

**PART 1**  
**Early Elementary Resource**  
**Guide to Integrated**  
**Learning**

Indicators of

**A Quality**  
**Early**  
**Elementary**  
**program**

This part of The Early Elementary Resource Guide to Integrated Learning focuses on some essential indicators that contribute to establishing a quality early elementary program. Teachers may use these indicators as a self-evaluation tool to determine if they are providing a developmentally appropriate program to meet the diverse needs of all students. This information will be helpful as teachers continue their efforts to improve the teaching and learning process.



## ***Indicators of a Quality Early Elementary Program***

The indicators listed below will help teachers improve the teaching and learning process to help students become more successful learners.

### ***Learning Environment***

#### **Emotional Climate**

- The atmosphere is free from pressure and constant hurry.
- Students feel valued.
- Students trust and respect adults and other classmates.
- Adults respect each other and each student.
- Students are helped to make friends and share ideas.
- Students are encouraged to express themselves through conversation and interacting with others.
- Teachers listen attentively to students and encourage them to listen to others.
- Students are given time to talk with adults on an individual basis or during group meetings.
- Parents are welcome as partners in the learning process.
- Adults acknowledge and reinforce positive student behavior.
- An appreciation for individual differences is modeled by adults and promoted by students.
- Students are encouraged to negotiate and problem solve with their peers to resolve their own conflicts.

#### **Physical Climate**

- Students' work is attractively displayed throughout the classroom and school building.
- Space is arranged to allow students to work alone or with other classmates.
- A special area is set aside for students to engage in a "meeting time."
- Space is provided to support small and large group activities.
- Interest centers are set up for all curriculum areas.
- Age appropriate materials and equipment are readily accessible to all students.
- Sufficient quantities of high quality literature and other materials are readily accessible to all students.
- Materials are organized and displayed attractively at the eye level of the students.
- There is a table where the teacher can work with small groups of students.
- Students sit at tables or with desks pushed together in small groups.
- Seating arrangements are flexible and allow every child to hear and see what is being asked and demonstrated.

# ***Curriculum and Instruction***

## **Teaching & Learning**

- A variety of resources are available to support student learning.
- The daily schedule is open and flexible and incorporates large blocks of time for students to work on projects.
- An understanding of how students learn and develop is used to shape curriculum and instruction.
- The curriculum describes realistic goals and objectives for what students should know and be able to do.
- The curriculum allows for creativity and flexibility for students and teachers.
- The curriculum is designed to help integrate all content areas.
- Student exploration and inquiry are fostered.
- A balance is maintained between activities that are selected by the students and activities planned by the teacher.
- A balance of “active” and “quiet” learning activities is maintained.
- Social interaction among students and between teachers and students is encouraged.
- Continuity of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is ensured between and across grade levels.
- Students are given opportunities to apply learning in meaningful contexts.
- Classroom activities and materials allow students with diverse needs and interests to experience success.
- The curriculum reflects the diversity of experiences and learning among groups of students.
- Play is viewed positively and supported as an active learning process.

## **Assessment**

- A combination of individual student work, student projects, and teacher observation is used to assess student achievement of the learning standards.
- Assessment data are used to plan curriculum and instruction.
- Teachers use assessment data to monitor students’ work and progress.
- Assessment data are used to strengthen the teaching and learning process in the classroom.
- Assessment data provide a continuum of knowledge about students as they move from class to class and grade to grade.
- Teachers use assessment data to identify students’ strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- Students use assessment data to evaluate their own learning.
- Parents are included as partners in assessment and receive specific information about their child’s progress.

