

(i) A group that serves children 24 to 36 months of age must have no more than ten children; and,

(ii) A group that serves predominantly three-year-old children must have no more than twenty children; and,

(iii) A group that serves predominantly four-year-old children must have no more than twenty-four children.

(3) If the responsible HHS official approves a waiver to allow a program to operate below the minimums described in § 1302.21(c)(2)(iii) or (iv), a program must meet the requirements described in § 1302.21(c)(2)(i), or in the case of a double session variation, a program must meet the requirements described in § 1302.21(c)(2)(ii).

(4) In order to receive a waiver under this section, a program must provide supporting evidence that demonstrates the locally-designed variation effectively supports appropriate development and progress in children's early learning outcomes.

(5) In order to receive a waiver of service duration, a program must meet the requirement in paragraph (c)(4) of this section, provide supporting evidence that it better meets the needs of parents than the applicable service duration minimums described in § 1302.21(c)(1) and (c)(2)(iii) and (iv), § 1302.22(c), or § 1302.23(c), and assess the effectiveness of the variation in supporting appropriate development and progress in children's early learning outcomes.

(d) *Transition from previously approved program options.* If, before November 7, 2016, a program was approved to operate a program option that is no longer allowable under §§ 1302.21 through 1302.23, a program may continue to operate that model until July 31, 2018.

Subpart C—Education and Child Development Program Services

§ 1302.30 Purpose.

All programs must provide high-quality early education and child development services, including for children with disabilities, that promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth for later success in school. A center-based or family child care pro-

gram must embed responsive and effective teacher-child interactions. A home-based program must promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality early learning experiences. All programs must implement a research-based curriculum, and screening and assessment procedures that support individualization and growth in the areas of development described in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and support family engagement in children's learning and development. A program must deliver developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning, approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts. To deliver such high-quality early education and child development services, a center-based or family child care program must implement, at a minimum, the elements contained in §§ 1302.31 through 1302.34, and a home-based program must implement, at a minimum, the elements in §§ 1302.33 and 1302.35.

§ 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment.

(a) *Teaching and the learning environment.* A center-based and family child care program must ensure teachers and other relevant staff provide responsive care, effective teaching, and an organized learning environment that promotes healthy development and children's skill growth aligned with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*, including for children with disabilities. A program must also support implementation of such environment with integration of regular and ongoing supervision and a system of individualized and ongoing professional development, as appropriate. This includes, at a minimum, the practices described in paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section.

(b) *Effective teaching practices.* (1) Teaching practices must:

(i) Emphasize nurturing and responsive practices, interactions, and environments that foster trust and emotional security; are communication and language rich; promote critical