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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State Department of Education Identifies Recommended Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers**

*Curriculum Provides Guidance to Child Care Centers*

BALTIMORE (January 23, 2008) – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Childhood Development today released a state-recommended list of curriculum for infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) to provide guidance to child care centers, Head Start programs, and nursery schools in selecting curriculum that aligns with *Guidelines for the Healthy Development and Care of Young Children*. These guidelines serve as a framework for the learning and development for infants and toddlers.

MSDE is recommending the curricula of two publishers, Pearson: The OUNCE Scale and Teaching Strategies: Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos. The OUNCE Scale enables caregivers and families to monitor a child's development. It has multiple approaches to collecting information, structured methods for keeping track of accomplishments, and includes family members in the assessment process. The Teaching Strategies curriculum is a comprehensive curriculum with a clear organizational structure and a particular focus on routines and experiences. It translates research and theory from the field of early childhood education into a practical, easy-to-understand approach to working with children and their families.

“We are very excited to provide programmatic support to early childhood providers who serve infants and toddlers,” said Dr. Rolf Grafwallner, Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Early Childhood Development. “More than 150,000 infants and toddlers are cared for in Maryland. The use of the infant/toddler curricula will inevitably improve the quality of care and enhance young children’s development and learning.”

The Early Childhood Curriculum Project, made up of representatives from the early care and education community, higher education, public and non-public schools, initially identified a state-recommended list of comprehensive curricula for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds and also participated in the review process to determine recommendations. This project is meant to offer resources for the classroom that align with the state’s prekindergarten and kindergarten curricular frameworks, also known as the Voluntary State Curriculum.

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### **Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers**

“We have a responsibility to ensure that all children are ready for school,” said Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools. “This state-recommended list of curriculum will provide the resources and guidance to Maryland’s early learning educators to better prepare our youngest children so that when they enter prekindergarten they are ready to learn.”

Maryland joins a number of other states which have established a state-recommended list of curricula for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. This initiative is part of a three-year strategic plan, devised by MSDE to improve the early learning opportunities for young children before they start school.

For more information about the Early Childhood Curriculum Project visit the Division of Early Childhood Development’s section on the MSDE website [www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care).

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