

North Little Rock School District

Early Childhood Program

Family Information



**"If a child cannot learn in the way we teach, we must teach
in a way a child can learn."**

MISSION STATEMENT

The North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Program staff will create and maintain a developmentally appropriate program environment for learning while equipping and empowering families to participate in and enhance their children's education. The North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Program is committed to providing high quality preschool experiences for all three- and four- year old children that would not otherwise have the opportunity to attend pre-k. Since 1991, the District has committed time, space, and money to serve as many pre-kindergarten children as possible.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Environment as the third teacher

Through beautiful spaces and authentic materials, the environment becomes a natural catalyst for learning.

Child-inspired curriculum

Through play, language, and observation, children's ideas and theories are captured, explained and expanded

Documentation as communication, instruction, and validation

Through documentation, children's work is valued and made visible, encouraging collaboration within our community and driving instruction.

PROGRAM GOALS

- ❖ To establish a collaborative community of learners that includes program staff, children and parents/caregivers.
- ❖ To lay a foundation of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that value education and lead to life-long learning.
- ❖ To challenge children to think critically, work collaboratively and solve problems creatively.
- ❖ To cultivate children's positive self-image and feelings of personal worth and self-esteem
- ❖ To create an environment that is relative to children thus providing the motivation for meaningful and contextually grounded exploration.
- ❖ To cultivate an environment where children and staff have the opportunity to creatively and freely manipulate ideas, objects, and experience.

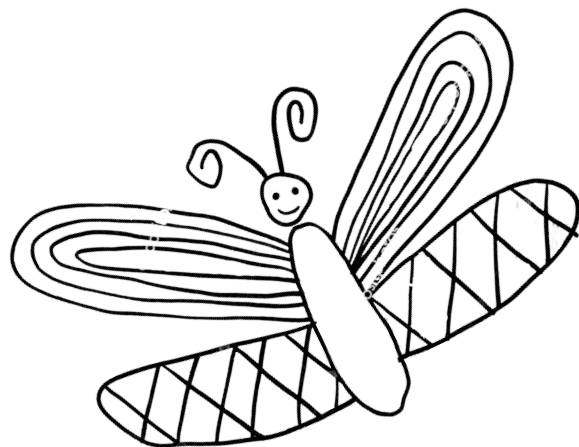
PHILOSOPHY

The North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Program believes that children deserve the best that humanity has to offer. We recognize that every child is unique in their styles of learning, stages of development, and interests. They have strengths, abilities, and potentials which must be recognized and supported in a respectful and nurturing manner. Children in the North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Program have the right to realize and expand their potential and to interact with adults who support their thoughts, ideas, and actions rather than simply teaching knowledge and skills. With these beliefs, each child has the possibility to impact his own learning and be a productive citizen.

The North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Program is committed to the exploration and implementation of a Reggio-inspired approach to teaching and learning. This approach focuses on the image of the child, the role of the environment, collaboration, documentation, a child-centered curriculum, professional development, and partnerships with parents and the community.

In order to truly understand and meet the needs of each child, we must develop a relationship with the one who has the most influence in the child's life – the "parent". It is for this reason the parent has the right and is encouraged to participate actively in the growth, care, and education of their children. We acknowledge the parent as a child's first and most important teacher and as being fundamental to the early childhood program.

These beliefs create an atmosphere of growing and learning which influences parents, staff and children for life.



PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Signing In and Out

Child Care Licensing Regulations require that all children be signed in and out each day. It is the policy of the North Little Rock School District that the person signing the child in/out must be at least 12 years old.

School Hours:

School starts at 7:30 am and ends at 2:30 pm.

Children should be in their classroom **no later than 8:00 AM**. Anyone arriving after 10:00 a.m. will need a Dr's note or needs to have prior arrangements with the school. It is also very important that you pick your child up on time. Once school is dismissed, teachers need time to prepare for the next day. All Pre-K children should be **dropped off no later than 8:00 am and picked up by 2:30 pm (These times are considered tardies and accumulate to unexcused absences)**.

Written documentation will be required for any absences within 2 days of returning to school in order for the absences to be considered excused.

Attendance

In order for your child to take full advantage of the program, he/she must be at school all day, every day. ***It is very important that your child is at school ON TIME everyday he/she is not sick.***

Three tardies (dropping off OR picking up late) = one unexcused absence. **Ten unexcused absences (which will include tardies) can result in dismissal from the pre-k program.** We have a limited number of slots in our pre-kindergarten program and usually have a waiting list. It is for this reason **you may lose your slot in the program if you are consistently late bringing or picking up your child.**

Whole Group Instruction Time

Classroom will not be interrupted during whole group instruction to ensure students stay focussed and instruction is not lost. These lessons usually last between 10-15 minutes. ***No one will be allowed to enter or leave the classroom during this time***. A sign will be posted at the door when meetings are in session. Parents may wait in designated areas for the meeting to finish. Your child's teacher will provide you with a schedule so you will know what time these meetings occur. Each class has their own specific time for whole group instruction.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Staff is as concerned about your child's health and safety as we are about their education. It is for that reason we have the following policies and procedures.

Contact Numbers

It is very important that we are able to contact someone in the event your child gets sick, hurt, school closings due to weather, etc. PLEASE make sure your child's teacher and the school office have CURRENT WORKING phone numbers for you and any one that can pick up your child.

Illness

Any child with a contagious illness will be removed from the classroom immediately. This is for the protection of the other children in the room as well as the staff. The sick child will be kept in the office until he/she is picked up. It is very important that your child is picked up in a timely manner. Often there are several sick children in the office at one time which could result in your child being exposed to additional illnesses while waiting to be picked up. Children sent home with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school. This is subject to change depending on CDC guidelines.

Change of clothes

Children have accidents!! They fall down in the mud, spill paint, splash water and sometimes do not make it to the bathroom in time. We make every effort not to bother parents at work when this happens, however, we must have a change of clothes for your child in the event of an accident. Please make sure your child always has an extra set of clothes (including underwear and socks) in his/her cubby. If not, we will have to call you to bring a change of clothes for your child.

Well Child Check Up

ALL children in ABC Pre-K classrooms are required to have a well child check up. You should have received a Well Child Screening form with your acceptance/school assignment letter and there is one included in this folder. This form must be filled out and returned to your child's teacher within 45 calendar days after enrolling. Any child that does not have a form on file will be sent home until the physical is complete. Students absent 10 days straight will be dropped.

Contact With and Access to Children

Please list ALL persons that have permission to pick up your child on the Child Data Sheet in this folder. You may attach an additional sheet if necessary. We will not release your child to anyone that is not on your list or on the child's birth certificate. You may call the school office to authorize someone not on your list, only in cases of emergency. We must be able to verify that you are making the request by either caller ID or calling you on a number on your child's paperwork. Anyone picking up a child will be asked for a picture ID unless the teacher knows the adult. This is for the protection of your child.

Child Care Licensing regulations require us to inform you that your child could be interviewed in the case of an investigation by Child Care Licensing or other agency. Your child's teacher, counselor, or principal will be present during any interview and you will be notified as soon as possible after the interview.

CHILD NUTRITION

Meals

The North Little Rock School District provides free breakfast and lunch to ALL children grades Pre-K - 5th grade through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program.

We will serve snacks at all Pre-K sites. There is no charge for snacks, however, DHS does require that we have a FREE and Reduced Meal application on file for every child. The application is in your Parent Folder. Please complete your application and return it to your child's teacher within two days of enrolling your child in our program.

New USDA Guidelines state that children ages 2 through 5 years old must be served unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk.

Children bringing their breakfast/lunch

Parents are welcome to send children's meals to school with the understanding that there is no way for teachers to refrigerate or heat children's meals. If you choose to send your child's meals, you must make sure that all of the nutritional requirements are met. A list of required foods components are located on the Pike View ECC web page under documents / parent information.

Sending treats to school

Due to legislation addressing childhood obesity in Arkansas, schools are limited to nine events per year where food of non-nutritional value is served – i.e. cupcakes, chips, candy, etc. It is for this reason that we do not allow parents to

bring birthday or other treats for children during the school day. Your school will notify you of the dates of their nine events.

CLASSROOM AND CURRICULUM

Dressing for SUCCESS in a pre-k classroom

Three and four year olds are MESSY! Our curriculum is MESSY!

Please send your child to school in clothes that are appropriate for what they are doing – painting, working with clay, playing in dirt, eating spaghetti in the cafeteria, etc.... We make every effort to keep children relatively clean (wearing smocks while painting, etc.), but children are children and there are 20 of them in each classroom. Dress your child comfortably in clothes that you do not mind getting dirty..... Everyone will be happier at the end of the day! This does not apply on “special” days such as picture day. Due to safety reasons, we request all shoes to have a backing.

School Supplies

The Arkansas Better Chance and Professional Development Grants pay for all supplies, materials and other programming costs for pre-k classrooms. Parents may donate items to their child’s class if they wish but will not be required to pay for anything.

Suggested items to be donated:

Kleenex Baby Wipes Antibacterial Gel Liquid Soap
Headphones (personal use)

Check with your child’s teacher for other needs.

Field Trips

ALL transportation and admission fees for children going on field trips are paid through the Early Childhood Program’s grants. Admission fees will be paid for parents that are asked to go as chaperones and they may also ride the bus. Whenever possible, additional parents are welcome to attend but must pay their own admission and provide their own transportation. Please notify your child’s teacher in advance if you plan to attend.

Sending / Bringing items from home

PLEASE do not send toys or other items with your child to school. Our classrooms have lots of materials for children to use while at school so keep those items for your child to use at home.

Photos and Videos

We regularly video and photograph children as they work. We use these to review and reflect on what children are learning; in displays in the room and hallway; for staff development and in professional presentations. Videos and photos will never be provided to anyone that is not a part of the North Little Rock School District Early Childhood Program staff (see attached Multi Verification Form).

Religious Activities

The Establishment Clause in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits public aid for religious worship or instruction. No religious activity will be paid for or subsidized by public funds or occur in any manner suggesting endorsement of any religion or religious message.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Getting to know you

Knowing about you and your family helps us design our program to meet your needs and interests.

PARENT SURVEY - There is a parent survey included in this packet. Please fill it out and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible. This information will help us in planning our family activities for the year.

FAMILY MAP – During the fall, you and your child's teacher will complete a Family Map. This helps us get to know your child and your family, identify strengths and areas of need, and offer resources to you and your family.

PARENT /TEACHER CONFERENCES: There are two conferences per year and 100% parent participation is required. A district calendar has been provided for exact dates.

Get involved

We need you your support, your skills, your time, your knowledge!!

VIPS – We encourage you and your family to volunteer your time and/or talents in your child's classroom or school. It makes our program even better and your child will LOVE having you at his/her school. Talk to your child's teacher to volunteer.

PTA - Please become an active member of the school's PTA by joining, participating in PTA activities and meetings, and maybe even being a PTA officer or committee member.

For you and your family

Parenting is hard work and children do not come with instructions!! We want to help.

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER – Each pre-k site has an area with information and resources for families. Pike View ECC also has an extensive parent resource center with numerous videos, books and pamphlets focused on children 0-5.

FAMILY EVENTS - The fast pace of modern day family life can make it easy to forget that simply just spending time with our children is really important. Watch for information about Family Nights at your child's school. It is a FUN, FREE way to spend time together AND get involved in your child's school and education.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM - A Pre-K teacher at each site will oversee the program for their school. All of our teachers have access to multiple resources and are able to help families with many questions/concerns/issues. There are school counselors at all elementary schools and a district Social Worker (Bobbie Riggins 771-8099) that can provide assistance... And you can call the Early Childhood Office at 771-8170 if you need information or assistance.

PARENT PACKET - The information in this packet must be returned to your child's classroom teacher by the second day of enrollment. These forms include:

1. CACFP Meal Income Eligibility Form
2. Child care Food Program Enrollment Form
3. Home Language Usage Survey
4. Multiple Verification and Consent Form
5. Child Guidance Policy
6. Child Personal Data Sheet
7. Home School Contract
8. Health Form

