

Appendix A

Definitions

(A1) Definitions for Early Childhood Evaluation

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Definitions

Advanced Placement (AP): The AP program is an intensive program of college level curricula and examinations developed by the College Board that provides high school students with an opportunity to earn college credit at participating colleges and universities across the country. The AP program offers students an opportunity to develop their academic strengths through rigorous curricula and challenging national examinations and exposes them to academic experiences usually reserved for college students.

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS): CLASS is a classroom observation tool developed at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education. It aims to provide a common lens and language focused on classroom interactions that encourage student learning. The Pre-K CLASS tool organizes teacher-student interactions into three broad domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support.

Degrees of Reading Power (DRP): The Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) assessment DRP measures reading growth across time. This assessment was used at a countywide level through 2012-13, and is included in this report as part of the longitudinal analysis of outcomes for Pre-K students conducted by Hanover Research.

Developmental Math Assessment (DMA): The Developmental Math Assessment (DMA) assesses the number concepts, operations, geometry, and measurement and data and gives an individual account of each student's strengths and needs. The DMA is used with all VPI students as well as 4-year old special education Pre-K students. Given the specific teaching of mathematics in the Montessori program and three-year cycle, those students are not formally assessed until the kindergarten year when they take APS kindergarten math assessments.

High Scope¹: Beginning with the [Perry Preschool Study](#), HighScope revolutionized early childhood education with a new approach to teaching and learning. Research-based and child-focused, the HighScope curriculum uses a carefully designed process — called "active participatory learning" — to achieve powerful, positive outcomes.

International Baccalaureate (IB): International Baccalaureate (IB) is an academic program licensed by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) that, upon successful completion, results in the awarding of a high school degree. The curriculum emphasizes the importance of international awareness and responsible citizenship for students.

Montessori: The primary Montessori program in Arlington Public Schools is a multi-age preschool program based on the methodology and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. Students work independently and cooperatively in a structured environment which allows students to work at their own pace. Montessori teaching materials are designed to promote habits of concentration, initiative, persistence, and discovery, while the Montessori philosophy and community emphasizes respect for others, peace, and creativity.

¹ www.highscope.org

Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS): The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) provides a comprehensive assessment of young children’s knowledge of the important literacy fundamentals that are predictive of future reading success. PALS is the state-provided screening tool for Virginia’s Early Intervention Reading Initiative (EIRI) and is used by 99% of school divisions in Virginia on a voluntary basis.

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP): The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model is a research-based and validated model of sheltered instruction for English language learners. VPI and Special Education Pre-K teachers were required to participate in SIOP training offered by the Early Childhood Office during a three-year period from 2012-13 through 2014-15. Primary Montessori teachers were invited to participate as well; their participation was optional.

Special Education: The Pre-K special education program receives oversight from the Office of Special Education. The program serves children with disabilities aged two to four years old. There are a variety of programming options based on student’s needs and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Options include community-based resource services provided in a child’s private childcare or Pre-K program within Arlington, toddler programs, multi-intervention programs for students with autism, and non-categorical programs for students aged three to four years old. The programs for students aged three to four years old are aligned with the VPI curriculum. The goal of the Pre-K special education program is to help students meet their individualized IEP goals in identified developmental areas of delay.

Standards of Learning (SOLs)

The SOLs are the Virginia Board of Education's curriculum objectives that describe the commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement by subject for grades K–12.

Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive standards for Four-Year-Olds²: The Foundation Blocks is a document prepared by the Office of Humanities and Early Development in the Virginia Department of Education, which describes specific indicators for pre-kindergarten children in the content areas of literacy, mathematics, science, history and social science, physical and fine motor, personal and social development, art and music.

Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI): The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) is designed to follow the High Scope model. The VPI Pre-K program curriculum is based on Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds. The standards cover literacy, mathematics, science, history and social science, physical and motor development, and personal and social development. The VPI program has a strong focus on education, parent involvement, child health and social services, and transportation for families with four-year-olds at risk of school failure. The Foundation Blocks establish a measurable range of skills and knowledge essential for four-year-olds to be successful in kindergarten.

² www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/early_childhood/preschool_initiative/foundationblocks.pdf