

# Early Learning Site Visit Description

2018 – 2019

## Focus

Supporting high quality, inclusive, developmentally appropriate practices in early learning. **Purpose**

Selected sites will develop a two to three-hour visitor program including resources to:

- **Facilitate Transfer of Knowledge**
  - support visitors in the study of promising practices within the Early Learning sector and the application of the pedagogy in early learning programs; and,
  - assist educators in planning a high quality, inclusive, developmentally and culturally appropriate early learning program.
- **Build Capacity and Expertise**
  - articulate and promote the inclusionary philosophy and beliefs of *Inclusive Education* (2017) and demonstrating inclusive practices,
  - articulate and promote the principles of *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* (2010) and to implement *Essential Learning Experiences* (2015),

**OR**

  - articulate and promote the principles of *Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten* (2009) and meeting the outcomes as outlined in the *Saskatchewan Kindergarten Curriculum* (2010),

**OR**

  - articulate and promote the principles of *Jouer et explorer: Guide du Programme d'apprentissage pour la petite* (2008) and meeting the outcomes as outlined in the (2014) *Maternelle Immersion Française*.
- **Exemplify Promising Practice**
  - support continuous reflection and professional growth with all staff at the host sites.

Refer to Attachment 'A' for possible areas of focus for site visits.

## Description

A site visit is a professional learning opportunity for early childhood educators. Educators visit one or more programs that demonstrate promising practices in planning and learning for young children. The duration of the visit is usually three hours with a large part of the time spent observing the children and interactions of the educators in the program environment. There is a pre and post component where the host describes the program to the visitors and explains the journey of their program as it relates to the focus of the initiative.

## Process

Educators and programs who are interested in the Early Learning Site Visit Initiative will submit an application and related material to the Ministry of Education, Early Years Branch for consideration by **April 24, 2018**.

Ministry staffs will short list eligible programs. Ministry staff or assigned early learning experts will visit potential sites that meet criteria with selection of sites for 2018-19 by May 25, 2018.

## Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for identifying potential programs include the following:

- Early learning programs must actively be pursuing promising practices while:
  - embedding *Essential Learning Experiences* (including the spiritual domain) through experiential learning (inquiry and play); and,
  - meeting curricular outcomes through experiential learning (inquiry and play).
- Programs must have an environment that reflects the principles of early learning and distinguishing features of high quality, inclusive, developmentally appropriate programming.
- The environment must clearly demonstrate in word and practice that children are capable and competent.
- Program educators must be able to articulate their strengths and their journey towards high quality programming.
- Program educators demonstrate the importance of reflective practice and documenting children's learning.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The ministry will:

- Select new host sites,
- Provide funding for the *Early Learning Site Visit Initiative*,
- Develop site guidelines,
- Develop visitor guidelines in consultation with sites,
- Provide templates and samples of information for visitors,
- Support the program in the development of site visit focus, content and materials,
- Facilitate leadership/professional learning meetings for selected programs,
- Inform sector of site visit schedule, locations, and,
- Obtain feedback and recommendations on the *Early Learning Site Visit Initiative* from sites and visitors.

## Site Visit Programs

Educators will:

- Participate in the initiative for a twelve-month period (June 2018-June 2019),
- Participate in an initial meeting with the ministry to review the initiative purpose and objectives (1 day),

- Participate in a preliminary discussion with the ministry and collaborate on site visit focus and materials to be developed for visits (.5 day),
- Collaborate on the brochure finalization and the development of a presentation for visitors,
- Conduct visits one or two days per month over a nine-month period for a total of six visits from October-June (6 visits x .5 days= 3 days),
- Participate in a mid-year conference call to evaluate, clarify, and provide updates on the initiative,
- Arrange for an ECERS-3 evaluation on program (for new sites),
- Provide the ministry with copies of visitor evaluations, guest registry and ECERS-3 final report,
- Participate in a leadership reflection meeting with the ministry and new sites to review the program; and,
- Provide the ministry with a final report and evaluation of the *Early Learning Site Visit Initiative*.

**For the visits the educator will:**

- Develop materials (e.g., PowerPoint presentation, slideshow, handouts) for visitors to the site,
- Display and share ministry and other relevant resources,
- Provide an orientation to visitors,
- Conduct the tour of the classroom allowing time for observation and interaction with children,
- Provide time for reflection, questions and resource sharing immediately following the observation of the site; and,
- Follow-up with visitors as required.

**Timeline**

Event	Time Frame
Initial organizing meeting with sites to set dates	June 2018
Site visit dates released	August 2018
Development of materials	July 2018 to September 2018
Visits	October 2018 to May 2019
Mid-year evaluation and teleconference	February 2019
Leadership reflection meeting	June 2019
Site final report	June 2019

**For Further Information**

If you have any questions, please contact Kathryn Cooper at 306-787-2701 or [kathryn.cooper@gov.sk.ca](mailto:kathryn.cooper@gov.sk.ca) and/or Michelle Gray at 306-798-9556 or [michelle.gray@gov.sk.ca](mailto:michelle.gray@gov.sk.ca).