

# United Methodist Association of Preschools Accreditation Standards

## Part B: Program Management

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### Section 1: The Program

- B 1.1 The program shall maintain a governing board including representatives of the Church Trustees, Staff-Parish Committee, Age Level Coordinator/Children & Family Ministries, Pastor as ex-officio, Parents, Teachers, and Director.
- B 1.2 The program shall have a Philosophy and Mission Statement available.
- B 1.3 The program has written policies defining roles and responsibilities of board members and staff.
- B 1.4 Fiscal records are kept with evidence of long-range budgeting and sound financial planning.
- B 1.5 Operating budgets are prepared annually and there is a quarterly reconciliation of expenses to budget. The program may work in conjunction with the church finance committee as dictated by church administration.
- B 1.6 The program shall have a written policy for operating. Policy shall include policies related to providing staff compensation (i.e. benefits, raises, time off, free child care, etc), scheduling (hours and holidays), payment of fees and refunds. Hiring practices are nondiscriminatory.
- B 1.7 Benefit packages for full-time staff include paid leave (annual, sick and personal), medical insurance and retirement options. Benefits for part-time staff are available on a pro rated basis.
- A 1.8 The program administration and staff have the opportunity to evaluate themselves and the program. (Appendix 3 & 4)
- A 1.9 The program parents have the opportunity to evaluate the program. (Appendix 5)
- B 1.10 Records are kept on the program and related operations such as attendance records of staff and children.
- B 1.11 The program has a child abuse and neglect policy that includes reporting requirements for staff as well as procedures to be followed should a staff member be accused of abuse or neglect.
- B 1.12 The program staff works in partnership with families.
  - B 1.12(a) The program provides program information for new or prospective parents and orientation for children and families
  - B 1.12(b) The program welcomes parents and visitors at all times.
  - B 1.12(c) Regular communication is encouraged.
  - B 1.12(d) Staff and parents work together to support children's development and learning.
  - B 1.12(e) Families are informed about the program and the curriculum, policy changes and other issues that may affect the program.
  - B 1.12(f) Staff is familiar with and makes use of community resources. The program staff connects families with needed resources.

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- B 1.13 The program policy regarding the enrollment and termination of children's enrollment protect children's rights as outlined in the American's with Disabilities Act.
- B 1.14 The program is designed to be inclusive of all children, including children with identified disabilities and special learning and developmental needs.
- B 1.15 When children with special needs enroll, each child has an individual program plan; each child is professionally evaluated; the program has access to a referral system; and reviews of each child's progress are done using a team concept.
- B 1.16 The program has a written policy for use of media, such as TV, films, videotapes and video games. Use of media is limited to developmentally appropriate programming.

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### **Section 2: Program and Church Relationships**

- B 2.1 The program is a mission of the church to the surrounding community.
- B 2.2 The program shall have a connection in the structure of the local church through the Commission on Education, Children's Council, or other decision-making body, as stated in the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*.
- B 2.3 The program has developed harmony with the church and pastor resulting in open communication and cooperation.
- B 2.4 The program has developed a strong and healthy relationship with the church in areas such as shared space and use of materials and facilities.
- B 2.5 The program provides information about activities and special events to the church through newsletters, bulletins or other means of printed communication.
- B 2.6 The Program provides information from the church about church functions and events such as the Sacrament of Baptism, to staff and parents through newsletters, brochures, flyers, or other means of printed communication.
- B 2.7 The program participates in, or supports church functions.
- B 2.8 The church participates in, or supports program functions.
- A 2.9 The program and the church support each other financially in a manner that is mutually acceptable.
- B 2.10 The program staff is considered part of the church staff.

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### **Section 3: Christian Education**

- B 3.1 Christian Education is presented at the child's level of developmental readiness and interwoven into the total school curriculum. It is to nurture children's knowledge and understanding of God, Jesus, the Bible, the Church, and themselves and others as children of God.
- B 3.2 Children are encouraged to participate in Christian worship and music.
- B 3.3 Children participate in a variety of Christian celebrations both in the classroom and as a part of the church.
- B 3.4 Children are nurtured as they develop a good self-concept as a child of God and a person of value
- B 3.5 Children learn to care for others and the community through mission opportunities.

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### Section 4: Program Staff Qualifications

B 4.1 UMAP shall recognize six classifications of program staff:

Administrator/Director – is an adult staff member who works in ministry to the children and is directly responsible for the daily operations of the program.

Early Childhood Specialist – is an adult staff member employed to direct the educational program. This position may be filled by the director or a teacher.

Lead Teacher – is an adult staff member who works in ministry to the children and is directly responsible for the daily operations of a classroom.

Assistant Teacher – is an adult staff member who works in ministry to the children under the direction of a lead teacher.

Student Assistant – is a staff member who works in ministry to the children under the direct supervision of the director, a teacher, and/or an assistant.

Support Staff – is a staff member who works in ministry to the children, but does not have direct supervision of children or count towards ratio. This would include, but not be limited to, bus driver, cook or office staff.

B 4.2 The Administrator/Director of a UMAP Accredited Program shall have at least one of the following educational credentials (a or b);

- (a) Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or a related field of education to young children.
- (b) Bachelors Degree in another field with an additional 12 credit hours in Early Childhood Education.

and must meet the following:

- (c) Must be at least twenty-one (21) years old.
- (d) Have one year or more years experience as an on-site program director.
- (e) Must have at least one course in administration.
- (f) Must successfully complete a training in Emergent Literacy.

B 4.3 The Administrator/Director of a UMAP Accredited Program should have the following qualifications.

- (a) Continues training in the field of early childhood education or child development.
- (b) Ability to uphold good Administrative practices, (i.e. record keeping, budgets, rules and regulations, etc).
- (c) Has knowledge of current Early Childhood research and issues.
- (d) Is supportive of UMAP as well as other early childhood organizations.
- (e) Manifests a concern and love for children expressed daily in interactions such as classroom visits, arrival/departure greetings, etc.
- (f) Should be of Christian faith and be a member of a local church.
- (g) Whether or not a member of the local congregation, should consider herself/himself a leader, responsible for the ministry to others.
- (h) Shows the ability to minister to children, parents and staff.

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B 4.4 The Early Childhood Specialist of a UMAP Accredited Program shall have at least one of the following educational credentials (a or b);

- (a) Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development.
- (b) Graduate Degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development.

and must meet the following:

- (c) Must be at least twenty-one (21) years old.
- (d) Must have three years of full time teaching experience with young children.
- (e) Must successfully complete a training in Emergent Literacy.

B 4.5 A Lead Teacher in a UMAP Accredited Program shall have at least one of the following educational credentials.

- (a) Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, or a related field
- (b) A two year degree or higher from an accredited college or university with at least 6 credit hours in Early Childhood Education or Child Development
- (b) A current National C.D.A or state recognized equivalent.

and must meet the following:

- (c) Must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
- (d) Must successfully complete a training in Emergent Literacy.

B 4.6 A Lead Teacher in a UMAP Accredited Program should have the following qualifications.

- (a) Commits to pursuing a higher level degree (such as AA, AS, BA, BS, MA, etc.) in the field of early childhood education.
- (b) Is supportive of UMAP as well as other early childhood organizations.
- (c) Manifests a concern and love for children expressed daily in interactions.
- (d) Should be of Christian faith and be a member of a local church.
- (e) Whether or not a member of the local congregation, should consider herself/himself a leader, responsible for the ministry to children.
- (f) Ability to minister to children and parents.

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- B 4.7 An Assistant Teacher in a UMAP Accredited Program shall have the following
- (a) A High School Diploma or GED
  - (b) Must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
  - (c) Must successfully complete a training in Emergent Literacy.
- B 4.8 An Assistant Teacher in a UMAP Accredited Program shall have the following qualifications.
- (a) Commits to pursuing continued training in the field of early childhood education.
  - (b) Is supportive of UMAP as well as other early childhood organizations.
  - (c) Manifests a concern and love for children expressed daily in interactions.
  - (d) Should be of Christian faith and be a member of a local church.
  - (e) Whether or not a member of the local congregation, should consider herself/himself a leader, responsible for the ministry to children.
  - (f) Ability to minister to children and parents.
- B 4.9 A Student Assistant in a UMAP Accredited Program shall meet the following qualifications.
- (a) Must be at least sixteen (16) years old.
  - (b) Must be a current High School/college student or enrolled in a GED Program.
  - (b) Must successfully complete a training in Emergent Literacy.
- B 4.10 Support Staff in a UMAP Accredited Program shall meet the following qualifications
- (a) Must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
  - (b) Must complete a background screening.
- B 4.11 UMAP aspirational goals for teacher qualifications are as follows:
- Lead Teachers with a 2 year degree or CDA or state equivalent certificate shall be encouraged to work towards their Bachelors or higher level degree.
- Assistant Teachers Assistants without any form of certification should be working toward a CDA or state equivalent certificate or other degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development.

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### **Section 5: Pre-service Training**

- B 5.1 The program provides staff with a complete orientation of the program. Orientation for new employees shall include, but not be limited to, observing experienced teachers, visiting other UMAP Accredited Programs, in-service training, college courses (when available face-to-face or online courses), observing children, print/audio/video or live presentations.
- B 5.2 Substitutes and volunteers are given orientation to the program and policies and receive ongoing training.

### **Section 6: In-service Training**

- B 6.1 The program provides staff with opportunities to participate in ongoing professional development to improve skills working with children and families or to prepare them to assume more responsible positions.
- B 6.2 Ongoing professional development provides continuing education and other opportunities for staff to keep abreast of the latest developments in the field, including new programs and practices, pending legislation or regulatory changes.
- B 6.3 Professional development experiences should be credit bearing whenever possible.
- B 6.4 Continuing education is encouraged through tuition reimbursement or financial assistance. Staff is encouraged to join and participate in professional organizations.
- B 6.5 Directors and all staff must have at least 30 clock hours of job-related continuing education in the first year of employment at this program and 24 clock hours of job-related continuing education each year thereafter.

### **Section 7: Additional Training Requirements**

- B 7.1 The program Administrator/Director, Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and Support Staff shall complete training in Pediatric CPR and First –aid within the first ninety (90) days of hire. A trained staff member is required to be on site at all times.
- B 7.2 All program staff must complete training requirements in early childhood according to the state and local licensing agency and provide proof thereof.

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### Section 8: Staff Interactions

- B 8.1 The program shall provide time for administration and staff to plan and consult together frequently about the program, children and families. Time to meet together, pray together, socialize, laugh, plan and share ideas, consult or seek advice from each other.
- B 8.2 Staff meetings are held at least once a month to discuss program planning, implementing and attaining goals, plans for individual children and to discuss the program and working conditions.
- B 8.3 Teachers are provided weekly paid planning time, away from the responsibility of the children. Staff keeps information about children, families and associates confidential.
- B 8.4 The program staff compiles written, individual descriptions of children's development and learning. Staff uses the information to plan appropriate activities.
- B 8.5 The Program shall have a schedule for assessment of children. Assessments should be developmentally appropriate and based on a child's age. There should also be a plan for sharing assessment information with parents.
- B 8.6 The program has a consistent method of communication between school and home. These methods may include but are not limited to, newsletters, daily reports, conferences, etc.
- B 8.7 The work environment for staff, including classrooms and staff rooms, is comfortable, well organized and in good repair
- B 8.8 The program provides staff space and time away from the children during the day. When staff work directly with children for more than 4 hours they are provided at least one break in each 4 hour period.
- B 8.9 Staff keeps information about children, families and associates confidential.