Curriculum Training Review Tool

October 2026

Curriculum Training

Purpose: This tool is intended to **support consistent review and interpretation of curriculum training documentation for GNJK rating purposes**. Programs may use this guidance to determine whether professional development meets Grow NJ Kids (GNJK) curriculum training expectations and to identify appropriate documentation to support completion.

Curriculum training refers to professional development that is **specific to a particular curriculum** and **includes content on its components, implementation, and/or the research, foundation, or pedagogy that inform its design**. To meet GNJK requirements, **the training must be directly aligned to the identified curriculum and support its use in practice**; general trainings applicable to any curriculum do not meet this criteria.

Curriculum components

Examples of curriculum components are provided below. ***Inclusion of these topics alone does not qualify a training as curriculum training.*** The training description must clearly demonstrate that the content is specific to a *particular* curriculum and is not broadly applicable to *any* curriculum.

Component	Description
Curriculum Overview	Introduces the purpose, structure, standards alignment, and progression of the curriculum; sets the foundation for all other training
Lesson Planning	Helps educators translate the curriculum into daily instructional practice; focuses on pacing, objectives, differentiation, and instructional design
Key Instructional Practices	Covers strategies and methods expected when teaching the curriculum; often includes pedagogy, scaffolding, engagement strategies, and differentiation
Family Engagement Connected to Curriculum	Helps educators communicate curriculum goals and learning expectations to families; supports home-school alignment and student learning beyond the classroom
Differentiation & Support for Diverse Learners	Supports multilingual learners, students with disabilities and varying skill levels; accessibility, accommodations, and scaffolds tie to the curriculum
Culturally Responsive & Inclusive Practices	Ensures that curriculum reflects students' identities and experiences; equitable implementation and bias awareness in instruction and assessment
Implementation & Fidelity Support	Expectations for consistent use of the curriculum; common pitfalls, non-negotiables, and flexibility within the model
Instruction Materials & Resources Training	How to use teacher guides, digital tools, manipulatives, and student materials; efficiency tips and planning support

What types of training are ***not*** considered curriculum training?

- General professional development that is broadly applicable to staff regardless of the curriculum used
- Professional development on a performance-based assessment (PBA)
- Product demonstrations, sales presentations and vendor marketing
- Compliance or regulatory training
- Instructional topics without a curriculum connection
- Coaching or reflective practice sessions that are not curriculum-anchored

Intentional training selection based on staff needs

- ECE program staff should select professional development aligned to GNJK standards **and** individual staff needs
- Foundational curriculum trainings are for newer staff or those new to a curriculum and build core knowledge
- Advanced curriculum trainings are for experienced staff who have completed foundational training, and deepen practice
- Where possible, prioritize selecting training based on individual staff needs, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach across all staff

GNJK professional development requirements for curriculum training

*The information below is from the **GNJK Quality Standards for Early Care and Education Programs**.*

- Curriculum training must be provided or approved by the curriculum developer, GNJK Training Services, or by an approved trainer certified by the curriculum developer
- Each training must be a minimum of 1 hour in length
- Programs can exclude staff in their first year of employment from professional development completion calculations if these staff members have an up-to-date professional development plan that shows they will complete the required professional development by their second year

Note: If alignment with GNJK requirements is not clear based on the training description and evidence provided, additional information may be requested.

Acceptable evidence of completed curriculum training

*The information below is included in the **GNJK Rating Protocol for Center-based Programs**.*

- Training records or certificates
- NJ Workforce Registry transcripts
- College transcripts

Training records and certificates must include: name of the training; date of the training; number of training hours; name of staff member who attended; and name of training facilitator or organization.

Curriculum-specific documentation

- Training evidence should clearly identify the curriculum connected to the training. If the curriculum connection is not clear, additional documentation may be requested (i.e., course description, agenda, syllabus, training objectives, confirmation from the curriculum developer or approved training entity)
- Submitted training documentation should clearly identify the curriculum connected to the training
- Programs are responsible for maintaining documentation and ensuring that staff training records are current and available at the time of rating review

Questions? Email the GNJK Rating Team at GNJKRating@montclair.edu