

COMPONENT IX: MARYLAND MODEL FOR SCHOOL READINESS/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DEFINITION:

Professional Development is aligned with the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR). Staff members of all participating programs have participated in Maryland Model for School Readiness training and understand their responsibility for implementing MMSR as appropriate for their program. Every Judy Center staff member should become aware of the MMSR framework. Staff working with children aged birth to six should receive extensive training.

MMSR defines school readiness as the state of early development that enables an individual child to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences. As a result of family nurturing and interactions with others, a young child at this stage has attained certain levels of social and emotional development, cognition and general knowledge, language development, and physical well-being and motor development. School readiness acknowledges individual approaches toward learning as well as the unique experiences and backgrounds of each child.

BACKGROUND:

What is the Maryland Model for School Readiness?

Children who succeed in school do well I life. Recent neuro-scientific research confirms the notion that children who do well before they come to school have a greater chance of doing well in school. The MMSR is a framework designed to guide practitioners in the field of early care and education toward the best practices in early pedagogy. There are five components that describe the framework.

1. **Professional development** is on-going and engages educators in developing knowledge and skills in assessment and instruction of young children, communication with families, and coordination with other programs. Professional development provides teachers with recent research, teaching and assessment strategies, and protocols for communication and articulation.

2. **Instruction**, either in the classroom or alternate learning settings, such as a family child care or home visiting programs, is based on knowledge of child development and of how children learn best. Instruction emphasizes the early educator's understanding of each child's individual strengths, interest, and areas of need with the aim of guiding them toward meeting child readiness standards.

3. **Assessment**, using performance-based approaches such as the Work Sampling System (WSS)™, provides the key to understanding children's learning and progress within the context of indicators, which guide instruction and provide a valid means to track children's progress and performance. The WSS performance indicators articulate from preschool to grade 5. The MMSR is using the WSS indicators for preschool through kindergarten.

4. **Communication** with families is an integral part of sharing children's learning and progress. It enhances families' support of their children's development and early learning by providing them with an understanding of school readiness expectations. Another aspect of communication is ongoing dialogue between a diverse group of early educators (i.e., horizontal communication) on the progress of all children who attend more than on setting daily. Another aspect of communication is the articulation of assessment information among early educators as children exit one program in order to transition to another (i.e., vertical communication).

5. **Collaboration and coordination** is the component of MMSR, which requires a common understanding of the school readiness goals among early educators working with young children over time. The Judy Centers have this component inherently built into them.

Kindergarten and pre-kindergarten teachers, together with Head Start and childcare staff are engaged in joint activities, which allow for discussion of effective teaching practice, of common goals that can be assessed as a result of WSS data aggregation, and of the use of assessment documentation to track the progress of children who receive early intervention services.

<i>MMSR Components</i>	
MMSR Component	MMSR Materials
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven MMSR professional development modules on all five components for public schools.¹ • Nine Training of Trainers professional development modules for public schools.² • Nine MMSR professional development modules – adapted for child care and Head Start³ • Nine Training of Trainers professional development modules for child care and Head Start.⁴ • Four professional development modules for the domain, Language and Literacy.^{5a} • Two professional development modules for the domain, Scientific Thinking.^{5b} • Four professional development modules for the domain Mathematical Thinking.^{5c} • Professional development syllabi and descriptions. • Three staff development modules for home visitors
Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MMSR Framework and Standards for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten. • Maryland Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. • Alignment of document MMSR Standards, WSS performance indicators, and Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC)

<p>Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Sampling System (WSS)TM 4th Edition (P-3; P-4; K)⁶ • Work Sampling System (WSS)TM for Head Start⁷ • Compatible assessment systems in Anne Arundel, Harford, and Montgomery Counties • Alignment of WSS and the Voluntary State Curriculum. • School Readiness Baseline Report⁸ • MMSR Exemplars for Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten for Fall and Spring⁹
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MMSR Handbook for Early Educators • MMSR Information Brochure¹⁰ • Parents Matter¹¹ • Strategies for Bridging Home and School¹²
<p>Collaboration and Coordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) MMSR staff development module for school administrators (in development) • Technical assistance guide for implementing MMSR in Head Start and child care (in development)

What are the state requirements regarding MMSR?

According to COMAR 13A.08.01.02-3, all local school systems are required to submit kindergarten assessment information using an MSDE-approved assessment system (i.e., WSS) by December 1 of each year to MSDE. This information is used for the required annual *School Readiness Baseline Report* to be submitted by MSDE to the General Assembly in February of each year.

The Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Education Enhancement Program (Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 5-215) provides for the funding and statewide implementation of MSDE’s “Early Childhood Assessment System,” (i.e., MMSR) including the requirement to implement that system in Judy Centers.

The Joint Chairman's Report (1999) required the Sub-cabinet on Children, Youth, and Families to stipulate the Head Start and Early Head Start State Supplemental Funds should be used only for programs that were "consistent with the principles of the Maryland Model for School Readiness." Because the National Head Start Office requires local Head Start grantees to align their programs with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, the Maryland State Head Start Association developed a Maryland-specific document, which aligns with MMSR.

The expansion of the MMSR to the child care home visiting sectors is based on policy decision by state and local stakeholders in response to the school readiness needs of the result area, *Children Entering School Ready to Learn*, which was identified by the General Assembly in 1999.

**Timeline for Kindergarten teachers and Maryland State Department of
Education to collect and report Work Sampling System information for the
State's School Readiness Baseline Report**

- August - November** -- --Kindergarten teachers observe and document strengths and needs for **all** students using the 30 WSS performance indicators.
- September 30** -- Any student who enrolls after this date will not be included in MMSR data collection.
- November (1st 2 weeks)** -- Kindergarten teachers complete ratings on 30 performance indicators.
- November** -- Local Early Childhood Supervisors determine the date for teachers to submit the checklists/progress reports with the 30 performance ratings.
- February** -- MSDE presents *Children Entering School Ready to Learn* report to the Maryland General Assembly.
-- Local school systems receive copies of the report.
- Ongoing** --Teachers continue observing and documenting strengths and needs for all students throughout the entire school year on all performance indicators.
- May/June** -- Share assessment information with first grade teachers.
--Judy Center Partnership Kindergarten teachers rate students on 30 WSS indicators. This information is provided to MSDE by Sept. 30th.

What does the implementation of MMSR at Judy Centers look like?

Kindergarten, Pre-kindergarten, Head Start, and child care staff are engaged in at least three sets of activities:

- Joint staff development activities using the existing (or modified) MMSR staff developmental modules.
- Periodic horizontal communication of the progress of children who are in more than one setting daily and vertical communication of the progress of children when they move from one level to the next.
- Review of aggregated WSS information pertaining to the school (and county) following joint planning, which will involve focusing on specific domains or specific populations of children.

STRATEGIES:

Professional Development

This component involves staff development for everyone working with Judy Center children. There is a variety of training modules available corresponding to the varying needs of the programs.

- Half-day training session for all Judy Center Partners: a training module that gives an overview of MMSR. Through activities, partnership staff learn their role in implementation of the Judy Center Partnership.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten Teachers – Four sessions are offered in the first year of training and three sessions in the second year. Upon completion of two years of training the teacher may participate in Institutes of Science, Math, Language and Literacy, or Social Studies. There are regional trainings offered for new teachers. Local Early Childhood Supervisors are responsible for arranging for these training opportunities.

- Head Start/Child Care – The Maryland Committee for Children has developed modules for child care providers, which are appropriate for Head Start teachers as well. Contact Steve Rohde at Maryland Committee for Children.

Local Alignment

It is ideal to embed the MMSR indicators into the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten report cards or other progress reports. There are several counties that have accomplished this task (Allegany, Anne Arundel, Frederick, Harford, Montgomery, and Washington). Several other counties are planning to embed the indicators or are in the process of doing so (Baltimore City, Calvert, Charles, Carroll, Howard, Kent, Prince George’s, Talbot, Washington, and Wicomico Counties).

Coordinator Needs Assessment

It is helpful for the Judy Center Coordinator to be aware of and to document the training of each staff person working with Judy Center students. Such documentation is needed for the evaluation purposes and should provide the basis for a professional development needs assessment.

<i>Challenges/Strategies/Solutions:</i>	
Challenges	Strategies/Solutions
Many have heard of it, but few staff members know the MMSR.	Provide an orientation session to the steering committee and all staff members.
Some staff members have previously received MMSR training, some have not.	Determine who will attend the MMSR professional development. Trainings will vary depending on the number of previous trainings staff has attended.
The MMSR professional development modules are somewhat different from the ones used for child care and Head Start, which affects the way in which joint staff development sessions are organized.	Use a plenary and break out format with at least two trainers (i.e., start out the day with all staff members for a segment of the training which is the same for all participants and break into groups for staff development segments which are different from each other.)
There are limited funds for professional development.	The Judy Center grant should have included funds for the MMSR training. If money is tight, try to coordinate with professional development sessions that are offered by the Regional Child Care Resource Centers or MCC.
Problems scheduling meetings at times when all staff members can participate.	Build in long-term planning including the administering of the modules, communication and articulation, and planning time using the aggregated data.

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Maryland Model for School Readiness and School Readiness Information:
<http://www.mdk12.org/instruction/ensure/MMSR/index.html>

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⁶ MMSR is using portfolio assessment and two versions of the
WSS Kindergarten Developmental Checklist

⁷ WSS Head Start uses a modified WSS P-3 and P-4 Developmental Checklist

⁸ Annual Report submitted by MSDE to the General Assembly.

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