



HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS SUPPORT

STEAM, LANGUAGE, AND CULTURE

PART 1302: PROGRAM OPERATIONS

- Subpart C - Education and Child Development Program Services
 - 1302.30 Purpose
 - 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment
 - 1302.35 Education in home-based programs
 - 1302.36 Tribal language preservation and revitalization

All programs must provide high-quality early education and child development services that include children with disabilities and promote children’s cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Teaching practices should not only provide learning experiences that support all of the developmental domains in the ELOF, such as math and cognitive development, but also foster trust and security and intentionally create an environment that builds on children’s individual development and learning patterns. Additionally, home-based programs must encourage parents as the child’s first teacher and support parents as they provide high-quality early STEAM experiences that build on children’s individual development and learning patterns.

1. STEAM learning opportunities support thinking and communication skills, foster positive interactions with adults and children, and build confidence and joy in learning. All these skills and behaviors promote school readiness.
2. STEAM integrates many areas of learning and development across the Early Learning Outcome Framework (ELOF) domains. As children explore and investigate, they are relating to others, developing concepts, expressing themselves, managing their emotions, learning to problem-solve, and more! These are ELOF goals across the developmental continuum for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
3. STEAM concepts are already present in much of what you do. This is not an additional curriculum piece you have to add to your planning and practices. STEAM extends many of the learning experiences you already provide!



4. The Head Start Program Performance Standards help you integrate tribal language and culture in Head Start classrooms, in the curricula, with ongoing observation-based assessment, and across program systems and services. The current Head Start Program Performance Standards require programs to support all children’s home languages and cultural and linguistic heritages (1304.21(a)(1)(i)). When most children speak the same language, at least one classroom staff member or home visitor must also speak the children’s home or tribal language. If staff are unable to speak the children’s home or tribal language, a native speaker (who does not have to meet the credentialing requirements of Head Start staff) can join the classroom (1304.52(g)(2)). The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework notes that children must be allowed to demonstrate the skills, behaviors, and knowledge in the Framework in their home language, English, or both languages” (page 4).



In addition, 1304.53(b)(1)(i) and (ii) address culturally appropriate toys, materials, and furniture in Head Start programs. They require that a program’s approach to child development, education, and assessment be culturally and linguistically appropriate.

These Head Start Program Performance Standards support the integration of tribal language and culture into every aspect of the Head Start and Early Head Start program model.

REFERENCE:

Native Language Preservation, Revitalization, Restoration, and Maintenance in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, ACF-IM-HS-15-02, <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-15-02>