

**SANTA ANA UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Early Childhood Education

2025-2026

PARENT HANDBOOK



Welcome to ECE!

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the Santa Ana Unified School District Early Childhood Education Program!

The Santa Ana Unified School District and the Board of Education have a firm commitment to quality programming that recognizes, respects and honors the individuality of each child and family. Developmentally appropriate and culturally diverse experiences are integrated into all components of the curriculum ensuring an atmosphere of acceptance for developing feelings of self-worth, dignity, and ethnic pride. The Early Childhood Education Department programs provide abundant opportunities for young children to grow personally, socially and to become more effective learners.

The Full day State Preschool is open from 8:00 am-4:00 pm Monday through Friday throughout the year. Part day State Preschool is open from 8:00 am-11:00 am and 1:00 pm-4:00 pm Monday through Friday from August to June. Holidays are based on the Santa Ana Unified School District's school calendar. The program offers an educational component, a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack. There are parent opportunities for classroom participation and education. All staff meet State Department of Education certification and receive ongoing training.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the SAUSD Early Childhood Education Department is to ensure that children enter Kindergarten healthy and ready to learn. This is accomplished by providing high quality preschool programs and support services in partnership with California Department of Education, First 5 Orange County, and other partners in the community. In addition, we are committed to assisting the children and their families to improve the quality of their lives. Please let us know how we can help you, your child and/or your family. Together we can make this a successful year for all the children and families enrolled in the Santa Ana Unified School District Early Childhood Education Program!

Please take time to review the material included in this handbook. It will provide you with necessary information regarding the policies, procedures and expectations for the Early Childhood Education Part Day and Full Day Programs.

We look forward to serving your family this school year!

Sincerely,
Keely Orlando, MA, Ed.
Director, Early Childhood Education

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SECTION I: PROGRAM DESIGN

AGES

The Santa Ana Unified School District Early Childhood Education department serves 2-5 year old children whose families meet income or other eligibility criteria for the program.

Child's Birth Date	Early Learning Options for Families
2 year olds may start ON their 2nd birthday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One SAUSD Preschool program• Part Day Preschool• PM Session Only at Selected Sites
9/2/2020 - 12/1/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One SAUSD Preschool program• Part Day Preschool• Full Day Preschool
9/2/2020 - 9/2/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One SAUSD Preschool program• Part Day Preschool• Full Day Preschool (OR) Transitional Kindergarten
9/2/2019 - 9/1/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kindergarten

PART DAY PROGRAM HOURS & DAYS OF OPERATION	
Morning Session: 8:00am-11:00am, Monday through Friday	
Afternoon Session: 1:00pm-4:00pm, Monday through Friday	
First Day of School: Monday, August 11	Last Day of School: Thursday, May 28
There will be no school on the following days:	
September 1	February 13, 16, 20
October 6, 10, 31	March 6
November 11, 17, 24-28	April 3, 6-10
December 19, 22-31	May 25
January 1-2, 19	

FULL DAY PROGRAM HOURS & DAYS OF OPERATION	
Full Day Session: 8:00am-4:00pm, Monday through Friday	
First Day of School: Tuesday, July 1	Last Day of School: Friday, June 30
There will be no school on the following days:	
July 3-4	January 1, 19
August 8	February 13, 16
September 1, 9 (Modified Day 8am-11am)	March 6 (Modified Day 8am-11am)
November 11, 17, 27-28	May 25
December 19, 24-26, 31	June 19

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS Main Office: 417 E. Central Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92707 (714) 569-9782		
Adams State Preschool 2130 S. Raitt St. Santa Ana, CA 92704	Carver State Preschool 1401 W. Santa Ana Blvd. Santa Ana, CA 92703	Davis State Preschool 1405 French St. Santa Ana, CA 92701
Diamond State Preschool 1450 S. Center St. Santa Ana, CA 92704	Edison State Preschool 2063 Orange Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92707	Esqueda State Preschool 2240 S. Main St Santa Ana, CA 92707
Franklin State Preschool 210 W. Cubbon St. Santa Ana, CA 92701	Fremont State Preschool 930 W. Tenth St. Santa Ana, CA 92703	Garfield State Preschool 850 Brown Santa Ana, CA 92701
Harvey State Preschool 1635 S. Center St. Santa Ana, CA 92704	Heninger State Preschool 417 W. Walnut Santa Ana, CA 92703	Heroes Preschool 1111 Civic Center Drive, Santa Ana, CA 92703
Jackson State Preschool 1143 S. Nakoma Dr. Santa Ana, CA 92704	Jefferson State Preschool 1522 W Adams St Santa Ana, CA 92704	Kennedy State Preschool 1300 E. McFadden Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92705
King State Preschool 1001 S. Graham Ln Santa Ana, CA 92703	Lincoln State Preschool 425 S. Sullivan Santa Ana, CA 92704	Lowell State Preschool 700 S. Flower St. Santa Ana, CA 92703
Madison State Preschool 1124 E. Hobart Santa Ana, CA 92707	Martin State Preschool 939 W. Wilshire Avenue Santa Ana, CA 92707	Mitchell Preschool 3001 W. Harvard St. Santa Ana, CA 92704
Monte Vista Preschool 2116 Monte Vista Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92704	John Muir State Preschool 1951 N. Mabury St. Santa Ana, CA 92705	Monroe State Preschool 417 E. Central Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92707
Pio Pico State Preschool 931 W. Highland Santa Ana, CA 92703	Romero-Cruz State Pre-K 2701 W. 5 th Street Santa Ana, CA 92703	Roosevelt-Walker Community Center 816 E. Chestnut Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92701
Santiago State Preschool 2212 N. Baker St. Santa Ana, CA 92706	Sierra Preschool 2021 N. Grand Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92705	Taft State Preschool 500 W. Keller Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92707
Warwick State Preschool 780 S. Lyon St. Santa Ana, CA 92704	Washington State Pre-K 910 W. Anahurst Pl. Santa Ana, CA 92707	Wilson State Preschool 1317 N. Baker St. Santa Ana, CA 92706

ENROLLMENT SPECIALIST STAFF DIRECTORY:			
Enrollment Specialist	Patricia Cortez	714-569-9765	Jackson, Romero Cruz, Washington, Harvey
Enrollment Specialist	Alejandra Chavez	714-569-9745	Adams Full Day, Diamond, Jefferson, Pio Pico
Enrollment Specialist	Adriana Jimenez	714-569-9783	Davis, Garfield, Muir, Franklin, Fremont
Enrollment Specialist	Claudia Mier	714-569-9760	Esqueda, Edison, Kennedy, Monroe, Mitchell
Enrollment Specialist	Marina Ortega	714-569-9720	Madison, Roosevelt, Warwick, Sierra
Enrollment Specialist	Liz Ruelas	714-569-9793	Henninger, Lowell, Wilson, Santiago, Heroes
Enrollment Specialist	Katherine Chanman	714-569-9777	King, Lincoln, Monte Vista, Martin, Carver,
Department Specialist	Carla Noriega	714-569-9753	

STAFFING

California State Law requires that anyone who works in a publicly funded preschool program must hold a Child Development Permit. The permit is issued by the State of California, Commission on Teacher Credentialing. All of our Preschool Teachers hold Child Development Permits.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

SAUSD Early Childhood Education department is committed to quality early childhood education. All staff members hold the appropriate credential/permit required by the State of California. New employees are provided an in-depth orientation to guide them to understand how agency policies relate to their respective job description.

We support continuous staff growth by assessing the needs of staff and providing professional development activities to enhance their growth. Teachers are regularly notified of staff development opportunities from outside agencies such as CPIN, CECO, and BTSA.

Annual program satisfaction surveys are completed by the teachers to identify areas of interest, concern, or areas of improvement.

The Early Childhood Education Director, Coordinators, and Early Learning Specialists evaluate our staff members annually on specific performance criteria.

We have sound internal communication mechanisms, which include email, phone, and newsletter to provide staff with information necessary to carry out their respective duties.

SECTION II: GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES

OPEN DOOR POLICY

All SAUSD Early Childhood Education classrooms operate under an “open door policy”. Parents are welcomed into their child’s class at any time while school is in session to observe and/or volunteer. Visiting parents must provide a current negative TB test (within the last 12 months), proof of immunization for Measles (MMR), Influenza, and Pertussis (TDaP), a copy of their driver’s license, and completed Statement of Good Health. **Any adult that would like to participate in any classroom activities must have all the above mentioned documents on file.** Visiting parents must check in through the front office of the school site and obtain a visitor’s pass using the Raptor System.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Santa Ana Unified School District’s Early Childhood Education programs are operated on a non-discriminatory basis, affording equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, actual or perceived sex, disability, or age in any of its policies, procedures or practices.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Children with disabilities or other special needs, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are welcomed into the program. Reasonable accommodations to participate in the program are provided to ensure a successful placement.

PROHIBITION OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OR WORSHIP

The ECE department shall not provide childcare and development services that include religious instruction or worship of any type.

MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

The welfare of all children is of concern to all adults in the SAUSD, ECE program. The State of California requires (Section 11166 of the Penal Code) all employees working in child development programs to report all “suspected/possible” physical, emotional, neglect, and/or sexual abuse to the Child Abuse Registry. All parents need to be aware and need to report to staff any situation and/or conditions that may affect the welfare of any child in the program. The Department or licensing agency has the authority to interview children, or staff, and to inspect and audit child or child care center records, without prior consent. The penalty for employees NOT reporting suspected abuse cases is a fine and/or imprisonment.

Possible Reasons for Reporting:

- If a child arrives with bruises or appears neglected, at risk, or sexually abused, program employees are mandated to call the Child Abuse Registry.
- It is the responsibility of the County Department of Social Services to investigate and determine if a child has been abused.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The governing board is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free of harassment. The Board prohibits sexual harassment of any pupil by any employee, pupil, or other person at school or at school-sponsored or pupil-related activity. The Board also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against any person who complains, testifies, assists or otherwise participates in the complaint process established in accordance with this policy. A school employee to whom a complaint is made shall within 24 hours, or as soon as reasonably possible, of receiving the complaint, report it to the Principal or designee. All complaints and allegations of sexual harassment shall be kept confidential except as necessary to carry out the investigation or take other subsequent necessary action (BP 5145.7; EC231.5, 48980; 5CCR4917).

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance in the filing, investigation and resolution of complaints with federal or state laws. SAUSD has adopted policies and procedures to investigate and resolve complaints regarding an alleged violation by a local educational agency of federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, unauthorized charging of pupil fees for participation in an educational activity and the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). For more details regarding the uniform complaint procedure refer to the Rights and Responsibilities brochure of Pupil and Parents of SAUSD.

If you have a question or concerns, please communicate with your child's teacher. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the parent-teacher meeting, please contact the Early Childhood Education office at (714) 569-9782.

SECTION III: PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the Santa Ana Unified School District Early Childhood Education Department is to provide a high quality educational experience for preschoolers that successfully prepare them for entry into Kindergarten.

To ensure this goal is achieved, the ECE department includes critical elements of community involvement, regular assessment of student development, safe and healthy environments, and collaboration with health and social services agencies to provide essential services to families within the community.

DESIRED RESULTS DEVELOPMENTAL PROFILE (DRDP 2015)

The goal of the SAUSD Early Childhood Education department is to ensure that all children are making progress in the domains of physical, cognitive and social-emotional development.

Our program uses the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP 2015) to assess students' progress. The DRDP is a tool developed by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division, to assess the development of the children on 6 different areas:

1. Children are personally and socially competent
2. Children are effective learners
3. Children show physical and motor competence
4. Children are safe and healthy
5. Families support their children's learning and development
6. Families achieve their goals

Children are assessed within 60 days of enrollment, and every six months thereafter.

Parent input is a necessary component of this assessment. The assessment is also used to plan and conduct age and developmentally appropriate activities for the children.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

The program's responsibility is to provide an environment that stimulates each child's curiosity and learning in a developmentally appropriate context. The High Scope philosophy provides the framework for the program to integrate other curricula and to meet the needs of the children. The use of observation and assessment (DRDP 2015) drives the planning process, the teaching, and ultimately the learning. Children best learn when they are pursuing their own goals and interests, and are encouraged to make choices about materials and activities throughout the day. It is the program's goal to help children become critical thinkers, acquire the necessary skills to be socially competent and to have a love for learning.

CALIFORNIA INFANT/TODDLER & PRESCHOOL LEARNING FOUNDATIONS

The California Preschool Learning Foundations outline key knowledge and skills that most children can achieve when provided with the kinds of interactions, instruction, and environments that research has shown to promote early learning and development.

Teachers plan instructions based on the following domains:

1. Social-emotional development
2. Language and literacy
3. English-language development
4. Mathematics
5. Visual and performing arts
6. Physical development
7. Health

8. History-social science
9. Science

CURRICULUM

The Early Childhood Education department utilizes Benchmark “Ready to Advance”, High Scope “Numbers Plus” and Conscious Discipline Curriculum for Preschool. Our early childhood curriculum encourages both children and adults to initiate learning experiences. Through daily planning and evaluation sessions, adults provide activities and generate strategies to challenge children’s emerging abilities and to encourage children to develop and pursue their own interests, talents, and goals. The High Scope philosophy helps adults focus on developmental principles and encourages them to build on children’s existing strengths and accomplishments.

We encourage each child to develop his/her unique pattern of interests, talents, and skills. We know that children learn best through interaction with people and materials, and it is through play and instruction that they will achieve their educational goals. Because we recognize that each child grows at different rates, their instruction will focus on the following:

1. **LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:** Listening, understanding, speaking, and communicating.
2. **LITERACY:** Phonological awareness, book knowledge, appreciation of literacy, print awareness, pre-reading concepts, early writing, and alphabet knowledge
3. **MATHEMATICS:** Spatial sense, counting, patterns, and measurements
4. **SCIENCE:** Methods and increased knowledge
5. **CREATIVE ARTS:** Dramatic play, art, music, and movement
6. **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL:** Self-concept, self-control, cooperation, relationships, knowledge of family and community
7. **PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:** Fine and gross motor skills, and healthy practices
8. **APPROACHES TO LEARNING:** Initiative, curiosity, engagement, persistence, reasoning, and problem solving

ASSESSMENT

Staff performs developmental screening on each enrolled child in all the preschool programs. The developmental screenings include the areas of Cognition, Speech and Language, Gross & Fine Motor, Self-help, Social and Emotional development. The purpose of developmental screening and assessments is to find out about each child’s growth and development to plan appropriate classroom activities. They may also give us information about potential areas of concern.

Your child will be assessed in the Fall and Spring. The teacher will also monitor your child’s progress throughout the year with samples of their work and observing their classroom behavior. A portfolio of skills will be kept during the year and shared with you as well as the results of the developmental screenings and assessments.

LEARNING GENIE

The Learning Genie application will assist with capturing children's continuous growth through assessment and family engagement. Learning Genie is a confidential, district approved and program compliant application utilized for documenting, and rating child observations. This electronic portfolio and reporting system enables teachers to maximize learning opportunities through quick and organized recorded observations of children. The Learning Genie helps teachers rate children's growth daily which informs their curriculum planning, activities and lessons.

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS)

Preschool classrooms are assessed utilizing the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), a research-based observation tool used to help teachers and schools improve the quality of classroom interactions. The CLASS tool is designed to provide an objective behavioral assessment of a classroom focused on interactions. The tool consists of 10 dimensions within 3 Domains; Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. CLASS outcome scores drive instructional coaching for preschool teachers. Higher CLASS scores are associated with higher levels of children's success in early literacy, academic functioning and behavioral engagement.

Levels of program quality are based on current definitions of best practices and on research based on outcomes. The focus is on the needs of the children and how to meet those needs to the best of our current understanding.

PROGRAM SELF EVALUATION

For quality assurance and to monitor program efficacy, the ECE department conducts an annual self-evaluation process. The evaluation process includes input from parents, teachers, school administrators and assessments to evaluate our program. We use this information to improve our program quality. We are interested in how the program helps you support your child's learning and development. To ensure we are meeting your family's needs, we will be asking you to complete a survey in the Fall and Spring.

Included in this comprehensive self-evaluation process are the following assessments:

- Desired Results Program Action Plan (DRDP): Summarizes program-wide trends/themes found among the three Summaries of Findings:
 - DRDP Essential View
 - Parent Survey
- Agency Annual Report: Describes how the Annual Report was compiled and who participated in the process
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS): Summarizes key findings and plans to improve the quality of classroom interactions.
- Agency Categorical Program Monitoring/Contract Monitoring Review (CPM/CMR) Summary of Findings: Summarizes the ECE department's non-compliance findings in the CPM/CMR instrument

- Personnel Roster: Summarizes ECE personnel
- Attestation of Qualified Staff and Ratio Requirements: The following documentation will be kept in the Early Childhood Education department files, updated as necessary, and made available to CDD staff upon request:
 - Current Personnel Roster (CD- 3701) form attached to a current, comprehensive list of **all** personnel assigned to each classroom
 - Copies of current permits, credentials, or temporary county certificates
 - Copies of waivers, if applicable, for the Program Director or Site Supervisor(s)

(California *Education Code (EC)* sections 8203[g], 8208[v][aa][af], 8244, 8264.5, 8264.7, 8360-8361, 8463[l][m], *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5 (5 *CCR*), sections 18203, 18205-18207, and 18295).

The SAUSD Early Childhood Education Department maintains at least the following minimum ratios at all sites and these ratios shall be determined based on actual attendance.

Age Group	Adult:Child	Teacher:Child
Infants (Birth to 18 months)	1:3	1:18
Toddlers (18+ up to 36 months)	1:4	1:16
Preschool (36+ up to Kindergarten)	1:8	1:24

(*EC* sections 8203, and 8264.7-8264.8; 5 *CCR*, sections 18013[d], 18135, and 18290)

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Teachers are required to hold two (2) parent-teacher conferences per school year at school.

If you have any questions about your child's progress at any time of the year, please feel free to contact your child's teacher for information. Additional conferences will take place when considered necessary by the staff or parent.

The purpose of Parent-teacher contacts/conferences is to:

- Provide information regarding your child's progress
- Discuss your child's individual needs and the services available for meeting those needs
- Provide an opportunity for parents to recommend activities they would like included in the curriculum
- Provide suggestions for activities parents can use to help their children at home

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & EDUCATION

Parents are supported, assisted and recognized as the principal influence on their child's growth and development. Parental involvement and education is an integral component for success in

the program. Research has proven that the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

- Create a home environment that encourages learning
- Express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers
- Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community

When parents are involved, children do better in school! That is why we have specific requirements for you and Parent Involvement in your child's preschool class. Your participation in class will be of direct benefit to your child and to all of the children in the class because with more teachers in class, more can be accomplished for the children.

Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved in their child's education by:

- Participating each day in the 15 minutes reading session with their child in the classroom
- Volunteer in the classroom twice a month

By volunteering, you are bringing great value to your child's educational experience, and you are helping to uphold the state requirement for adult: student ratio.

The preschool program is required to have 3 adults in every classroom, at all times. All State Preschools are licensed under Title 5 and are required to have a ratio of 1 adult for every 8 children (1:8). Each preschool classroom has 2 teachers and 1 teacher assistant. In order to provide the highest quality learning experience for your child, we encourage at least one parent to volunteer in each classroom daily, and we welcome additional support to enhance the quality of your child's preschool experience. Parent involvement activities such as volunteering also provide valuable opportunities for high quality parent/child interaction modeled by the child's teacher. **Please do not bring valuables into the classroom to prevent loss or damage to personal items.**

Ongoing, on-site parent education workshops are offered by our Parent Education Specialist. Workshop topics are selected based on the results of a Parent Interest Survey given to parents at the beginning of the school year. Topics may include: child development, behavior management, discipline, health, nutrition, safety, consumer skills, community resources, etc.

In addition, parental input is welcomed. A Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is established each year to advise program administrators on issues related to services for families and children. Participating families elect PAC site representatives. Board members from the previous year are encouraged to extend their term and serve an additional year. Training is provided for each PAC member. PAC officers are elected to represent and or lead the monthly meetings. PAC members are asked to share information with staff and parents at each of their sites.

SOCIAL SERVICES REFERRALS & FOLLOW UP

One of the goals of our program is to establish a strong partnership between the school, home and community to provide the fundamental basis for success for children.

The ECE program has a Parent Education Specialist on staff to highlight the importance of the connection between home and school, in collaboration with classroom staff. The Parent Education Specialist is also available to help families obtain the necessary services, both internally and in the community. They can help with:

- Assistance in case of emergency or crisis
- Support for needed community services
- Parenting classes and informational workshops
- Referrals to training for adults and / or educational resources
- Help in working with government agencies
- Help with medical and dental insurance for families who are not covered
- Translation services for non-English speakers

When families indicate a need for resources on the Parent Needs Assessment, the ECE Parent Education Specialist will contact the family to provide information on agencies that can provide support in areas of need. The Parent Education Specialist will follow up with the family within 30 days to determine if their needs are being met, or if any additional resources are needed. If additional referrals are given to the family, the Parent Education Specialist will again contact them within 30 days to follow up.

HEALTH REFERRALS

The Department of Early Child Education recognizes the importance of early identification of health problems, if undetected or untreated, can cause learning problems. The objective of the ECE department is to help you keep your child in the best possible health. The preschool program provides information and helps parents to identify health problems and help children to have the best possible health.

Families enrolled in the ECE Department will have access to the following services:

- Health, welfare, safety and nutrition education
- Vision and hearing screenings for children
- Body mass index (a measure of height and weight for children)
- Medical and dental referrals for children
- Referrals and support for special needs
- Mental health services
- ASQ & ASQ-SE (Developmental Assessment)

STUDENT REFERRAL PROCESS & FOLLOW UP

- Pre-Screening of students medical/health history to identify any referrals needed
- Developmental Screening using the ASQ and ASQ SE tools as indicated
- Referrals to community health resources based on findings of screenings

- 60 day window for observation/identification of children with suspected delays
- Referrals are submitted on a case by case basis dependent on the areas of student needs
- Monthly COST (Collaboration of Services Team) meetings to follow up on and track referrals
- Ongoing assessments and referrals of student needs

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Early Childhood Education department is committed to supporting your family by establishing a strong partnership with you, your family and the community. A cooperative network between school, home and community is established to provide the crucial foundation for children to succeed. This will reinforce the gains made by your child in the program and support your own personal goals and self-sufficiency.

Please contact the Enrollment Specialist, Teacher, or the ECE office for information, referrals and services.

NUTRITION

Children will be served a free, healthy, hot, well-balanced lunch at school every day.

Meals are varied and reflect the ethnic backgrounds of the children. All meals comply with Federal U.S.D.A. Nutrition requirements. Nutrition policies include the following:

- Children are required to have at least one serving of each food on their plates. They are not required to eat everything, only to place the food on their plates.
- Meals are served family style and children are required to serve themselves and clean up when they are done.
- Parents identified as Volunteers must sit at the table with the children and serve as role models by serving themselves one helping and tasting each food item.
- **District Policy states no food in and no food out.** All leftover food items must be thrown out at the end of each meal.
- Non-district food may not enter the classroom at any time (Birthdays, Holidays, End of the Year...etc). Teachers will turn away any non-district food items.

The food program is part of our curriculum and is an opportunity for children to learn concepts in areas such as health, nutrition, math, science, and language. Although children are encouraged to try new foods, they are never forced to do so.

Nutritionally balanced meals are provided in accordance with the Federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Families are required to fill out a "Meal Benefit" form at Warwick Square Apartments. Monthly menus are posted in each classroom.

In accordance with the Federal Law and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, sex, age or disability.

It is important that you notify your child's teacher and the school nurse of any food allergies your child may have. A 'Food Substitution Form' must be completed by a physician in order for your child to receive a substitute product or meal.

SECTION IV: PROGRAM QUALIFICATION

ELIGIBILITY

All families must meet **ONE** of the eligibility criteria listed below:

1. **EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS:** Written referral from an emergency shelter or other legal, medical or social service agency OR a written parental declaration that the family is homeless and a statement describing the family's living situation
2. **CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES, AT RISK OF ABUSE, NEGLECT AND/OR EXPLOITATION DOCUMENTATION:** Written referral, dated within six months of application for services and includes:
 - **CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES:** Statement from local county welfare services worker certifying that the child is receiving Child Protective Services (CPS) and that child care and development services are a necessary component of the CPS service plan
 - Probable duration of the CPS service plan
 - Name, address, phone number and signature of the county child welfare staff
 - **AT RISK OF ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND/OR EXPLOITATION:** Written referral, dated within six months of application for services and includes:
 - Statement by a legally qualified professional (someone licensed in the state to perform legal, medical, health or social services for the general public) that the child is at risk of abuse and neglect and that child care and development services are needed to reduce or eliminate that risk
 - Probable duration of the at risk situation
 - Name, address, phone number and signature of the legally qualified professional
3. **DISABILITY (IEP or IFSP Set-Aside)**
 - 10% of enrollment is reserved for children with disabilities (using Disability for eligibility)
 - If applying for the Full Day program, families must still establish a need for services. *Note - Once all families with established need are enrolled, parents of children with disabilities may be eligible without establishing need
 - Only children with disabilities are eligible to receive services with this eligibility category. Siblings must qualify under other eligibility requirements.
 - Copy of active IEP/IFSP summary page required
 - Once the 10% set-aside is filled, children with disabilities become a part of the regular enrollment priorities.

4. INCOME & FAMILY SIZE

- **INCOME DOCUMENTATION:** Required for the 2 months preceding certification or recertification (income threshold 115% of SMI)
- Total countable income means all income of the individuals counted in the family size, for example:
 - Gross wages or salaries, overtime, tips, cash aid, child support payment received, portion of student grants or scholarships not identified for educational purposes as tuition, books or supplies
 - ECE department reserves the right to ask for additional documentation to verify income.
- **Employed Families:**
 - Verification of Employment Release authorization
 - Payroll check stub(s) or letter from employer; OR
 - Other record of wages issued by the employer
 - Provide copies of the documentation of all non-wage income
 - Provide self-certification of any income for which no documentation is possible
- **Self Employed Families:** As many of the following types of documentation as necessary to determine income:
 - Letter from source of income
 - Copy of the most recently signed and completed tax return (all documents)
 - Other business records, such as ledgers, receipts, or business logs
- **FAMILY SIZE:** The parent must provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family. Supporting documentation for the number of children shall be at least **one** of the following:
 - Birth certificate
 - Child custody court order
 - Adoption documents
 - Foster Care placement records
 - School or medical records
 - County welfare department records
 - Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent

5. RECEIVING BENEFITS FROM GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMS: Families who have a member of its household who is certified to receive benefits from:

- Medi-Cal
- CalFresh
- California Food Assistance Program
- California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children
- Federal Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- Head Start
- Early Start

- CalWORKS
 - Provide documentation that the family is certified for a governmental program
 - Provide application for the government program with family's income for purposes of prioritizing enrollment and calculating family fees.
 - *If application for a governmental program is not available, the family will self-certify that they do not have access to the application and that the income declared on the application is correct
6. **FRPM (FREE/REDUCED PRICED MEALS):** If the ECE program is operating within the attendance boundary of a public elementary school, except charter or magnet school, where at least 80% of enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM) may enroll 3 & 4 year old children under specific conditions as described below:
- In order to be eligible for services under Free/Reduced Priced Meals (FRPM), the school site must be located within an FRPM school boundary, and when enrolling families under these special provisions, must certify that the family resides within the FRPM school boundary.
7. **NEED (FULL DAY PROGRAM ONLY): A child's hours for Full Day enrollment is based on the parent's NEED for child care services.** In order to satisfy the need requirement for Full Day services, parents must meet and provide documentation for one of the following criteria:
- Employed
 - Seeking employment
 - Attending school with a vocational goal
 - Experiencing homelessness
 - Child Protective Services (CPS/At-Risk)
 - Seeking permanent housing for family stability
 - Incapacitated
 - Welfare to Work Activities (CalWORKS Programs)

FEE POLICY (FULL DAY PROGRAMS ONLY)

FEE ASSESSMENT:

The fee schedule prepared and issued by the CDD must be used to determine family fees. The following factors are to be used to determine the fee to be assessed and collected for each family:

- Adjusted monthly family income
- Family size
- **No adjustments to fees shall be made for excused or unexcused absences**
- At the time of initial enrollment, Enrollment Specialist shall provide the family a copy of and explain to the parent(s) the ECE Department's policies regarding fee assessment and collection and the possible consequences for delinquent payment of fees.

EXCLUSIONS FROM FEE ASSESSMENT:

No fees shall be collected from families if:

- Income level (in relation to family size) is less than the first entry in the fee schedule
- Any individual counted in the family size is receiving CalWORKs cash aid
- Child is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation and exemption is indicated and documented by:
 - Legal OR
 - Medical OR
 - Social services agency OR
 - Emergency shelter
 - Families whose child is receiving protective services may be exempt from paying fees if need is documented by:
 - County welfare department
 - Child welfare services worker

FEE PAYMENT:

- Fee payment must be in the exact amount
- ECE may not accept overpayment of fees
- ECE must accept any of the following forms of payment as determined by parent choice:
 - Cash (exact amount only)
 - Money order
 - Personal check
 - Online payment system (service fee will apply)

CREDIT FOR FEES PAID TO OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- ECE Department shall grant a fee credit equal to the amount paid to other child care providers.
- Fee credit shall be issued to the subsequent fee billing period.
- Families are NOT allowed to carry over the credit beyond the family's subsequent fee billing period.

RECEIPT FOR PAYMENT OF FEES:

Enrollment Specialists shall provide an original copy of a pre-numbered receipt to each person who pays a fee. The receipt must show the following information:

- Amount paid
- Date of payment
- Rate of payment
- Period of service purchased

DELINQUENT FEES:

Fees shall be considered delinquent after 7 calendar days from the date the fees were due.

Enrollment Specialists shall issue a Notice of Action after the account is 7 calendar days delinquent, and shall include the following information:

- Total amount of unpaid fees
- Fee rate
- Period of delinquency
- Services shall be terminated 2 weeks from the date of the NOA unless all delinquent fees are paid before the end of the 2 week period.

PLAN FOR PAYMENT OF DELINQUENT FEES:

If a family indicates they are unable to pay their delinquent fees **in full**, Enrollment Specialists shall work with parents to create a reasonable repayment plan for payment of delinquent fees.

ECE Department will continue to provide services to the child, provided the **parent pays current fees when due** and complies with the provisions of the repayment plan.

Upon termination of services for nonpayment of delinquent fees, the family shall be ineligible for child care and development services until all delinquent fees are paid.

24 MONTH ELIGIBILITY:

Upon establishing initial or ongoing eligibility for services:

Family shall be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for those services for not less than 24 months.

Family shall receive those services for not less than 24 months before having their eligibility or need recertified. If a child is no longer age-eligible for services during the 24 month period, ECE will notify the family of the date the child will be disenrolled from the program.

Family shall not be required to report changes to income or other changes for at least 24 months.

Family shall report income increases that exceed the threshold for ongoing income eligibility within 30 days (income exceeds 115% of state median income)

Families may voluntarily report income or other changes to reduce the family's fees, or increase the family's services.

The duration of services for the Part Day program is the current program year and the following program year, provided the child continues to meet age eligibility requirements.

In the event the eligibility period ends before the end of a program year, eligibility shall be extended until the end of the program year, as long as applicable age-eligibility requirements are met.

RECERTIFICATION:

Parents are required to update their enrollment information upon the end of their certification period by verifying eligibility, need and income through the recertification process.

SECTION V: ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Families apply for the program using the “Care Connect” enrollment system application following the easy steps below:

1. Download the Care Connect application to your mobile device or access through the web-based version on a computer.
2. Create an account (one per family)
3. Gather all required documents (see below)
4. Submit all required documents using the Care Connect application
5. Contact the ECE office at 714-569-9782 if assistance is needed with your application

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION:

- 1 month of consecutive income from either month of the 2-month window immediately preceding the initial certification or recertification
- Birth certificates for all children in the family
- Child’s physical exam
- Child’s dental exam
- Child’s immunization records
- Child’s TB test
- Copy of student IEP/IFSP (if applicable)

****The ECE office can not enroll any student until all the required documentation is submitted.****

FAMILY SELECTION & NOTIFICATION PROCESS:

After all required documentation is submitted, families are ranked on a list based on enrollment priorities (See matrix below).

After families have been ranked, an Enrollment Specialist will contact you to determine if you qualify for the program based on the documentation you provide. At this time any outstanding documentation will be requested, and an estimated timeline for processing will be provided.

Once your family’s documentation is verified, processed, and cleared by the Department Specialist and School Nurse, you will be contacted again with your child’s start date for the program.

Your child’s teacher will then reach out to you to schedule your orientation or “phase-in” appointment to familiarize you with the program before your child begins school.

ENROLLMENT PRIORITIES:

PART DAY ENROLLMENT PRIORITIES		
ENROLLMENT SET ASIDE (10%)	4 & 3 year olds	Exceptional Needs Set Aside (10%)
PRIORITY 1:	4 & 3 year olds	Child Protective Services or At Risk of Abuse, Social Services Referrals
PRIORITY 2:	4 & 3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Needs • Income Eligible
PRIORITY 3:	4 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enrolled in TK • Enrolled as 3yo • Lowest income • Non-English speaking • Longest wait time
PRIORITY 4:	3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest income • Non-English speaking • Longest wait time
Once ALL children in the above groups are enrolled, the following enrollment priorities apply:		
PRIORITY 5:	All children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over income within 15% • Exceptional needs • 4 year olds (not SPED) • 3 year olds (not SPED)
PRIORITY 6:	4 & 3 year olds	<p>Student resides within Free/Reduced Lunch Campus boundaries (FRPM)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No income ceiling • Lowest income ranking first • Not available at Santiago and Muir

FULL DAY ENROLLMENT PRIORITIES		
ENROLLMENT SET ASIDE (10%)	4 & 3 year olds	Exceptional Needs Set Aside (10%)
PRIORITY 1:	4 & 3 year olds	Child Protective Services or At Risk of Abuse, Social Services Referrals
PRIORITY 2:	4 & 3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional needs • Income eligible
PRIORITY 3:	4 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enrolled in TK • Income eligible • Non-English speaking • Longest wait time
PRIORITY 4:	3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest income • Non-English speaking • Longest wait time
Once ALL children in the above groups are enrolled, the following enrollment priorities apply:		
PRIORITY 5:	4 & 3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over income within 15% • Exceptional needs • 4 year olds (not SPED) • 3 year olds (not SPED)
PRIORITY 6:	4 & 3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income eligible & NO established need • Lowest income ranking first • 4 year olds • 3 year olds
PRIORITY 7:	4 & 3 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student resides within Free/Reduced Lunch Campus boundaries • No income ceiling • Lowest income ranking first • *Not available at Santiago and Muir

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

You will be asked to complete the Application for Service with the Enrollment Specialist. This must be signed and dated by both the parent and the Enrollment Specialist.

NOTICE OF ACTION

The Notice of Action shall be issued:

- Within 30 days of the date parent signed the application
- Certification is completed
- Recertification is completed
- Changes that affect eligibility occur
- The family is to be terminated from the program
- Issued to the family for approval, denial, termination and changes to service
- Parents given the right of appeal

HOW TO CONTINUE IN THE PROGRAM

- Timely Recertification
- All families will be recertified at intervals not to exceed 24 months.
- For recertification, families will be required to provide documentation to support continued eligibility.
- Families will be notified in advance of the recertification date.
- Abide by agency policies, procedures and program requirements

SECTION VI: SCHOOL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

SIGN IN & OUT POLICY

Parents, legal guardians, or authorized adults must accompany their child to the classroom or designated drop off area upon arrival. Authorized adults are required to sign in and out when picking up and dropping off children. The ECE program utilizes an electronic sign in/out system that can be accessed from your Care Connect account on your mobile device, or using the ipad provided by the teachers. Parents must use their **FULL** legal signature. The person who signs the child in must remain with him/her until the child has been screened for signs of illness and is accepted by the teacher. Legal documents delineating a child's custody or release must be on file in the classroom and updated as needed.

For your child's protection, he/she will NOT be released to anyone except a parent, a legal guardian, or an authorized adult, 18 years of age or older, specified on the emergency card with picture ID. Exceptions are made if school personnel are notified **IN WRITING** with a note signed and dated by the parent, or legal guardian. Parents are strongly encouraged to place as many authorized adults' names as possible on their child's emergency card, with a minimum of 3 names required.

NOTE: IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT IF YOU ADD OR DROP AN AUTHORIZED ADULT YOU NOTIFY YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER WITHIN 48 HOURS FOR THE EMERGENCY CARD TO BE MODIFIED.

ABSENCE POLICY

Regular attendance not only enhances each child's experience with classmates and teachers, but also increases his/her chance of having a rewarding and positive educational experience. It also establishes a positive pattern for school attendance early in the child's school career. Children must attend all scheduled days of school.

In order to maintain the mandated enrollment, we have the following procedure in place:

If your child is unable to attend due to illness, etc. please call your classroom teacher or the Enrollment Specialist and advise them of the absence.

In the event you do not call, staff will contact you to establish why the child was not at school.

If a child is absent for three (3) consecutive days and the staff is unable to contact the family, a notification will be sent to the parents advising them to contact the school/program within 7 days of receipt of the notification.

When the family has not been in communication with the program for seven (7) consecutive calendar days and has not notified the program of the reason the family is not using services, the program shall attempt to contact the parent through a variety of communication methods. At least one communication attempt shall be in writing, which may be through electronic methods. The program shall keep documentation of all communication attempts, including a copy of all written communication, in the family data file. The program shall issue a notice of action to disenroll the family on the basis of abandonment of care when there has been no communication with the family for a total of 30 consecutive calendar days.

When a child returns to school after an absence, regulations require that a satisfactory explanation be presented to the teacher. You will need to provide a reason for the absence with all of the following information:

1. Name of student
2. Specific reason for absence
3. Date of Absence
4. Signature of Parent or Guardian

Absence verification can take place via phone call to your classroom teacher, or through the Care Connect application.

EXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE:

1. Child Illness
2. Parent Illness
3. Quarantine of child or parent

4. Court-ordered visitation
5. Family Emergency
6. Best interest of the child: (limited to 10 days per fiscal year)
 - Family Visitation
 - Vacation with Family
 - Family moving
 - Religious or cultural celebration
 - Personal or family business
 - Bereavement of **immediate family member** - (Immediate family member is defined as parent, stepparent, grandparent, great grandparent, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, stepsibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew or first cousin)

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE:

1. Preschool child did not want to go to school
2. Parent/child overslept
3. Any absence for which a specific reason is not given
4. Non-court ordered visitation with non-custodial parent

The program shall not disenroll any family due to excessive absences, except in circumstances of abandonment of care.

LATE PICK UP & DROP OFF POLICY

Being left at school beyond closing time can be a frightening experience for a child and arriving late confuses the child's routine. The staff is as supportive as possible, but it is a situation we want to avoid. Children must attend according to the class schedule. If someone else is bringing your child, it is still your responsibility to have him/her dropped off or picked up on- time. Parents who are going to be late because of an emergency must call the classroom as soon as possible. It does not excuse the late arrival or pick up but it does help us to plan accordingly.

The following policy will be in effect when you are consistently late picking up or dropping off your child during a one-month period of time:

1. The first time you will receive a verbal warning from the classroom staff. Staff will document your late arrival.
2. The second time you will receive a late notice that you and the teacher must sign.
3. The third time, you will receive another notice and a conference with the teacher, Enrollment Specialist, and Early Learning Specialist.
4. If you continue to be late after the conference your child may be dropped from the program.

When a child is left at a center past the center's closing time the following procedure will be followed:

1. Attempts will be made to contact the parents/guardians

2. Attempts will be made to contact all persons listed on the emergency card
3. If a child has not been picked up within **60 minutes** of closing and no one on the emergency card can be contacted, School Police will be called.

COURT ORDERS & CUSTODY

The preschool program will restrict parents' access to their child ONLY if a current copy of a court decree has been provided to the school. The preschool staff will not become involved in any child custody disputes unless required by law. Our records are not available unless required by a current court subpoena.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

ILLNESS INSPECTION & POLICY

Children are screened by their teacher upon arrival, and will NOT be admitted if they have any symptoms. Parents are asked to keep their children home when they are not feeling well and show signs of any illness. Remember; if your child contracts a contagious disease, please contact the school immediately.

If your child is brought to the classroom when sick, or becomes ill while at school, we will require that she/he be taken home immediately.

Your child is not well enough to be in class if any of the following symptoms are noted:

- A temperature more than 100.4 degrees
- Ear pain or drainage from ear(s)
- A deep hacking cough
- Severe congestion
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- An unexplained rash
- Vomiting, Diarrhea, and/or Fever (in the last 24 hours). May not attend if taking medication that reduces fever.
- Complaints of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms (be sure to contact the doctor)
- Thick, green drainage from the nose
- If child has had a seizure recently, you must provide a doctor's clearance to return to school that states any restrictions or medications that may have been ordered.
- Any discharge or itching of the eyes
- An unusual yellow coloring to the skin or eyes
- Live lice or nits
- Any infectious disease diagnosed by your doctor (please contact us prior to returning child to class)
- Casts/braces-any physical limitations must have written medical clearance to attend with stated restrictions if any and the time-frame of the restrictions.
- Your child is overly tired or emotional

INJURED CHILD POLICY

Program employees will make every effort to provide treatment in case of an accident or emergency. Prior to enrollment, parents will be required to fill out a **general consent form** that includes parental/guardian consent for emergency treatment when the school is unable to contact a parent or the designated physician. A qualified staff person will provide first aid for minor injuries. For more severe accidents, the Paramedics will be called and the child may be transported to the nearest hospital.

MEDICATION POLICY

Medication can only be administered by school personnel if:

- The medication is in its original container with the label, name of medication, dosage, child's name, physician's name and telephone number.
- Medication at School form is completed by the doctor and signed by the parent. The ECE RN/LVN must see the medication and the Medication at School form and obtain your signatures on mandated documents before the child attends class.
- Over the counter medications will NOT be administered by school personnel unless the doctor has submitted a Medication at School form to the ECE RN/LVN for review.

Parents should make every effort to administer medication to their children during non-school hours.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

A copy of each student's up to date immunization card is submitted with enrollment paperwork, and will be kept in the student's file.

The following are the state REQUIRED immunizations that your child needs to enter our program. If your child is on a "catch-up" schedule, which is not common, the nurse will discuss with you what your child needs in order to enroll.

- Polio – 3 shots
- DTaP – 4 shots
- Hepatitis B – 3 shots
- Haemophilus influenza type B (HIB) – at least 1 shot given on or after 1st birthday
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) – at least 1 shot given on or after 1st birthday
- Varicella – 1 shot or proof of previous chicken pox illness

Also REQUIRED for tuberculosis (TB), your child's doctor will need to mark on the Physical Exam form in the enrollment packet if he/she completed a TB skin test within one year of school entry. OR if there are No Risk Factors based upon questions that your doctor will ask you.

DISABILITIES POLICY

Children with disabilities or other special needs are welcomed into the program. Reasonable accommodations to participate in the program are provided to ensure successful placement.

EMERGENCY DRILLS and EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF THE CENTER

Both earthquake and fire drills are conducted monthly. In case of an ordered evacuation, a notice will be posted at the center stating the directions to the facility where the children were transported. Staff will remain with the children at all times. In addition, the parents will be notified of the evacuation as quickly as possible.

STATE LICENSE/INSPECTION AUTHORITY

All of the preschool classrooms are licensed by California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. The preschool programs must comply with Title V Health and Safety Regulations. These regulations can be found at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/ord/PG587.htm>. According to the Health and Safety Code Sections 1596.852, 1596.853, 1596.8535, the California Department of Social Services has the right to inspect facilities, interview children or staff, and audit child care records without prior consent.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Parents are an integral part of our program and are **strongly encouraged** to participate in the classroom two (2) days per month. Volunteering in our program provides the opportunity to gain new skills, enhance the skills you already have, and may also be used as job experience. It is also a wonderful way to be part of your child's education. Parent volunteer hours will be recorded and presented on a certificate at the end of the school year.

In order to meet licensing, state, and District guidelines, classroom volunteers must meet the following requirements:

- Must be at least **18** years of age (or enrolled in an ROP program)
- Must be under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher, at all times, and never left alone with children (**may not take children to the restroom**)
- May not have siblings in her/his care while volunteering in the classroom
- Must be in good health, physically and mentally capable of performing assigned tasks and complete a signed Statement of Good Health
- Have a negative test for tuberculosis, performed not more than one year prior to their first volunteer day in the classroom
- Provide proof of immunization for the following:
 - Measles (MMR)
 - Influenza
 - Pertussis (TDaP)
- Provide a copy of their Driver's License/Identification to the ECE office
- Use District "Raptor" system when entering the campus
- Participate in mealtime

PARENT CONDUCT

Parents will comply with the following parent/adult(s)/child conduct when on school/site grounds:

- I will always approach my child's teacher(s), support staff, and/or coordinators respectfully when I have a concern or complaint.
- I will remain calm and use an appropriate tone of voice during all interactions.
- I will be asked to leave if I approach staff angrily, raise my voice (i.e. yell or curse) and staff will immediately report my actions to the Principal and/or School Police.
- I will be respectful when contacting Program staff in person or by phone.
- I am responsible for the actions of other adults who bring or pick my child, and/or volunteer on my behalf (i.e. relatives, childcare providers). I will explain and read this agreement to them.
- **I am fully aware that noncompliance with any of the terms stated will be automatic grounds for my child's dismissal from the Program.**

Compliance with all the terms stated in this Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct is a condition for my/our child to remain in the SAUSD ECE Program.

CELL PHONE USAGE

Teaching staff and parents are not permitted to use cell phones while in the classroom unless an extreme emergency arises.

CHILD GUIDANCE STRATEGIES

A safe and secure environment is our first priority for every child. We use the approaches from the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) to help children gain age-appropriate social skills.

A supportive social and emotional climate will be provided to enhance children's understanding of themselves as individuals and in relation to others. The program provides an environment that helps children build ethnic pride, positive self-concepts, individual strengths, and develop social relationships. Program staff allow children to express their feelings, give positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, and constructively intervene to modify inappropriate behavior.

By law, any form of discipline or punishment that violates a child's personal rights shall NOT be permitted, regardless of parental consent or authorization. The Preschool Program utilizes a positive approach to guiding children's behavior. Consistency is the key to guiding children.

The strategies we use to help children learn to respect limits in the classroom include:

- Redirecting them to appropriate activities
- Removal from the activity or area in the classroom
- Positive reinforcement
- Problem solving with the child
- Consistent daily routine
- Giving choices within limits
- Teaching children how to calm themselves in frustrating circumstances

- Developing behavior plans
- Develop classroom rules with children

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Early Childhood Education Program reserves the right to terminate services if it determines that it would be best for the child or group. The program can only serve children whose needs can be effectively met by the program. Not all children thrive in group instruction or in certain programs. The program is limited by funds, the proportion of adults to children, and training of specialized personnel, and may not be able to meet the needs of all children. **Cooperation from the parent is expected and required for continued enrollment.**

PRESCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

1. Be nice to others.
2. Work and play safely.
3. Listen to the teachers.
4. Talk quietly indoors.

If a child displays aggressive behaviors such as biting, scratching, kicking, hitting, throwing classroom objects or other aggressive behaviors toward self, other students, staff or parents, your child's teacher or the administrator will contact you to discuss the behavior and agree upon appropriate interventions in the classroom (i.e. positive behavioral supports, logical consequences, positive redirection, behavioral plan, etc.) The program staff is not permitted to use any type of physical punishment or isolation such as "time out".

If the interventions do not improve the child's aggressive behavior, the parent may be required to take the child home upon the next incident of aggression. Parents may also be asked to stay in the classroom to assist in keeping their child and others safe in the group setting until behavior improves.

A student in the preschool program may be disenrolled if the aggressive behaviors continue to pose a health or safety threat to themselves or others in the classroom.

Prior to disenrolling a child because of a child's persistent and serious challenging and/or unsafe behavior, the law requires that the ECE program must, within 180 days, pursue and document that we have taken at least the following reasonable steps:

1. Consult with the child's parents or legal guardians and teacher to inform them of the behavioral concerns. Information will be collected from parents about any concerns they have with their child's behavior in the home or other settings.
2. The ECE program will provide available District or other resources to support teachers with challenging classroom behaviors.
3. Teachers will develop a behavior plan with parents for the child to safely continue to participate in the program. The behavior plan may include:
 - a. Goal setting for the child's behavior

- b. District or community resources to support parents (Parenting classes, Trainings, etc)
 - c. Agreement for parent/guardian to stay to provide support if needed
 - d. Agreement to pick up child when incidents of aggression occur and result in injury or harm to any individual in the classroom
 - e. Modification of child's schedule to support behavior management
4. If the child has an IEP or IFSP consult with the District or the local regional center on how to best serve the child.
5. If the child does not have an IEP or IFSP, the ECE program will:
 - Implement behavior supports before referring the child to the District to request an assessment to determine the child's eligibility for special education support and services, including a behavior intervention plan.
 - Complete a universal screening including social and emotional development with parent support
 - Refer the parent or guardian to local community resources
6. If after following and documenting the reasonable steps referred to above to foster the child's safe participation, and concerns about safe participation remain, the ECE program will consult with the child's parents or legal guardians, the child's teacher, and if applicable, the District providing special education services to the child.
7. If the ECE program determines that the child's continued enrollment would present a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children the ECE program, they shall refer the parents or legal guardians to other potentially appropriate placements such as Resource and Referral agencies and programs, or other local referral services available in the community.
8. Once the reasonable steps outlined above have been completed, the ECE program may then disenroll the child, subject to the due process requirements and procedures identified in 5 CCR sections 18119-18122.

It is important to remember that individual children differ in how they learn to control their behavior. We are committed to working with parents to help them learn strategies to maximize pro-social behavior and minimize inappropriate behaviors. We have an abundance of information and resources that can be provided to help you respond to your child's behavior. The preschool staff, parents and administration work collaboratively to ensure what is best for the child.

RESTROOM/TOILETING

To ensure safety and compliance with state law, children are actively supervised at all times by employees, this includes when they are using the restroom facility. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform preschool staff at enrollment if their child is not independently using the restroom.

Children will be encouraged to manage their toileting needs without adult assistance. This will increase autonomy and independence in the young child.

- The preschool program acknowledges that toilet learning is developmental, and children will enroll at various levels or abilities of toileting independence.

- If needed, parents and teachers will work together to develop an individualized Toilet Teaching and Learning Plan for their child during orientation/phase-in.
- The preschool program partners with families to teach children toileting independence utilizing developmentally appropriate practices such as: restroom breaks embedded in the daily routine, visual cue cards in the restroom and practicing daily health and hygiene.
- Children will remain under full supervision of an SAUSD employee and will be accompanied to the restroom in the classroom or outside of the classroom utilizing the licensed restroom facility at each school. All children and adults will wash their hands before exiting the restroom.
- Children in the process of toilet training should wear pull ups or diapers to school.
- Parents will provide pull ups or diapers and wipes daily and as needed.
- Children arriving to school in soiled pull ups or diapers must be changed by parent prior to drop off.
- A change of clothing must be kept at the school for your child to change into in the event of a toileting accident or soiling clothes during play.
- Children are encouraged to change their own soiled clothing with support from the preschool staff to support development of independent toileting.
- Preschool staff will communicate with parents when a change of clothing occurs. A daily diapering log will be provided to parents if your child is not completely toilet trained.

HAND WASHING

Hand Washing is the single most effective way of preventing the spread of germs in our classrooms. For this reason, all children and adults present in the classroom will be required to wash their hands at specific times of the day as a part of the daily routine.

This includes, but is not limited to, the following situations:

- Upon entry into the classroom
- Prior to meal time
- After handling finger food, messy art, or classroom pets
- After using the restroom
- After outdoor play time

Students and parents will be instructed on proper hand washing techniques at the beginning of the school year.

BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Birthdays are special events for children and will be acknowledged by staff (except when religious preferences prohibit celebrations). Parents will not be permitted to bring food or party items (balloons, gifts, etc.) into the classroom at any time.

The Early Childhood Education Program recognizes that each child and family has their own culture, religion, customs, and/or traditions that make up their holiday celebrations. It is our goal

to respect each one and to celebrate the diversity of our community. In order to do this, holiday celebrations in the classroom will be centered on the children's needs and interests.

Specific religious holidays will not be the focus of a teacher directed activity. Holiday discussions, decorations, stories, songs and activities will be shared in class when the children initiate them.

Parents will be encouraged to share cultural experiences with their children such as; food recipes, stories, songs, etc. Parents can schedule these experiences with their child's teacher, not just during a holiday but also throughout the school year.

FOOD IN THE CLASSROOM

Parents are prohibited from bringing any food into or out of the classroom. All food provided to the children must come from the District kitchen.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS & TOYS

The preschool program provides many enriching materials for your child. Please do not send toys of any sort with your child to school. Toys from home can be disruptive to the program. We cannot be responsible for toys from home that become lost or broken.

CLOTHING

School uniforms may be worn, but are not mandatory.

Keep a complete change of clothing (including underwear) for your child in the classroom labeled with your child's name.

Dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes. Although efforts are made to keep your child's clothes clean, we cannot guarantee that children's clothes will not become soiled or stained.

Outdoor play is a scheduled part of the day year round. Please be sure children dress appropriately for the weather.

To meet our safety requirements and to assure your child's safe participation in all activities, please be sure your child wears non-slip, safe, closed toe shoes, not sandals or thongs.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Have your child well rested; 10 to 12 hours of sleep is recommended for preschool age children.
- Ensure your child is dressed appropriately for school and weather conditions.
- Make sure that your child is dropped off and picked up on time to school each day.
- Actively participate in your child's education by attending 15 minutes of daily reading time, volunteering in the classroom, and attending parent teacher conferences and parent meetings.

- Learn and create opportunities for your child to expand their learning at home.
- Keep your child home if he/she is not feeling well.

COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Open communication between parents, staff and administration is very important to the program. Staff at each site should be able to assist you with any concerns that you may have. Please do not hesitate to speak to a staff member, program coordinator or the ECE Director. Every attempt will be made to solve any problem that may arise in a timely and effective manner. Teachers and Enrollment Specialists will be available to answer questions or give you support throughout the school year. Messages may be sent to your teacher and/or Enrollment Specialist through your family account on the Care Connect application, or through email. Teachers and administrators may also send important messages through Parent Square. Notes and flyers will be distributed many times during the year to inform you of activities, meetings, community events, health, child development, etc. Please check your messages daily to be sure to receive this important information.

If your concerns are not addressed with the Teacher and you need further assistance, please contact:

EARLY CHILDHOOD ADMINISTRATION:			
Director	Keely Orlando	714-569-9742	
ECE Coordinator	Charlotte Ervin	714-569-9775	Adams, Edison, Jackson, Kennedy, Monte Vista, Muir,
School Readiness Project Coordinator	Kathy Gomez	714-569-9789	Lydia Romero-Cruz Academy, Pio Pico, Lowell, Monroe
Early Learning Specialist	Aldo Aceves	714-569-9752	Carver, Diamond, Esqueda, Fremont, Jefferson, King, Monte Vista, Taft
Early Learning Specialist	Yoly Aguilar	714-569-9750	Adams, Kennedy, Mitchell, Roosevelt Walker Community Center, Sierra, Washington
Early Learning Specialist	Laura Barnett	714-569-9744	Davis, Edison, Franklin, Garfield, Harvey, Heroes, Lorin Griset, Martin
Early Learning Specialist	Veronica Berber-Aceves	714-569-9792	Heninger, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Muir, Santiago, Warwick, Wilson

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Information is gathered so that the Early Childhood Education staff can completely understand the needs of your child/family and work together to meet those needs. All information obtained

from you is completely confidential. At the end of the school year, regulations require records to be locked up for five (5) years, and then destroyed. Except for your local elementary school, records will only be sent to other agencies with written permission from the parents or legal guardian. Only the parent/guardian(s) signing the enrollment form will have access to the records.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

If the parent/guardian does not agree with an SAUSD State/Federal Preschool decision as stated in the Notice of Action (CD-7617), the parent/guardian may appeal the intended action. To protect the right to appeal, the parent/guardian must follow the instructions as described. If the parent/guardian does not respond by the required due dates or fails to submit the required appeal information with the appeal request, the appeal may be considered abandoned.

Step 1: Complete the appeal information as found on the reverse side of the Notice of Action.

Step 2: Mail or deliver the written local hearing request within 14 days of receipt to:
SAUSD, Office of Early Childhood Education 417 E. Central Ave., Santa Ana, CA. 92707

Step 3: Within 10 calendar days following the agency's receipt of the appeal request, the agency will notify the parent/guardian of the time and place of the hearing. The parent/guardian or an authorized representative is required to attend this hearing. If the parent/guardian or representative does not attend the hearing, the parent/guardian abandons the right to appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

Step 4: Within 10 calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or deliver to the parent/guardian a written decision.

Step 5: If the parent/guardian disagrees with the agency's written decision, parent/guardian has 14 days from the receipt of the decision to file an appeal with California Department of Education (CDE). The appeal must include the following documents and information:

1. A written statement specifying the reasons you believed the agency's decision was incorrect
2. A copy of the agency's decision letter, and
3. A copy of both sides of the Notice of Action.

Mail the appeal to:

California Department of Education
Early Learning and Care Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Appeal Coordinator

Step 6: Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the appeal CDE will issue a written decision to the parent and the agency. If your appeal is denied, the agency will stop providing child care and development services immediately upon the receipt of the CDE decision letter.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The following process has been put into place to address your concerns:

- First, please discuss the issue with the person/persons involved. For example, if you feel that something is not right in the classroom, talk to the classroom staff first.
- If the problem persists please contact the **Early Learning Specialists**, at the ECE Office (714) 569-9782.

Remember that your opinion, viewpoint, and concerns are important. Your suggestions are helpful in improving the quality of the program.

TERMINATION POLICY

The Early Childhood Education program reserves the right to terminate services if it is determined that it would be in the best interest of the individual child or group. The ECE programs can only serve those children whose needs can be effectively met by the program. Not all children thrive in group care or in certain programs. Additionally, the program is limited by funding, adult to child ratios, specialized staff training, and may not be able to meet the needs of all children. Specific circumstances in which this may occur include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Aggressive, anti-social or unacceptable behavior to the extent that the child's safety or the safety of other children or staff cannot be guaranteed
- Use of profane language
- Threats
- Destruction of property
- Physical violence
- Disrupting the classroom
- Inability of the child to adjust to the group care situation
- Abandonment of care (no contact for 30 days)
- Excessive late pick up
- Violation of policies and procedures
- Knowingly using incorrect or inaccurate information to obtain a benefit that they would otherwise not be entitled to receive.
- ECE program is not able to meet the child's needs

If it is determined jointly by the Director, School Readiness Project Coordinator, Early Learning Specialist, Teaching Staff and/or other ECE specialist that the program is unable to meet the needs of a specific child, enrollment may be denied, services may be terminated, and a Notice of Action will be issued to the parent to notify them of the impending change in services. This action will only be considered after all other avenues available to the program have been explored to provide service to the child and family. Every effort will be made by the department to link the child to another appropriate program within the school district or community.

SECTION VII: RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

Acknowledgement of receipt form:

The parent handbook contains important information about the Early Childhood Education program and the services we provide.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the handbook. This will ensure a successful school year in the program.

If you have any questions regarding any part of this handbook feel free to contact the staff of the Early Childhood Education Program at 714-569-9782.

Return completed form

I acknowledge receipt of the **Parent Handbook** which I have reviewed and will comply with the policies stated within.

Student Name

Date

Parent/guardian Name

Parent Signature

<https://www.sausd.us/ece>