4. Guidelines for the Analysis and Description of Early Childhood Education Programs

The guidelines which have been described and explained in Part 3, "Analyzing Early Childhood Education Programs," are intended to help school personnel. Their objectives are: (a) to identify the main ways in which early childhood education programs may differ from one another; and (b) to gain increased insight into the consequences for children that might follow the choice of one program rather than another. The guidelines should be useful to curriculum workers who are trying to mount programs suited to the particular needs of local communities. For example, the guidelines may help them make decisions on which of several Head Start or Follow Through models to adopt, or may help them as they work at local program development for children from age 3 to grade 3.

Both the content and the format of the guidelines are intended to be used only as starting points. Those using the guidelines may want to add or delete dimensions, expand on those that are given, or convert them to a format more useful for specific local purposes. Some of the program dimensions identified are described on a scale of alternative choices. These dimensions were selected as being those which are most central in terms of their effects on the lives of children and/or the conditions under which a program can be developed and sustained.

In making a descriptive analysis of a program, several steps might be followed. For instance, first use the guidelines as a checklist of characteristics, adding brief descriptive phrases where needed and identifying areas which are unclear, important aspects that may have been overlooked in planning, or characteristics which may not be related to local needs. Next, the items in each category should be considered in connection with Milly Cowles' discussion of theories of development (see pp. 790-95) in order to clarify what assumptions may underlie the various choices and what possible consequences each choice may have for children and staff.

Another step would be to determine the degree of consistency or relatedness among the various categories: goals and procedures; procedures and evaluation approaches; overall program characteristics and
methods used for staff development. Inconsistencies or "mismatches" can be a source of major problems in programs. Some methods for staff training do not prepare teachers adequately for the kind of program intended and some sets of teaching procedures do not lead to the fulfillment of desired goals. In some communities, the general requirements for the development of certain programs cannot be met without a great deal of difficulty. In addition, some sets of assumptions regarding human learning and development may be too narrow to explain many aspects of human behavior.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that much that is of great importance in making a real difference in programs has been left out. Examples of such omissions are the effects on student development of teacher and parent expectations of success or failure, and the quality of interpersonal relationships within classroom and family groups. Factors such as these should, of course, be considered when analyzing programs.

Guidelines for Analysis of Early Childhood Education Programs *

I. Assumptions Regarding Human Development and Learning (See Cowles, pp. 790-95).

Where does the program fit along this continuum?

Behavioral - Cognitive - Psychosexual - Normative - Environmental . . . Transactional . . . Personality . . . Maturational

If you have not already done so, acquaint yourself with these four main views using the references suggested on pages 790-95. On the basis of your reading and discussion, try to formulate the answers to the following questions that might be given by adherents of each view:

1. What is human development?
   a. What is the relationship between learning and development?
   b. What motivates and sustains development and/or learning?
   c. What view of Man is reflected—especially concerning the nature of intelligence and of human knowledge or knowing?
   d. What is the relationship among language, cognition, affect, and perceptual-motor functioning?

2. Under what conditions can development be (best) fostered or facilitated?
   a. Role of the individual (student, learner)
   b. Role of teacher and school materials
   c. Role of other agents (peers and parents, home and neighborhood).

3. What kinds of evidence are collected and used:
   a. In basic research and theory building/testing?
   b. In evaluation of children’s progress and intervention programs?

4. To what extent do theories covered deal with the same phenomena, the same dimensions of human behavior and development?

5. To what extent has the theory been translated for implementation into practice? What are some of its salient/typical implications for practice?

* These guidelines are the result of the joint efforts of the members of the ASCD Early Childhood Education Council. They were compiled and edited by David L. Elliott.
6. What do theories try to do? What should we as educators expect of them? How can we best get more help from theorists and researchers?

II. Aims and Objectives (See Frost, pp. 796-801).
What are the objectives of the program and how are they described?
A. What are the main types of outcome objectives for children and at what level(s) are they described?

Begin by going to all the sources to which you have access concerning a particular program. Fill in as much information as is available using the categories below as a beginning. Add categories or subcategories wherever necessary, especially at Level 3, Specific Instructional Objectives.

_Level 1. Broad Program Objectives_

- Mainly custodial
  - School readiness
  - Life adjustment
- Other

_More broadly educational development of competence_

_Level 2. Intermediate Range Objectives_

- Perceptual-motor
  - Eye-hand coordination, auditory discrimination, visual discrimination
- Cognitive
  - Concept formation (relational, general), principles and generalizations, problem-solving ability, creativity
- Language
  - Competence, performance in standard English, other dialect or language reading
- Affective
  - Positive self-concept, achievement motivation, persistence, autonomy, ethnic pride, openness to change
- Role as student
  - Ability to follow directions, impulse control, politeness, self-direction, initiative, responsibility for own learning
- Mastery of subject-matter content
  - Mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, literature
- Other

_Level 3. Specific Instructional Objectives_

B. What is the degree of specificity of the statements of objectives?

- Very explicit
  - Global, general (behavioral definitions)
  - Emphasis on products, measured (loosely defined)
- Emphasis on “learning outcome, criterion performance”
- Specific sequence
  - Sequence emerges in predetermined situation

C. What is the process-product emphasis of the goal statements?

- Mainly on process
  - Teaching procedures, (outcomes in pupils)
- Mainly on product
  - Instructional setting

Some programs will list more of the process-type objectives, exemplified in IID, than the product-type objectives of the previous section. There may be specific reasons for this that are at least in part traceable to assumptions made about human learning and development. (In most programs, process objectives
are reflected in descriptions of program procedures rather than in their statements of goals.)

D. What objectives are expressed in terms of (expected changes in) program procedures and adult roles?
   1. Teachers and other adults as:
      _ Disseminators of knowledge content
      _ Sources of reinforcement (rewards, knowledge of results)
      _ Guides to children's learning and developmental activities
      _ Models with which to identify
      _ Other
   2. Materials and equipment to:
      _ Facilitate lesson and drill sessions
      _ Serve as self-correcting guides to learning
      _ Stimulate curiosity and invite exploration
      _ Aid in organizing natural world surrounding children
      _ Other
   3. Setting

E. Of the objectives listed in A and/or D, which are considered most important and why?
   1. Range, as revealed in A2:
      Narrow ............................................ Broad
      (language only, cognition only) ("whole child")
   2. Priorities, as revealed in A and D, as well as through direct observation:
      Why? Why are some omitted?

F. What degrees of relatedness are assumed to exist among the various types of objectives listed in IIA?
   _ Individual objectives seen as separately achievable
   _ Some goals inclusive
   _ All goals seen as interdependent

G. What is the expected time span for reaching goals?
   a. Long-term: ___________ Short-term: ___________
      By adult_ ... By grade 6 ... By age 8 ... Within ... Within
      hood one year one summer
   b. Same for all goals ... Varies with different dimensions mentioned in A (specify how many) __
   c. Same for all children ... For selected subgroups of children only

III. Principal Program Components or Procedures (See Patterson, pp. 802-805).
What are the most characteristic features of the operation of the program?

A. In what ways are initial student status and subsequent student status assessed?
   1. Timing:
      _ On entry into .... _ Continually .... _ At year's
      the program during the year end
   2. Type:
      _ Informal .................. _ Formal
      _ Teacher judgment _ Std. tests
      _ Work completed _ Checklists _ Observ. schedules
      _ Unsystematic _ Systematic
      _ Haphazard _ Carefully planned

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3. By whom carried on:
   - Student self-evaluation
   - Teachers
   - Specialists
   - Aides
   - Supervisors
   - Parents
   - Other

4. Criteria used: (See list of objectives from IIA.)
   - Narrow range
   - Full range

5. Purpose:
   - As integral part of instructional program
   - Feedback to shape program development
   - As distinctive function (e.g., research)
   - For periodic reporting only (e.g., to parents)

B. What main kinds of materials and equipment are used in the program?
   - Specifically programmed
   - Self-correcting
   - Appropriate for independent pupil use
   - Restricted range
   - Adaptable to wide variety of uses
   - Requires adult direction and supervision
   - Wide range of types (Describe)

C. How is time used in the program?
   - Highly structured
   - Blocks of time designated for specific activities
   - Flexible schedule varying from day to day

D. How is space utilized in the program?
   - Single classroom
   - Areas or rooms designated for specific activities
   - Wide variety of locations used regularly
   - Much flexibility in the use of space

E. What are the main sources of structuring for the children’s activities which are supposed to contribute most toward the achievement of the program’s objectives? (Factors can be ranked in order of importance.)

1. Main focal points:
   - Materials and equipment accessible to students for their use
   - Physical layout of building and lot (including boundaries)
   - Other influences (e.g., in neighborhood, home, TV, etc.)
   - Direct instruction by teacher (i.e., teaching lessons)
   - Direct instruction by other adults (i.e., aides, parents)
   - Teachers (adults) as guides, to support for exploration
   - Interaction with peer group

2. Main initiative in choice of activities and materials:
   - With children
   - Varies with
   - With teacher, adults time of day, etc.

3. Locations of activities:
   - Exclusively in classroom
   - Mainly in neighborhood homes
   - Mainly in neighborhood schools

4. Degree of diversity in instructional situations:
   - Essentially the same all year
   - Continually added new elements
Narrow range of materials and activities accessible to students

Wide range of activities and materials accessible to students

5. What is the degree of regular relationship between school activities and the everyday life of the children?

Learning tasks are largely focused on complex naturalistic situations

Continual movement between extremes

Learning tasks are largely focused on highly defined lesson-task situations

6. What degree of relationship is maintained among various subject areas in the program?

Subject areas treated separately for purposes of instruction

No distinctions made among subject areas for purposes of instruction

F. What provisions are made for individual differences in experiential backgrounds, developmental levels, and learning styles among students?

1. Amount of differentiation:

Very little (Same activities for all)

Highly differentiated and tailored

2. Main means for differentiation:

Through kinds of materials available

Through level of usage of materials

Through action of adults and older children

Through homogeneously grouping by age, achievement or ability level, interests, etc.

One-to-one tutoring

Varying locations for activities

IV. Administrative-Organizational Requirements (See Hodges, pp. 806-808).

What administrative-organizational arrangements have to be made for the program to become fully operational (with special attention to the requirements for developing a new program or for successful replication of an existing model in a new setting)?

A. In what main ways are members of the local community involved in the program, particularly the parents and neighbors of the children who are enrolled?

Only indirectly (e.g., through local school board, PTA, etc.) (e.g., CAP agency)

As part of larger project (e.g., CAP agency)

Direct involvement:

In selecting programs, deciding on objectives

In policy making and planning

Setting administrative and fiscal policy

Relatively high power and influence

As parts of paid staff—teachers, aides, other staff

As clients—Main ways of reaching children (i.e., through parent education, home teaching)

Along with the children (supplementary to children's program)

As volunteers, participating parents, resources for children, resources for teachers

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B. What kinds of personnel will be required and what qualifications should they have? (Enter number for each category.)

1. Type/Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff-child ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Supervisor/adviser</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Teacher</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aide/assistant</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Home visitor</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Volunteer</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Psychologist</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Social worker</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Medical worker</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nutritionist/cook</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Custodian</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Other (Designate)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. What amounts and kinds of experience are parts of the desired qualifications for each of the above types of personnel?

3. What personal qualifications are sought in each of the types of personnel in B1?

4. What number of children can be served effectively by one staff member in each of the above categories? (List in right-hand column of B1.)

   In most programs the teacher is the basic unit upon which all other staff ratios are based: e.g., one teacher per 15 children with two aides, etc.

5. What incongruities are there, if any, between the personnel requirements of the program being analyzed and existing state/local personnel regulations? (List.)

6. What kinds of staff development (pre-/in-service training) will be required? (See Section D.)

7. In what main ways should the staff be involved in planning and implementation of the program?

   _In the selection of the program model to be implemented, or_
   _in the continuing development of a local program_
   _Planning the process of implementation, or_
   _continuous involvement in the problem-solving process_
   _Developing policy positions for the program_
   _Developing program materials and selecting equipment, or_
   _developing supplementary materials and adapting program to the needs of local children_
   _Developing and implementing evaluation procedures_
   _Developing dissemination procedures within the local organization and its community_
   _Other (specify)_

C. What are the space, time, and transportation requirements of the program?

1. Space:

   Describe types of (a) indoor and (b) outdoor space needed.

   What is the estimated number of square feet of floor space per child?

2. What arrangements for transportation must be made:

   a. To get children to and from the program site?
   b. For travel within the time of the program?

3. Time requirements:

   _Extended day care (early morning to early evening)_
   _Full school day (8:30-9:00 a.m. to 3:00-3:30 p.m.)_
   _One-half day exclusively within school hours_
   _One-half day not exclusively within school hours_
   _Other (specify exact time periods)_
   _Year-around.......School year.......Other_
D. What kinds of staff development (pre-/in-service training) will be required to operate the program?

1. What is the minimum amount of preservice training required to initiate the program?
   a. Who should receive this training? _Teachers, _Aides, _Others
   b. What amount of time and what types of resources will be needed?

2. What kinds of in-service staff training are required to sustain and/or develop the program?
   a. Who should receive this training? _Teachers, _Aides, _Others
   b. What kinds of resources will be required for this training?
      _Local supervisors, _Outside advisers, _Higher education helping teachers, _project faculty
      _Adult education consultants, _Other personnel specialists
      _Kits of materials, _Films and video and/or equipment tapes _Other
   c. How are these resources to be employed?
      _To give teachers feedback on own behavior
      _To give teachers feedback on children’s behavior
      _To engage staff in continuous problem solving related to day-to-day work
      _Other (specify)
   d. What are the proposed timing and spacing of in-service work?
      _Daily sessions _Weekly sessions _Other
      _Time provided _After-hours _On staff’s own time during working hours compensated for

3. What kinds of incentives for engaging in training are provided the recipients?
   _College credit _Additional pay _Released time _Credit toward advanced certification _Promotion

E. What are the costs for the first year of the operation of the program?
(Based on unit of _ children. See B2.)

Items marked with asterisk are to be counted as continuing after the first year of operation.

*Staff (salary/month x months of program operation)
*Staff fringe benefits (per month x months of operation)
*Initial staff development, preservice training first year
*In-service training
*Basic equipment (furniture, non-expendable teaching devices, etc.)
*Basic program materials (books, kits, games, etc.)
*Expendable supplies and raw materials
*Food services (breakfasts, lunches, snacks, etc.)
*Transportation 
*Medical, psychological, social, nutritional services
*Supervisory/administrative costs (as a proportion of the total costs, considering more than one unit of _ children)
*Evaluation
*Dissemination

F. How much time is required for the implementation or development of the program?

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1. Lead time required to prepare for first period of operation:
   _weeks ...................._months ................_years

2. Estimated time required for relatively full implementation or development of program:
   _weeks ...................._months ................_years

   Considerations here include time required for: desired community and staff involvement in preliminary planning and policy making; recruitment and training of personnel; acquisition of land, buildings, equipment, and materials; and the enrollment or recruitment of children and parents.

V. Evaluation of the Program (See Patterson, pp. 809-11).
What kinds of evaluation procedures are necessary to the operation of the program?

A. What are the main purposes for the evaluation?
   _No regular and/or systematic evaluation_ _Regular and/or systematic evaluation

   1. Types:
      _Formative—to facilitate decision making in the program_ _continuous_________ periodic_________ occasional
      _Summative—for accountability, to determine whether program fulfilled objectives after it is over_ _Comparative—mainly for basic research

   2. Audience:_funding source(s),_sponsor of model, _local administration, _local community, _teachers, staff, _parents, _children, _other (specify)

B. What criteria are used in the evaluation?
   1. Product evaluation (of outcomes in children):
      (See types of objectives listed in IIA.)
      a. Range and priority of types covered in evaluation
      b. Specific objectives covered in evaluation

   2. Process evaluation (of program procedures):
      (See IID.)
      _Description and assessment _______No description or assessment of procedures carried out of procedures
      _Assessment to determine extent of the implementation of chief components/characteristics of a given "model"_________or
      _Other criteria—
      _Materials and equipment present,
      _Physical plant characteristics,
      _Staff characteristics, _Staff behavior patterns,
      _Other (specify)

   3. What main evaluation methods and strategies are employed?
      _Unsystematic ___________ Systematic (std. tests, (e.g., expert judgment) checklists, etc.)
      _Carried on by ___________ Carried on by independent local staff agents
      _Short-term time _________ Longitudinal time perspective (5-10 years+)

C. Is the evaluation approach itself evaluated?
   (See Kamii and Elliott, pp. 827-31.)
What, for example, is the degree of match between evaluation methods employed (including criteria) and:
1. The aims and objectives of the program?
2. The program procedures?
3. The underlying assumptions regarding learning and development? □