has experienced dramatic scientific advances directly related to early development and learning, emphasizing the importance of the first 3 years of life. At the same time, Head Start and Early Head Start adopted new national standards, RI adopted the Common Core, and Rhode Island was awarded a Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant. All of these factors contributed to the need for updated standards.

What are the major differences between the 2003 and the 2013 Standards?

Aside from the look of the document, the most significant differences are that the standards now apply to infants and toddlers, as well as preschoolers; and that all domains were updated based on the latest research. In addition, the domain of Social Studies has been added so that there are now a total of 9 domains.

What resources are available to me to help implement the standards?

The state created many resources to support your transition to the new standards. In addition to the Standards document there is also a revised poster, technical paper and website where you can access and print information. There are also newly revised professional development offerings (RIELDS trainings).

What is the implementation timeline?

The standards are now available electronically. New RIELDS trainings are being offered beginning in September 2013, and registration is now open. Trainings will be offered on a rolling basis beginning the Fall with the **Foundations for RI Early Learning and Development Standards** course. In January 2014,

additional courses will be offered, including **Developing a Curriculum Framework** (Level 1), **Implementing a Standards-Based Classroom** (Level 2), and **Implementing a Standards-Based Program** (Level 3).

Where can I get a copy of the Standards?

The 2013 Standards are available online by visiting:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/EarlyLearningStandards.aspx>.

Paper copies are forthcoming and when available the Rhode Island Department of Education will be mailing one copy to every licensed program. Additional copies will be made available to training participants and online.

How can I obtain professional development on the standards?

Professional development opportunities are offered year around, for free, funded by the Rhode Island Department of Education. To view the training calendar or to register for a class please visit:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Workforce.aspx> or call the Professional Development Coordinator at (401) 222-2118 or by e-mailing Gloria.linakis@ride.ri.gov

What else should I do to support my transition to the new ELDS?

There are several things you can do to support your programs transition to the new standards. The Standards document has been aligned to other Race to the Top and Department of Education Initiatives. As a result, it would be helpful to update yourself on the new system alignments in addition to, re-assessing your curriculum alignment, and providing information to families about the transition to the new standards. Additional resources are in development which will further support this work, including curriculum alignments for pre-packaged curriculums, available early 2014, revised Fun Family Activity Cards and a Parent Guide to Standards Based Education, which will be released later this fall.

Where can I go to find additional information?

Additional information about the Rhode Island 2013 Early Learning and Development Standards can be found by visiting:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/EarlyLearningStandards.aspx>

To speak with a Rhode Island Department of Education staff member regarding the Standards please call (401) 222-8890 or e-mail Allison.Comport@ride.ri.gov