



The Grove

Buena Vista School District's Early Childhood Program

A. Center's Purpose and Our Philosophy of Child Care and Education

The mission of Buena Vista School District is "to ensure every student reaches the peak of success."

BV Schools' Early Childhood program exists to help lay the important high-quality foundational experiences and education necessary for this mission to be accomplished in the very early years. We believe that parents are their child's first and longest standing teacher and so, together, we partner to accomplish the mission.

We do this by providing high quality and individualized early learning experiences and environments for children and families through purposeful play, applying intentional teaching strategies guided by formative assessment in all areas of child development as described by the Colorado Developmental Learning Guidelines, and keeping current in, and applying, research and evidence-based early childhood practices.

B. THE AGES OF CHILDREN ACCEPTED

The Grove will accept children ages 12 months (and walking) up to 6.0 yrs. of age.

The Grove is state licensed as a child care facility for children ages 1-6.0 years of age.

Funding for our preschool programs comes from several sources including:

- Individual Grants
- Universal Preschool
- Tuition
- B.V.S.D-I.D.E.A (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- District Employee Assistance

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

C. HOURS OF OPERATION

Preschool in session:

Full day: Monday-Thursday 7:50 AM-3:20 PM

Before and after school care is available from 7:30 - 7:50 am, and 3:20 - 4:00 pm for an additional cost.

Toddler care in session:

Monday-Friday 7:30 AM-4:00 PM

Staff Hours:

Monday-Friday 7:40 AM-3:40 PM (unless otherwise contracted to cover additional hours)

Center phone number 719-395-5270

D. INCLEMENT WEATHER

All inclement weather decisions are based on concerns for student, parent and staff safety. If school is canceled, an announcement through the Infinite Campus messenger communication system will notify parents either by home phone, cell phone or email, that school has been canceled for the day. Please make sure your preferred main phone number and method of contact is updated with The Grove's Administrative Assistant.

Please make sure that your child is dressed for our changing Colorado weather. A warm morning does not necessarily mean a warm afternoon. Students will not be outside for recess if the temperature/wind chill factor is below 20 degrees or over 90 degrees.

Regarding "Late Start"

If BVSD issues a "late start" students will arrive at 10am.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

E. Admission and Registration Process

The BVSD Early Childhood Program will accept enrollment applications throughout the year. Enrollment decisions are influenced by availability of the following number of slots, need, & the funding requirements that accompany those slots.

Funding Source (for preschool only)

a. District: District Employees receive discounted tuition (covered by BVSD)
b. Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP): Apply with DHS
c. Tuition-Based
d. Special Education: We reserve at least 1 open spot in each classroom to be able to abide by BOCES & SPED rules and regulations.
e. Universal Preschool Funding

Waiting list order based on age, eligibility, need, & application date

Funding Source (for toddler only)

Toddler enrollment is based on the order of application received with priority given to district employees.

f. Tuition-Based
g. Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP): Apply with DHS
h. District: District Employees receive discounted tuition

Tuition Payment Policy

Tuition is due on the 15th of each month, payable by cash or check to the front office. If tuition becomes more than 30 days past due, the child will not be permitted to attend until the account is brought current. If the outstanding balance is not paid in full within two (2) weeks of attendance being

suspended, the child may be unenrolled from the program. Re-enrollment is not guaranteed and is subject to availability.

(updated January 2026)

Regarding Health Care (from Colorado State Child Care Licensing Regulations):

7.702.52 Health Care A. Statements of Health Status

1. The center has the right to refuse to admit a child if a statement from a healthcare professional is not submitted.
2. At the time of admission, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide for each child entering the center:
   a. Documentation of immunization status or exemption as required by Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Immunizations must be updated and recorded as specified on the certificate of immunization or alternate certificate of immunization as supplied and approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Colorado law requires proof of immunization be provided prior to or on the first day of admission.
   b. Within thirty (30) calendar days after admission, and within thirty (30) calendar days following the expiration date of a previous health statement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each child must submit a statement of the child's current health status or written verification of a scheduled appointment with a health care provider. The statement of the child's current health status must be signed and dated by a health care provider who has seen the child within the last twelve (12) months, or within the last six (6) months for children less than two and one-half (2½) years of age. The statement must include when the next visit is required by the health care provider. All health statements must be kept at the center.
   c. Statements of health status of children less than two (2) years of age must be updated in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended schedule for routine health supervision or as required in writing by the health care provider.
   d. Health statements for children over two (2) years of age to seven (7) years of age must be updated in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended schedule for routine well child exams.
   e. Whenever the director has reason to suspect a child participating in the program may have a condition potentially communicable to the child or others, or finds the child's general condition indicates the need for examination, the director must require a statement from the child's health care provider approving the child to return to group care.

F. FEE SCHEDULE

	Toddler	3 Year-Old	4 Year-Old	4 Year-Old After UPK	Before/After Care
5 days	$1200	$820	$770	$335	$80
3 days	$750	$550	-	-	$48
2 days	$500	$350	-	-	$32

Two day enrollment is Tuesday and Thursday each week. Three day enrollment is Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Breakfast and Lunch Accounts

Preschool students receive free meals via Colorado's Healthy School Meals for All program, while toddler meals require purchase. Families may provide meals from home or utilize school cafeteria options. Daily meal selections occur each morning, and strict nut-free guidelines apply across all classrooms due to severe allergies.

Meal Program Guidelines

- Preschool Eligibility: Meals are provided at no cost through the voter-approved Colorado Healthy School Meals for All program.
- Toddler Program: Meals are not state-funded and must be purchased through the food services department.
- Daily Selection: Each morning, parents must choose either a hot (school-provided) or cold (home-provided) meal option for both breakfast and lunch, as we cannot split the selection between the two meals at this time.
- Allergy Safety: All meals and snacks brought from home must be completely free of nuts to protect students with severe allergies.

Please refer to the nutrition policy in our parent handbook for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

G. Identifying where children are at all times

- A Google form is utilized for parents to sign-in every morning and is maintained and checked on a daily basis by staff in each classroom.
- Staff counts and documents the number of children present and posts the number daily in a visible area in each classroom.
- When a class leaves the building, the teachers will carry an updated daily list with them and will post specifics on where the classroom is.
- When children leave the classroom/building for any reason they are in the company of a staff person or a parent/guardian (in the event of pick-up).

Protocol for going to outdoor recess:

- Count students when leaving for outdoor recess.

Protocol for coming in from outdoor recess:

- Count students in line.
- A minimum of 2 teachers are present during line up time.
- Before entering the classroom, while lined up, teachers will complete a head count.
- When back in the classroom, teachers will complete a head count.

H. Guidance, positive instruction, supporting positive behavior, discipline and consequences

Guidance-In terms of discipline, guidance is our main philosophy.

Children need guidance as they learn to develop self-regulation, gain responsibility for their actions and make choices that are acceptable. Teachers have primary responsibility for producing an environment in which these social and emotional skills are supported. Teachers are able to recognize when intervention is an appropriate measure or when child self-control can be developed. Teachers always model respect, composure and conflict resolution. The child's self-pride is also always respected. Teachers make an effort to speak with families to obtain their input on what techniques work best with their child. Volunteers have no responsibility or authority in discipline matters, except to prevent physical harm.

Classroom environment, daily schedule, lesson plans and curriculum all allow children the opportunity to develop social and emotional skills necessary for self -regulation. Children are supervised at all times and teachers monitor situations in order to make the most of learning experiences for each child. Expectations are made clear to children and positive behavior is acknowledged while negative behaviors are ignored whenever possible.

The Grove uses Conscious Discipline as our social/emotional curriculum. We also work with an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant to meet the needs of all students.

Severe behavior concerns-In the event of a severe behavior problem, teachers will work with families & staff to develop an individual behavior plan as a team.

We partner with Sol Vista who, through the *Mental Health Referral procedure* and reflective consultation, can support teachers and/or parents through mental health concerns.

I. Illnesses, accidents, and injuries

The Grove will obtain, upon admission, telephone numbers of the child's physician or other appropriate health care professional and telephone numbers where the parent/guardian and at least one other responsible adult can typically be reached in the event of an accident, illness or other emergency. Written authority will be obtained to arrange for medical care in the event of an emergency and will be on file the first day a child attends preschool.

When accidents, injuries or illness occur, a responsible adult will notify the parent /guardian. If necessary, the physician or medical facility will be called as per written instruction of the parent/guardian. Staff will hold current first aid and CPR certificates. Any child too ill to remain in the classroom will be comfortably cared for and supervised in the Director's office or Avery Parsons Elementary school nurse's room. Portable first aid kits will be available to staff at all times including field trips.

Accident reports will be filled out for each incident and will follow Child Care Licensing guidelines on reporting required accidents to the department.

For illnesses, children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school- symptoms include: fever, diarrhea, cough, runny/stuffy nose, rashes, or anything out of the ordinary.

J. Responding to Emergencies such as lost children, tornadoes, and fires

Lost Children

Sign-in sheets and/or current check in system are checked daily and used as daily attendance list. Children are continually counted throughout the day (see G. Identifying where children are at all times). When a class leaves the building, the daily list is taken along. In the event of a missing child, the following procedure takes place:

1. Director is notified
2. Staff are designated to search both inside and outside the building and the perimeter of the building.
3. If the child is not found after a thorough search of the building and perimeter, 911 is dialed. The child's family is also called at this time.
4. If the police and parents are notified, a debriefing session will be held and a report made to both staff and parents as to the circumstances surrounding the lost child.

Fires & other emergencies

Staff will respond to all disasters or emergencies by following the most current BVSD R-31 Emergency Operations Plan.

(included in this policies & procedures binder).

Evacuations

Each classroom will exit out the front entrance doors of their classroom, walking down the sidewalk on the west side of the preschool playground, proceeding to the parking lot on the north side of the building.

Procedure being used for second exit; each classroom will exit through the front door of their classroom and exit the playground on the east side of the building.

Teachers and aides will be in charge of checking all rooms for children and closing all doors in the preschool building, exiting safely and quickly. Teachers and aides shall check all exits to make sure they are clean and free of excess debris for safe, fast and obtainable exits; during snowfall, check and clean off all stairs. Staff and children will assemble in a central location to verify headcount and take attendance.

Evacuating Children with Disabilities

While evacuating children with disabilities we will initiate appropriate response actions for those who have special needs or need accommodations.

Reunification of Families

In an emergency, schools must establish a safe area for parents/guardians to go to pick up students. In a typical release the following steps will be followed:

1. Schools will implement notification procedures to notify parents/guardians of the emergency.
2. Parent/Guardian will report to the Parent/Guardian check-in area and give the name of the child.
3. Picture I.D. will normally be required by the person in charge to ensure the person requesting the child is a match to the name on the emergency release card. The schools may choose to rely on students to confirm the identity of the person coming to pick them up and ask students brief follow-up information rather than require identification to be presented.
4. A runner will go to the student assembly area or classroom and get the child requested by the parent/guardian or adult. The runner will escort the student back to the pick-up area. Schools may use an alternate method of reunifying the student to the parent/ guardian.
5. Parents/guardians will be asked to sign a form indicating they picked up the child. The date and time will also be indicated on the pick-up form.
6. If the child is in the first aid/medical treatment area, the parent/guardian will be directed to that area for reunification with the child.
7. Counselors, when available, will be located close to the first aid area in the event counseling services are needed.

Active Shooter

The Buena Vista School District utilizes the training of, “Lockdown”-locks, lights, out of sight. The immediate response of an active shooter is as follows:

1. Lockdown-Locks, Lights, Out of Sight
2. Evacuate/Self-Evacuate
3. Call 911

Teachers will be trained to:

- Consider situational awareness - get students away from harm: into classrooms off of playgrounds into safe spaces
- Call 911 & notify principal or designee
- Lockdown all interior doors.

- Announce “Lockdown: Locks, Lights, Out-of-Sight.”
- Be aware of “fake” fire alarms - smell for smoke, look for fire, consider the threat.
- Do not be concerned with “exterior” doors.
- Do not answer the door for anyone. Only law enforcement or school administration have authority to release the lockdown and will have a key to unlock classroom doors.
- Have a contingency plan to deal with media inquiries.

K. Transporting Children/Field Trips

The Grove follows state licensing and federal regulations regarding the transportation of children as specified and directed by the BVSD R-31 Transportation Department.

Students will participate in walking field trips on a regular basis. The Buena Vista School District does not provide transportation for students in the early childhood program and all field trips will be within walking distance. Students may be shuttled to a location away from school, without notice, in the event of an emergency.

Employees will not transport students in their own vehicles.

L. Field trips, television and video viewing, weapon play, and special activities, including staff responsibility for the supervision of children.

Field Trips-The BVSD Early Childhood Program recognizes that field trips are a hands-on approach to learning which allow us to share our community resources and learn more about culture. It is the desire of our preschool to include field trips as a supplement to children's total preschool experience. Field trips are verbally approved by the Director prior to scheduling. During field trips staff-child ratios are always maintained.

Video Policy-What is screen time? "Screen time" is any time spent in front of a screen, such as a TV, computer, video game player, smartphone or tablet. Screen time is a sedentary activity. Very little energy is used during screen time. Health and safety experts in child care recommend that providers limit screen time to no more than 30 minutes per week. Limiting media time for kids two and older during their time in child care will help meet the AAP recommendation: reduce screen time to no more than 2 hours per day including screen time at home.

Electronics & Screen Time use Policy

When caring for children, staff must refrain from personal use of electronics including, but not limited to, cell phones and portable devices, except in the case of collecting assessment data for Teaching Strategies GOLD or communicating with parents using ROOMS.

Please see the school district policy on screen time here:
Screen Time/Device Guidance - Families

Policy on weapon play

Children learn about their world through play, they use play to act out situations that they are interested in, want to know more about, or possible future roles. The world that we live in affects what children are exposed to and what type of play scenarios they participate in. In today's society, heroes often carry guns. These individuals include police officers, military personnel, super heroes, and popular characters. Many children engage in dramatic play in which guns are used.

The Grove will not provide any toy weapons of any kind or allow any toy weapons to be brought from home. Despite the absence of toy weapons at The Grove, children often choose other objects to use as weapons or use building toys to create them. We feel that restricting children's play and imagination is stifling their creative play. Due to this, we will not disallow children from building pretend weapons or using other objects as such.

In many cases, banning an activity or behavior causes increased interest in the same. Teachers will monitor gun and weapon play between children and use it as a teaching opportunity about safety and respect. In our community, hunting and guns are a valued aspect of many families. In committing to our policy of valuing each child's heritage, we believe it is more beneficial to allow children to explore this aspect of our culture, rather than disallow it. Violence and aggression will not be tolerated. Children will be instructed that guns and weapons are not to be used in an aggressive manner. This includes pointing weapons at people.

Important note: Gun and weapon play are not allowed at Avery-Parsons Elementary School. Due to this, we will assist children transitioning into kindergarten out of this type of play before they transition to kindergarten. During the second half of the year, children that are going to kindergarten the following year will begin to have their gun and weapon play decreased. In preparing for kindergarten, the children will be guided through alternative options during child directed play. As the year continues, the time allowed for

weapon play will be continually encouraged to decrease until the child is no longer engaging in such play.

M. Children's safety related to riding in a vehicle, seating, supervision, and emergency procedures on the road.

All children will be transported by their families or in accordance with transportation policy. (see K)

N. Releasing children to authorized caregivers

Documentation of Authorized Caregivers:

1) Files at The Grove will be regularly maintained which include the names, address and phone numbers of individuals whom parents have authorized to pick up the child for them. Staff will ask for identification from individuals not known to them.
2) Care-giving adults who bring the child to or remove the child from the facility will sign children in and out of the facility.

Policy for handling an Unauthorized person:

1) Children will not be released to an unauthorized individual.
2) The office will contact the custodial parent.
3) Telephone authorization to release a child is not encouraged but will be accepted on an emergency basis. Staff members taking phone messages will record information on the contact sheet at the Administrative Assistant's desk. In cases where there is a question of identity, a return call to the parent/guardian to verify her/his identity will be made. A Driver's License will be asked for and reviewed to prove identity.
4) The parent/guardian will be asked to update the child's contact information upon
next visit to the program.

Safety issues regarding release of child:

1) The staff at The Grove will take the following actions when any person picking up a child is reasonably suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol and is functionally impaired:

Staff will attempt to detain the person at the program (ask the person to sit down, engage the person in conversation, show things or ask the person to wait). While the person is being detained, the Director or another staff person will contact the local police department. Our primary priority is always the safety of your children, so if our staff observes an adult who appears unfit to drive with children in their vehicle, we are required to contact local law enforcement immediately.

2) The staff will not release a child to a person who has a restraining order against them; a current copy of the order must be in the family file. Custody/Restraining Orders are made known to all staff.

O. Procedures when a child is not picked up

When no responsible adult arrives to pick up a child within 10 minutes of the end of a session, a staff member will call the parent/guardian and all emergency contacts until they are able to make contact.

After 30 minutes from the end of a session, if the child is still not picked up, The Department of Human Services and local law enforcement will be notified.

P. Children who arrive late and their class/group is away from the center on a field trip of excursion

Children who arrive late

- It is important to the flow of the classroom as well as for the comfort of your child to be on time. Groups are formed and teachers take great care to create a plan. We try to minimize distractions for the teacher as well as for the rest of the children in the classroom.
- If your child will be late or you will be picking up your child early, please notify the front office.

Children who arrive late and their class is away from the building have several options:

- Parents may transport their child to the activity. In this case the class will be contacted in order to add the child to their attendance list.
- Parents may decide to take their child home.
- If another classroom is an appropriate setting and staff ratios are sufficient the child may be able to stay in the other classroom.

Q. Storing and Administration of Medication and delegation of medication administration.

If a child is prescribed a medication that needs to be given during regular school/child care hours, we require that the medication is brought to the School Nurse at the Elementary school and an "Authorization to Administer Medication" form be completed by the child's physician.

Medication will not be given without a signed medical authorization for the particular prescription or non-prescription medication. This includes lotion and diaper rash ointment.

All medications to be given must be brought into the School Nurse in the original container with the current date, child's name and physician's name clearly on the label, as well as instructions for administration given by the doctor.

Only those delegated and trained by the school nurse shall be allowed to administer medicine.

For parents:

Please do not give your child medications that they are to administer themselves while at school, such as cough drops, salves, etc.
Non-prescription medications must be accompanied by written authorization from your child's physician, along with instructions for administering.

If your child has a prescription for an EPI PEN for treatment of allergy symptoms or an inhaler for asthma, please ask your child's doctor to prescribe an extra one that may be kept in the classroom's locked medication box in case of emergency.

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R. Children’s personal belongings and money

Parents are asked to leave their children’s toys and money at home. If children bring personal items to The Grove, they are put in the child’s cubby until the end of the day. The Grove is not responsible for lost or missing personal items. Exceptions may be made between the teacher and the parent in consultation with the Director.

S. Meals and Snacks

1) Children enrolled at The Grove have the option to bring breakfast and lunch from home, or utilize the school lunch provided by the cafeteria. See the breakfast and lunch accounts section of the handbook for additional information.
2) Families are invited to eat lunch with their child. Please notify the staff or program secretary before 8 am if you plan to join us for breakfast or lunch.
3) The Grove will provide one half to two thirds of the daily nutritional needs of the child enrolled in a full day program (based on the Child and Adult Care Food Program Standards-see appropriate "Creditable Foods Guide for Child Care Centers"). Children who arrive early or who are simply hungry may require an extra snack.
4) Food for meals and snacks shall be chosen not only to meet the child's nutritional needs, but also to contribute to good dental health.
5) For conditions in which menus need to be modified, such as for food allergies, digestive or metabolic disturbances, etc., this information shall be kept as part of the child's record. A supporting statement, signed by a physician as to the type of modified diet needed, must be kept on file at the center and updated periodically.

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6) In cases where a child cannot eat a particular food item due to religious beliefs or for other reasons, the nutritionist will work with the family to develop menus to provide adequate nutrition suitable for the family.

7) Menus will be posted in the food preparation area and a common viewing area (parent message boards) where it's accessible to all. A copy of the menu should be sent home to care providers.

8) A consistent meal schedule will take place. The meal should be eaten at a leisurely pace, about 20-30 minutes to finish.

9) Mealtime will take place in a quiet, well-lit, well ventilated area that encourages socialization.

10) A period of quiet activity will be scheduled before lunch so the children can come to the table relaxed and ready to eat.

11) Family style food service and children's participation in nutritional learning activities will take place only to the degree that proper safety and sanitation practices can be followed. The children should be allowed to help set the tables before the meal when possible. The teachers should sit with the children and eat what is being served in order to model good eating behaviors.

12) Children will be encouraged to participate in appropriate mealtime conversations. Discussion of food dislikes will be discouraged. Proper mealtime etiquette and manners will be reinforced.

13) The child will be allowed to determine whether or not they want the provided food. If the child refuses a particular food, it will be offered again later, but the child will not be pestered or forced to eat. Another selection of food should not be withheld from them if they will not eat a particular food. Seconds should be offered. If a child refuses food at the beginning of the meal it should be offered again. Food should never be used as a reward or a punishment.

14) Desserts that are very sweet and lack nutritional value may be set aside and offered after the child finishes their meal. Jell-O with fruit may be

served with a meal since it does provide some nutritional value because of the fruit.

15) All children and adults are required to wash their hands before beginning a meal. The tables should be washed with hot soapy water and sprayed with a sanitizing solution before the table is set and the food is served. The children should be encouraged to clean up their own spills and to clean their own eating area by clearing away their own table service according to the requirements of the eating establishment.

16) Teaching Staff shall not be involved in food preparation and in the care of children at the same time.

17) Good hygienic practices must be followed. Persons with infected cuts or sores, colds or other communicable diseases shall not be allowed to prepare or serve food. Hands shall be kept off hair and face when preparing and handling food. Disposable plastic gloves shall be worn during food preparation and service.

18) Any food that leaves the kitchen will not be re-served in the classroom. It must be labeled “in the classroom” if put back into the refrigerator.

19) Food related activities could be coordinated with nutrition education to reinforce ideas about how food contributes to good health. Activities such as cooking provide a multitude of language experiences and develop thinking skills as teachers encourage children to guess, observe and draw conclusions about what they experience. When helping children cook, adults should keep simplicity and safety uppermost in mind. Advanced preparation and small group size help ensure that everyone gets to participate and that there is little waiting.

20) The Grove is peanut & nut free and maintains to not add extra sugars to meals.

21) We support all families in finding resources to provide healthy eating and nutrition for their families. Information will be given to families each year about a nutrition program that provides nutritious groceries,

nutrition education, breastfeeding support and other services free of charge to Colorado families who qualify (for example WIC).

22) Meals provided by families will be stored in their backpack throughout the day. If the food needs to be cold, please put a cold pack in the bag. We do not have the ability to refrigerate or warm up food. It will be served at the temperature it is stored at.

23) According to the rules regulating Childcare Centers, issued by the Department of Early Childhood rule 2.229M, students in toddler or preschool classrooms cannot have glass containers in the classroom. Please send food in non-breakable containers.

T. The Grove
Toileting and Diapering Procedure

Toileting will be handled on an individual basis. In the case that a child will need more than regular assistance in toileting or to be diapered, the child's family will be asked to help develop a plan. Families will be expected to provide training pants and /or extra underwear and clothing on a daily basis. The Grove has some supplies available in the case of emergencies.

Children will be treated with dignity, respect and patience during changes. Children will be expected and encouraged to help themselves as much as possible during each change. Change of clothes will take place in each classroom within the toilet stall area. Diapering will occur in the classroom bathrooms. If the staff restroom is used, the door will be left ajar and the child will never be left alone.

Universal precautions procedures will be followed to prevent the spread of disease and to keep areas sanitary. These include the use of gloves during changes, bleach water for cleanup, placing soiled clothes in a plastic for parent/guardian to pick up; and the soiled wipes and/or diaper in a plastic bag

for disposal. Staff and children will both wash hands after toileting and/or diapering.

Potty Training Policy

We are excited to partner with families as children begin their potty training journey. Our goal is to create a supportive, positive, and consistent experience for every child as they develop this important life skill.

Potty training is a developmental process that looks different for every child. While some resources encourage intensive at-home potty training approaches, school settings must balance individual support with the health, safety, and supervision needs of a group environment. Because of this, some strategies that are successful at home, such as allowing children to remain without pants or closely monitoring every cue, are not possible in a classroom setting.

Our approach focuses on collaboration, consistency, and positive encouragement while recognizing that children progress at different rates.

Readiness for Potty Training

Children show readiness for potty training at different times, and there is no universally agreed-upon age to begin. Families may notice signs such as:

- Showing interest in the toilet or wearing underwear
- Willingness to sit on the potty
- Staying dry for longer periods (approximately 2 hours)
- Communicating needs verbally or nonverbally
- Showing discomfort when wet or soiled

We strongly encourage families to begin potty training at home before fully transitioning the process to school.

Our Role as Teachers

Teachers are here to support and encourage children throughout the potty training process. Potty training begins at home, and we work alongside families to reinforce those efforts in the classroom.

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Because teachers are supervising multiple children throughout the day, we are unable to continuously monitor each child for individualized toileting cues in the same way a caregiver may at home. Instead, we use consistent routines and scheduled potty opportunities to support success.

Classroom Approach

- For health and sanitation reasons, children must remain in diapers or pull-ups while at school until they are having fewer than three accidents per day at home.
- Teachers provide regular potty opportunities throughout the day, including during diaper changes, transitions, before and after meals, before and after outdoor play, and at a minimum of every two hours.
- Children are encouraged, but never forced, to sit on the potty.
- Teachers use positive reinforcement to build confidence and independence.
- We follow a routine-based approach rather than a pressure-based approach.

Consistency Between Home and School

Consistency is one of the most important factors in successful potty training. We ask families to:

- Communicate their child's current potty routine and progress
- Use similar language and expectations at home
- Inform teachers of any changes or challenges
- Maintain consistency whenever possible if a child is going without diapers at home

Clothing Requirements

To support independence and minimize frustration, children should wear:

- Easy-to-remove clothing such as elastic waistbands
- Clothing without complicated fasteners or overalls
- Closed-toe shoes for safety
- Simple footwear, such as Velcro shoes, to encourage independence during bathroom routines

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Please provide at least three extra sets of clothing each day.

Accidents

Accidents are a normal and expected part of learning.

- Children will be changed promptly, respectfully, and without shame.
- Soiled clothing will be sent home in a labeled bag.
- If a child has two accidents while wearing underwear at school, they will be changed into a pull-up for the remainder of the day.

If frequent accidents continue, we may recommend temporarily returning to pull-ups until the child shows greater readiness and consistency.

Pull-Ups and Underwear

- Children will begin in pull-ups while learning the toileting routine.
- Once a child demonstrates consistent success, families and teachers will work together to transition to underwear at school.
- Children should have fewer than three accidents per day at home before transitioning to underwear at school.

Positive and Supportive Environment

We are committed to maintaining a positive and supportive toileting environment.

- We do not use pressure, punishment, or shaming.
- Children are never forced to sit on the toilet.
- Every child progresses at their own pace.

If a child becomes distressed or resistant, potty training may be paused until they are more comfortable and ready. Pushing a child before they are ready can lead to frustration, regression, and delays in the process. Our goal is to ensure that potty training remains a positive, confidence-building experience for every child.

Communication with Families

Teachers will keep families informed about:

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

- Toileting attempts and successes
- Accidents and patterns
- Progress and next steps

Open communication between home and school helps create the consistency children need to succeed.

U. Visitors

The Grove welcomes and encourages parents/guardians and volunteers to visit the school at any time. All visitors must check in at the preschool front desk, sign in and wear an identification tag to indicate that they are guests in the preschool building. Volunteers who come on a regular basis are required to fill out a BVSDR-31 volunteer packet and undergo a background check. We ask those who come regularly to phone in if they can't attend on a specific day.

V. Parent and Staff Conferences

Purpose: Conferences and Celebration of Learnings provide teachers and families with the opportunity for an in-depth discussion of each child's development and adjustment to the program. These partnerships provide a time for families to share their observations of their children, ask questions, discuss their expectations, or express concerns and also offer opportunities to identify ways to improve the child's learning in the home and in school. The Grove will partner with all families to meet their children's learning and developmental goals.

Procedure:

1) Celebration of Learning events occur in the fall. If an individual family wants to schedule a conference with a teacher, they can reach out individually with that teacher. Individual Learning Plans for each

student will be given out during the Learning Celebration and/or to each parent in the fall.

2) Family Conferences are offered in the Spring.
3) Family/Teacher conferences are held at the preschool, in your child's classroom, or in your home. Families will be signed up for a specific time slot based on preferences presented by the teaching staff. Teaching staff encourage families to attend with written reminders and phone calls when necessary.
4) Teachers prepare forms, information and work samples ahead of time, as needed, using the data entered in Gold.
5) Families are asked to give their input and ideas as part of the conference. Together, ideas for child development are created at home, in school or for transitions.
6) Upon the request of a parent, a missed conference may be re-scheduled or conducted at any other time during the year.
7) Families are given a copy of the conference form. Teaching teams share important information with team members for planning purposes. The Lead teachers give the completed forms to the Director who looks over all forms, initials and places in the child's file.
8) In addition to Parent and Student Conferences, teachers will support students with individual education plans by coordinating with the special education team and families to meet to discuss progress, learning and development goals. These meetings will occur prior to the school year, during parent and teacher conferences, and for their yearly IEP meetings.

W. FILING A COMPLAINT ABOUT CHILD CARE

If you believe a State Licensing Violation has occurred, you may file a complaint with:

Division of Child Care
Colorado Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman St

Denver, CO 80203-1744

1-800-799-5876 or FAX 303-866-4453

X. Reporting of Child Abuse

Any caregiver or staff who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency.

Child abuse reporting hotline:

1-844-CO-4-KIDS

The Grove Child Abuse reporting procedure:

1. Immediately inform your administrator or his/her designee of your concerns. No one has the authority to veto the reporting.
2. If it is necessary for school personnel to examine a student for evidence of physical abuse, two adults should be present during the examination and the examination should follow the “gym class rule.” Only examine the areas that can be seen if the child were wearing shorts and a t-shirt. Do not examine the child any further.
3. Complete the Known or Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect/Endangerment Reporting Form.
4. Call Department of Human Services Hotline 1-844-CO-4-KIDS
5. DO NOT conduct an investigation regarding the case. Investigations are the responsibility of the appropriate law enforcement agency staff and/or the Department of Human Services.
6. Give a copy of the Known or Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect/Endangerment Reporting form to the director. The Director will make necessary district-level notification.
7. Retain a copy of the Known or Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect/Endangerment Reporting Form in a confidential file. Do not file in the student’s special education or cumulative file.
8. Parents will be notified by Chaffee County Department of Human Services staff or law enforcement agency staff. Do not contact parents.
9. If Department of Human Services staff and/or law enforcement staff visit your site to interview a student, you are required to ask for photo identification (badge or identification card). Ask for a business card and retain a copy of card(s) in your files. If a student needs to be removed from class for the interview, this should be done by school staff.
10. If Department of Human Services staff and/or law enforcement staff visit your site to conduct an interview, you must provide a room that will provide a confidential setting. School staff shall not be present during the interview of a child by Department of Human Services staff or law enforcement staff. Whenever possible, law enforcement and Department of Human Services staff will call ahead of time prior

to arriving at the site and may want to talk with the reporter of the suspected abuse. Follow-up with the Department of Human Services staff and/or law enforcement staff after the interview.

11. School staff shall cooperate with the investigating authorities. In addition, school staff must notify investigating authorities of any special needs or conditions of the child such as transportation, translation needs, cognitive ability, etc.
12. By statute (CRS 19-3-401) law enforcement staff may remove a child from a site.

Y. Notification when Child Care Services are Withdrawn or when a Parent withdraws their Child from The Grove

Parents/guardians have the right to withdraw children from our program at any time. Parents complete a withdrawal form to formally exit the program.

Z. How decisions are made and what steps are taken prior to the suspension, expulsion or request to parents or guardians to withdraw a child from care due to concerns about the child's behavioral issues.

The Grove will follow the steps for accepting children based on the written Admissions and Acceptance Policy. No child will be denied admission based on behavior, medical compromise or immune deficiency. The Grove will work with the parent/guardian of the child and a team of professionals that service the child to determine the best educational plan to meet the needs of that child. Temporary suspensions and/or expulsions will be used sparingly and as determined involving a team of specialists and after the provision of reasonable modifications. Each child's plan will be developed on a case by case basis to best meet the needs of the individual child.

If temporary suspension is deemed necessary, we will do all we can to help the child return to full participation in all program activities a quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by:

- Continuing to engage with the parents and a mental health consultant, and continuing to utilize appropriate community resources;
- Developing a written plan to document the action and supports needed;
- Providing services that include home visits and others as deemed necessary

AA. Safe Sleep Procedures

The Grove will practice the ABC's of safe sleep. Infants and toddlers should be sleeping ALONE, on their BACK, on a COT.

- The only things that will be present on the cot include: a fitted sheet and a sleeping toddler. Bumpers, pillows, blankets, stuffed animals, bibs and clip-on pacifiers are unsafe for sleep and not allowed in the crib.
- If a toddler falls asleep anywhere except on their cot, they must immediately be placed on their back on the cot, even if they are old enough to roll over on their own.
- Rooms will be kept at a temperature comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Toddlers will be checked frequently to ensure they are not overheated or sweaty.
- Toddlers will be supervised their entire nap period.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

BB. Interpreters

The Grove will ensure that staff and program consultants are able to effectively communicate, either directly or through interpretation and translation with children who are dual language learners and to the extent feasible, with families with limited English proficiency.

- Consult with local school district personnel when there is not an immediate staff member available to support implementation.
- Families who need information in another language, or a translator, can request from the front desk, teacher, or EC director what information they would like and in what language.
- If it became evident that a need for a bilingual teacher would be needed in the classroom to provide support to a child with a dominant second language, every effort will be made to have at least one teacher in the classroom who is bilingual.
    - Note: At this time, the Buena Vista School district has an ESL teacher that is Bilingual in Spanish and can translate documents and converse with families as needed.

CC. Transition Policy

Children will experience a number of transitions throughout their early years. Changes and transitions can be unsettling to children when in unfamiliar environments. At The Grove we recognize that children learn best when they feel safe, nurtured and have positive experiences with caregivers and peers. We feel transitioning takes time, preparation, planning and patience. Transitions occur when starting in a new classroom environment, everyday transitions from home to preschool, and when transitioning into elementary school. We are committed to assisting families and children in making these transitions as seamless and comfortable as possible. Transitioning to The Grove will include several visits to the program and to the classroom to acclimate the student to their new environment with the guidance of their families. Transitions between classrooms within The Grove will include the option for families and the student to visit the new classroom and meet the teacher. The previous teacher will share information and items as needed

with the new classroom. Prior to any transition we will communicate with families via mail, email, Brightwheel or personal phone call.

Transitioning into The Grove

As our students transition into their first years of school, we will work together as a team of teachers with our families to support their children. We will provide the following opportunities for families, children and teachers to make positive connections.

- At Home Visits
    - Before school begins, each child will have a personal visit in their home with their classroom teacher. We will use “At Home Visits” to allow teachers and families to get to know each other on a personal one-on-one level, in the child’s natural environment, their home. During our “At Home Visits”, the children and teacher will become familiar with each other, and share information about the child and learn more about the families needs.
- Screening Day
    - Screening Day will be used to help students transition to The Grove. Students will be screened in our program to allow them to be familiar with their new school before the start of our program in the fall. Our screening day will include screenings for each child in the areas of vision, dental, health, speech, OT and developmentally appropriate ages and stages. We use this time to speak to families about their concerns with their students, and to support their goals for the upcoming school year for their children.

- “Welcome to The Grove”
    - Prior to school beginning, we will host a back to school night. This family event allows us to create a positive experience for our students and families by inviting them into their classrooms. During this event, students will explore their new learning environment and meet their classmates. This allows families to make connections with each other and students to become comfortable before school begins.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

Transitioning Between Classrooms

As our students transition between classrooms within The Grove we will coordinate the following activities to make the transition seamless:

- Families and student observes the new classroom
    - We will offer families and the student an opportunity to visit the new classroom and meet the teacher.
- New teacher observes student in existing classroom
    - The teacher from the new classroom will visit the student's existing classroom to observe the student in their classroom. Lead teacher from each room will meet to ask questions and reflect on their observations.
- Information Sharing
    - The previous teacher will share information and items as needed with the new classroom.

Transitioning into Avery Parsons Elementary

As our students transition from preschool to elementary school we will prepare for this transition by hosting several events for our families and students to become familiar with Avery Parsons Elementary school. We will also reach out to families in our community that do not attend The Grove by contacting other local preschools, daycares and advertising our transition events in the local newspaper and online. We will coordinate the following events to make the transition seamless.

- Kindergarten teachers observe Preschoolers and Classrooms
    - Kindergarten teachers will visit each Grove classroom to observe students in their classrooms before the end of their preschool year. Lead teachers and kindergarten teachers will meet to ask questions and reflect on their observations.
- Welcome to Kindergarten Day
    - "Welcome to Kindergarten Day" will be planned and coordinated with kindergarten teachers and elementary staff. Families will visit each kindergarten classroom and teachers to allow students to become familiar with elementary school. Kindergarten readiness calendars, pamphlets, and paperwork will be prepared to help families enroll their children in elementary school.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

- Kindergarten Visit Day
    - When classroom lists have been established, preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers will coordinate a soft hand off visit for students to visit their new teacher and classrooms. Students will become familiar with routines and their classroom before the first day of school.
- After First Week of School
    - Once students transition to kindergarten, we will hold meetings between past preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers to allow for conversations around student needs and strategies.

Our goals for all transitions include:

- Communicate with families and their children before they begin school to become familiar with their needs and their new classroom environment.
- Allow students to explore their new classroom environment and their teacher in their classrooms.
- Build relationships with families by keeping all lines of communication open.
- Ensuring all families know and connect with their teachers in a personal, one-on-one environment, preferably the child's home.
- Have families complete a student profile during At Home Visits to allow teachers to get to know their students.
- Connect families with The Grove program as a whole, with outside agencies, and with other Grove families.
- Provide transition information through Brightwheel communication, emails, newsletters and phone calls.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

CC. Inclusion Policy

The Grove believes in inclusive classrooms. Our students receive special education services in their classrooms and are fortunate to have a special education teacher, speech pathologist and occupational therapist for any students needing these services. Our SPED teachers collaborate with our lead and assistant teachers to create a system for our students to receive their service time without missing classroom learning or special events, while pushing into their natural, blended classroom environments. Our district supports our teachers by allowing them time to meet weekly with each other and our special education department to create any extra supports that allow for inclusion in our program. Teachers and the IEP team partner with families and meet regularly to collaborate on the student's goals and growth.

<u>Our goals for an inclusive environment include:</u>

- All children, regardless of ability, will learn together in a multi-aged classroom environment.
- All children are valued equally and deserve access to the same opportunities.
- Children with disabilities, and those without, will achieve greater academic gains in inclusive classrooms.
- General education teachers and special education teachers, including speech/language pathologists and occupational therapists will work together to provide meaningful support to all students.
- Teachers will use a variety of techniques and resources to connect with individual learning styles.
- We will focus on students' abilities, not disabilities.
- Teachers will differentiate curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- Providing a classroom environment that fosters an attitude of respect, understanding and empathy for all students.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

DD. Community Resource Guide

The Grove believes in engaging families with not only their child's school, but community-based services as well, to support families in their child's development. The Grove will provide families with a Community Resource Guide prior to the school starting each year. This community resource guide provides families with community-based resources and information. The resource guide will include, but is not limited to early intervention services, medical and dental care, early childhood mental health consultation, parent education programs, public library services, public housing assistance and job assistance programs.

Our goals for the community resource guide include:

- Providing service information for early intervention services, for example, screenings for speech and language delays, and physical delays.
- Engaging to involve all parents, students and teachers to be involved in the child's learning and development.
- To provide families with resources to support their child's development.
- Building partnerships and including families in their learning and development.
- Allowing families to be heard and a part of their child's education in their early learning setting and to help them be more engaged in their learning and early school readiness.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

EE. Quality Improvement Plans

The Grove creates yearly Quality Improvement (QI) Plans to allow our program to act on our self-assessments and data. We evaluate our performance in delivering quality education and care, and use data to plan future improvements to The Grove. We use the process of looking at student data, program self-evaluations, parent survey results and classroom CLASS evaluations to monitor and measure the quality of our program. Our QI plans are created by our director, teachers, staff and stakeholders. We share our QI plans with families during our Early Advisory Council meetings each month. The director also houses hard copies of our QI plans that are accessible to families, teachers, and stakeholders of our program.

FF. Adult: Child Ratios

The Grove believes that one aspect of quality care in early childhood programs is the opportunity for interactions between children and adults. Responsive teaching and caregiving are only possible when staff members have sufficient time to interact meaningfully with each child in their care and to plan and carry out high-quality learning opportunities. When numbers are too high, adults are stretched too thin to be responsive to the individual needs of the children in their care. At the Grove we will maintain low group sizes to place value on the child to adult relationship. A maximum group size of 16 must be maintained at all times in the classrooms.

Procedure

- Preschool Classrooms (ages 3-5)
    - The adult to children ratio will be one adult to eight children.
- Toddler Classrooms (ages 1 and walking to 3)
    - The adult to child ratio will be one adult to five children.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

GG. Continuity of Care Practices

While children are enrolled in The Grove, they will be in a classroom that is age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. Children will continue in this classroom until they have reached the maximum age or exceeded the learning process for the classroom. While children are in the classroom, they will continue with the same teachers for the duration of their time in the classroom. This provides continuity of care.

If for some reason a change of classroom is necessary, parents and EC Director and appropriate staff can schedule a meeting to discuss the need and make a decision following transition best practices.

<u>Our goals for Continuity of Care:</u>

- Provide stable relationships with teachers who are sensitive and responsive to a young child's signals and needs.
- Foster attachment relationships with children that are nurturing, individualized, responsive and predictable.
- Create as little disruptions in services as possible to support social-emotional and cognitive development.
- Ensure a consistent, safe and stable environment to allow children to develop the relationships and trust necessary to comfortably explore and learn from their surroundings.
- Deepen teacher and family relationships by building trust and connection.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

HH. Trauma Informed Practice

Our goals for supporting staff and families experiencing trauma/adversity:

- Realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for recovery.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, and staff.
- Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.
- Actively avoid re-traumatization.
- Provide resources for staff and families to ensure safety, trustworthiness, transparency, peer support, collaboration, empowerment and humility.
- Build awareness
- Support a culture of staff and family wellness.
- Create a safe physical, social and emotional environment.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

II. Breastfeeding

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all breastfeeding families have the support they need to continue breastfeeding while their children attend our child care center. We also strive to make sure that all families are well-informed about the risks and benefits of infant feeding choices as they may apply to these children and any future children.

Our goals for supporting staff and families while breastfeeding include :

- Providing an atmosphere that welcomes breastfeeding families.
- Supporting mothers who continue to breastfeed their infants/children as they return and continue to work.
- Keeping a private, designated space (other than the bathroom) available for mothers to breastfeed their children.
- The Director's office will be a welcoming space for staff and families to breastfeed. We welcome mothers to breastfeed in the classroom as well.
- Refrigerator and freezer space is made available for labeled, pumped human milk as needed.

Reviewed by superintendent 8.12. 2026 and 10.16.2026

JJ. Attendance Policy

The Grove's attendance policy follows the district's policy on absences. Due to high demand for Early Childhood Education and our extensive waitlist, absences of 16 consecutive days or more will result in unenrollment from the program. Students who are chronically absent will receive two staff contacts via phone or mail prior to being unenrolled.

KK. Collaboration with BVHS

The Grove partners with Buena Vista High School to encourage collaboration and community partnership. This is done in a variety of ways, one of which being monthly visits from Civics students. The Civics/Preschool partnership is one way that the Civics students accomplish their required 10 hours per semester of Civic Responsibility work. This course is required by the state of Colorado for all juniors.

LL. Mini Blessings

The Grove partners with Mini Blessings to offer therapeutic experiences for preschool children. According to the Mini Blessings website: "Here at Mini-Blessings Farm it is our sincere desire to share the healing power of horses; with the old, the young, the big, the small, and most importantly with anyone in need of healing. As a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, operating in Chaffee County, Mini-Blessings provides equine guided interactions and equine assisted learning to those within the Central Colorado region. With a herd of seven miniature horses and one full size standard horse, we are always willing and eager to help the healing begin!"

Mini Blessings visits are conducted weekly on preschool grounds and students will not be transported for this experience.

MM. Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Bullying, and Sexual Harassment

Buena Vista School District is committed to providing a school environment where all students are treated with dignity and respect and are able to learn free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and sexual harassment.

Discrimination or harassment based on a protected class is prohibited. Bullying, including bullying based on a protected class, is also prohibited. Sexual harassment and other unwelcome sexual conduct are prohibited, including unwelcome sexual comments, gestures, advances, requests, images, messages, or other verbal, physical, or electronic conduct of a sexual nature.

Students who experience or witness discrimination, harassment, bullying, or sexual harassment are encouraged to report the concern to a trusted staff member, school administrator, or the district's Compliance Officer. Retaliation against anyone who reports a concern or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

All reports will be taken seriously and addressed in accordance with district policy and applicable law. Students and families may review the listed District polices below for additional information:
Policy AC—Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (you can link)
AC-R-1—Harassment and Discrimination Investigation Procedures for Students
AC-R-3—Title IX/Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures
JICDE - Bullying Prevention and Education

NN. Student Gatherings

Buena Vista Schools respect students' rights to gather peacefully and to express their beliefs, ideas, and viewpoints, including through voluntary prayer and other religious expression, on the same terms as other noncurricular student activities.

Students who are planning a gathering on school property that requires use of facilities, special supervision, or that may affect the school day should notify their school principal in advance by completing the district's Student Gathering Notification Form. The form is available through the school office

and is intended to help students and school leaders plan for an appropriate time and location and ensure that the gathering does not interfere with classroom instruction, student safety, or other school activities.

Notification is not a request for permission to hold a particular viewpoint, belief, or expression, nor does it constitute district sponsorship or endorsement of the gathering's content. School leaders may work with students to identify an alternate time or location when necessary to address instructional time, safety, supervision, facilities, or other established school expectations. This also allows the principal to support their rights while also protecting the learning, safety, and rights of all students. Purely spontaneous, non-disruptive individual or small-group expression that does not require facilities or special logistics does not require prior notification.

Student gatherings must remain consistent with district policies and applicable law. Visitors and non-enrolled students may not organize or participate in a student gathering on school property outside the district's established requirements for visitors and community use of school facilities.

The district neither sponsors nor endorses the content of student gatherings.

Student Gathering Notification - BV Schools

Employee Handbook:

Staff Role and Religious Expression

Employees retain their First Amendment free-speech and free-exercise rights. When acting in their official capacities, however, they may not organize, lead, encourage, discourage, or actively participate in student-led religious gatherings. Presence solely for supervisory, safety, or custodial purposes is appropriate and does not constitute participation or endorsement.

Employees may engage in private religious expression (including quiet personal prayer) during times when other personal activities are allowed, provided the context clearly shows they are not acting as district representatives and the expression does not coerce or pressure students.

Whether conduct is official or private depends on the circumstances (role, timing, location, purpose, and actions).

This guidance protects students' rights and shields employees and the District from claims of endorsement or discrimination. It does not prohibit employees from exercising their own constitutional rights or performing neutral, assigned duties. Employees with questions about a specific situation should consult their supervisor or the Superintendent before acting whenever possible.