

§ 1302.34

conducted by qualified and trained personnel, and being age, developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and appropriate for children with disabilities, as needed.

(2) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English, a program must use qualified bilingual staff, contractor, or consultant to:

(i) Assess language skills in English and in the child's home language, to assess both the child's progress in the home language and in English language acquisition;

(ii) Conduct screenings and assessments for domains other than language skills in the language or languages that best capture the child's development and skills in the specific domain; and,

(iii) Ensure those conducting the screening or assessment know and understand the child's language and culture and have sufficient skill level in the child's home language to accurately administer the screening or assessment and to record and understand the child's responses, interactions, and communications.

(3) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and qualified bilingual staff, contractors, or consultants are not able to conduct screenings and assessments, a program must use an interpreter in conjunction with a qualified staff person to conduct screenings and assessments as described in paragraphs (c)(2)(i) through (iii) of this section.

(4) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and can demonstrate that there is not a qualified bilingual staff person or interpreter, then screenings and assessments may be conducted in English. In such a case, a program must also gather and use other information, including structured observations over time and information gathered in a child's home language from the family, for use in evaluating the child's development and progress.

(d) *Prohibitions on use of screening and assessment data.* The use of screening and assessment items and data on any screening or assessment authorized under this subchapter by any agent of the federal government is prohibited for the purposes of ranking, comparing,

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or otherwise evaluating individual children for purposes other than research, training, or technical assistance, and is prohibited for the purposes of providing rewards or sanctions for individual children or staff. A program must not use screening or assessments to exclude children from enrollment or participation.

§ 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services.

(a) *Purpose.* Center-based and family child care programs must structure education and child development services to recognize parents' roles as children's lifelong educators, and to encourage parents to engage in their child's education.

(b) *Engaging parents and family members.* A program must offer opportunities for parents and family members to be involved in the program's education services and implement policies to ensure:

(1) The program's settings are open to parents during all program hours;

(2) Teachers regularly communicate with parents to ensure they are well-informed about their child's routines, activities, and behavior;

(3) Teachers hold parent conferences, as needed, but no less than two times per program year, to enhance the knowledge and understanding of both staff and parents of the child's education and developmental progress and activities in the program;

(4) Parents have the opportunity to learn about and to provide feedback on selected curricula and instructional materials used in the program;

(5) Parents and family members have opportunities to volunteer in the class and during group activities;

(6) Teachers inform parents, about the purposes of and the results from screenings and assessments and discuss their child's progress;

(7) Teachers, except those described in paragraph (b)(8) of this section, conduct at least two home visits per program year for each family, including one before the program year begins, if feasible, to engage the parents in the child's learning and development, except that such visits may take place at a program site or another safe location

that affords privacy at the parent's request, or if a visit to the home presents significant safety hazards for staff;

(8) Teachers that serve migrant or seasonal families make every effort to conduct home visits to engage the family in the child's learning and development; and

(9) The program utilizes accessible communication methods and modalities that meet the needs of the community when engaging with prospective and enrolled families.

[81 FR 61412, Sept. 6, 2016, as amended at 89 FR 67810, Aug. 21, 2024]

§ 1302.35 Education in home-based programs.

(a) *Purpose.* A home-based program must provide home visits and group socialization activities that promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality early learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning, approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts. A program must implement a research-based curriculum that delivers developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate home visits and group socialization activities that support children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth for later success in school.

(b) *Home-based program design.* A home-based program must ensure all home visits are:

(1) Planned jointly by the home visitor and parents, and reflect the critical role of parents in the early learning and development of their children, including that the home visitor is able to effectively communicate with the parent, directly or through an interpreter;

(2) Planned using information from ongoing assessments that individualize learning experiences;

(3) Scheduled with sufficient time to serve all enrolled children in the home and conducted with parents and are not conducted when only babysitters or other temporary caregivers are present;

(4) Scheduled with sufficient time and appropriate staff to ensure effective delivery of services described in subparts D, E, F, and G of this part

through home visiting, to the extent possible.

(c) *Home visit experiences.* A program that operates the home-based option must ensure all home visits focus on promoting high-quality early learning experiences in the home and growth towards the goals described in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and must use such goals and the curriculum to plan home visit activities that implement:

(1) Age and developmentally appropriate, structured child-focused learning experiences;

(2) Strategies and activities that promote parents' ability to support the child's cognitive, social, emotional, language, literacy, and physical development;

(3) Strategies and activities that promote the home as a learning environment that is safe, nurturing, responsive, and language- and communication- rich;

(4) Research-based strategies and activities for children who are dual language learners that recognize bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths, and:

(i) For infants and toddlers, focus on the development of the home language, while providing experiences that expose both parents and children to English; and,

(ii) For preschoolers, focus on both English language acquisition and the continued development of the home language; and,

(5) Follow-up with the families to discuss learning experiences provided in the home between each visit, address concerns, and inform strategies to promote progress toward school readiness goals.

(d) *Home-based curriculum.* A program that operates the home-based option must:

(1) Ensure home-visiting and group socializations implement a developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood home-based curriculum that:

(i) Promotes the parent's role as the child's teacher through experiences focused on the parent-child relationship and, as appropriate, the family's traditions, culture, values, and beliefs;