

Glossary of Terms

Early Childhood Teacher Professional Development Request for Proposal

Adult Learning Principles: Instruction will include autonomy and self-directed opportunities; will build upon life experiences and knowledge; I establish clear goals; make the learning relevant and useful; and show respect to the learner.

Balanced Budget: A budget for which expenditures are equal to income.

Benchmark: A standard by which something can be measured or judged.

Cluster Evaluation: A collective evaluation of a group of grants with common attributes. A cluster evaluation is intended to measure, assess, or gauge the impact of grantmaking strategies.

Competencies: Measurable skills and/or abilities that correlate to a specific subject content area within early childhood education.

Curriculum: Materials used to supplement the teachers, mentors, and/or coaches in their teaching methodology of a specific learning program. The curriculum collectively describes the teaching, learning, and assessment materials available for a given course of study.

Developmentally Appropriate: Teaching strategies and learning environments that reflect research, theories and practices about how children grow, develop and learn.

Direct Beneficiary: Early childhood (birth to five) teachers, professionals, and other providers who will benefit from the program or project's proposed offerings.

Dramatic/Thematic Play Center: An area in which children can play, pretend, use their imagination, practice new skills and learn.

Early Childhood Education: For the purpose of the Foundation's ECE Impact Area and more specifically this RFP, this terminology is limited to birth to five years of age. Helios Education Foundation acknowledges that this terminology ordinarily refers to the age span from birth to age eight.

Emergent Literacy: Young children learning about reading and writing through experiences with oral and written language; begins during the period before children receive formal reading instruction. It encompasses learning about reading, writing and print; is acquired through informal as well as adult-directed home and early childhood program activities; and facilitates acquisition of specific knowledge of reading. It includes an awareness of print; the relationship of print to speech; is comprehensive of text structures; phonological awareness; letter knowledge; communication patterns in various cultures and community settings; and storybook reading.

Foundational Skills: The core elements of any learning project that is the basis for future learning.

High Need: Organizations and/or communities located in and/or serving children whose families have few resources, such as income, health care, material goods, transportation, family support, and other basic needs.

Impact: For the purpose of the Foundation's RFP, impact is the effect or consequence the stated project will have on the target audience.

Indicators: A number or ratio related to a specific goal, derived from a series of observed facts. Indicators can show relative changes due to the described program or project.

Indirect Beneficiary: The children (from birth to age five), who are taught and cared for by the early childhood teachers, professionals, and other providers.

Integrated Curriculum: Information and activities are presented in a thematic, holistic manner, connecting subject areas in a way that meets the needs of all children. Speaking and writing are parts of literacy learning, as is language learning.

Language Acquisition: The process of learning a language. From birth through age five, children subconsciously acquire the basics of their home language (phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics) assuming the absence of a disability and access to human language input.

Language Usage: A child's use of his/her home language and ability to communicate needs, thoughts, and wants verbally. A child's language usage can also be determined by the ability to initiate and sustain conversations, and by the ability to tell about a picture when looking at it.

Literacy Rich Environment: Describes an atmosphere or surroundings in which literacy-rich signage and activities are included in every component of every program schedule, each and every day.

Low Socioeconomic: Families that lack the financial, social, and educational supports. Low socioeconomic families also may have inadequate or limited access to community resources that promote and support children's development and school readiness. Low-socioeconomic parents may have inadequate skills for activities such as reading to and with their children, and they may lack information about childhood immunizations and nutrition.

Manipulatives: Materials that allow children to interact with concepts by using their hands and other tools to explore, experiment, and discover meaning; materials that develop understanding.

Mentoring: The transmission of knowledge in a subject area by a more experienced person to an individual who has less experience, through the enabling of a more comprehensive understanding of the subject content, and by providing guidance and support.

Measurement: Criteria of assessment and/or evaluation. A way to describe the extent of the effect a project has or has not had on the target audience; assessment of capacity.

Multicultural Curriculum: Understanding of and responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity as demonstrated in lesson planning, activities, materials and actions.

Open-Ended Questions: Questions that must be answered with more than the response “yes, or no”, or with just one word answers.

Outcome: An end result or consequence.

Peer: Person of the same age.

Phonological: The sound structure of speech, particularly referring to the perception, representation, and production of speech sounds.

Process-Oriented Experiences: Activities in which children participate that require thinking, communicating, organizing, interacting, making decision and solving problems, individually and in groups.

Professional Development: Broader than the term 'training', it includes helping teachers not only learn new skills but also develop new insights into their teaching methodology and their own practice; to explore new or advanced understandings of content and resources.

Quality: For the purpose of the Foundation's RFP, the term quality is focused on the teacher. A 'quality' early childhood program or project focused on teacher professional development related to language acquisition and literacy will include improving teaching methodology; interactions with children; allow for self-reflection of teaching style and practices; facilitate peer-to-peer interaction; provide opportunities for conversations between teacher and child and child-to-child; all done within a play-based environment.

Social Emotional Development: The child's ability to interact socially and to form and sustain relationships with peers and adults. Emotional development is inclusive of the child's concept of him/herself. Healthy emotional development also includes the ability to understand how others feel and the ability to express one's own feelings.

Underserved: Individuals that have limited access to sufficient social and health services.

Under-resourced: Individuals that have insufficient resources to improve their environment – whether that be school, community, home, work, personal, or other.

Vocabulary: A knowledge of words and word meanings in both oral and print language.

References: *Terminology taken from many internet sites was blended to create the definitions above. However, direct acknowledgement is made to the Oregon Early Childhood Foundations as many of their glossary definitions were used to create this document.*

Oregon Early Childhood Foundations Glossary of Terms. October 14, 2006. Retrieved on December 9, 2009 from:

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/priorities/ready4school/glossary.pdf>