

Shawnee Mission Early Childhood Family Handbook 2020-2021



We provide a safe and engaging environment where children and families experience the joy of learning.



Table of Contents

Program Overview	Page 4
Mission	Page 5
Early Learning Curriculum	Pages 5-6
Partners	Pages 6-7
Communication Between Home and School	Page 7
Visitor Information	Page 8
Attendance and Tardy Procedure	Page 8
Celebrations	Page 9
School Meals	Page 9
Safety and Security	Page 10
Health	Page 11-12
Playground Equipment	Page 12
Recess Guidelines	Page 12
Records	Page 12
School Closing	Page 13
Drop Off and Pick Up Map	Page 14



Welcome to the Early Childhood Education Center!

We are pleased you have chosen the Shawnee Mission School District for your child's early education. As your child begins his or her early learning experience, we know you will have many questions. We hope this handbook will provide you with school-specific information you need to make this year successful for both you and your child. General information about school policies, procedures, and programs can be found in a district handbook which is available [here](#).

Shawnee Mission Early Childhood Education Center
6700 W. 83rd St. Overland Park, KS 66204
Office Hours 7:30 a.m.– 4:00 p.m. 913-993-2600

Carla Heintz Principal, Early Childhood Education Center
Tracy Smarr- Dolezal, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator
Sara Moses, School Psychologist
Katie Watkins, School Nurse
Barbara Jump, Administrative Assistant
Chris Judd, Administrative Assistant
Lindsey A Guillen, Spanish Interpreter



Shawnee Mission Early Childhood Education Center (SMECEC) Family Handbook

Program Overview

There are 33 total early childhood classrooms in the Shawnee Mission School District. Eleven of those, located at the Early Childhood Education Center, serve students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) alongside typically developing peers functioning as one learning community. All students receive a high-quality early childhood program that is developmentally appropriate to each individual child. We generally serve three groups of children in our classrooms, as detailed below:

Children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- **Eligible for Special Education Services**
- **Typically demonstrates a need for intervention in more than one area of development**
- **May be eligible to receive district-provided transportation**

Peers

- **Must meet peer eligibility criteria:**
 - **Independent with toileting**
 - **Not eligible for any special education service**
 - **Age (must be 3, not kindergarten eligible)**
 - **Able to initiate play**
 - **Attend M-Th**
- **Not eligible to receive district-provided transportation**

Children Being Evaluated to Determine Eligibility for an IEP

- **May eventually have an IEP or enroll as a peer.**
- **May be eligible for district-provided transportation.**

Classroom Staff

Each classroom is staffed with a certified teacher. Other professionals, including speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists, may be in classrooms, depending upon the needs of individual children. Two paraeducators are also typically assigned to each classroom, assisting the teacher and therapists throughout the day.



District Mission

The Mission of the Shawnee Mission School District:

The mission of the Shawnee Mission School District, the bridge to unlimited possibilities yet to be discovered, is to ensure students construct their own foundation for success in life's endeavors through relevant, personalized learning experiences orchestrated by talented, compassionate educators and distinguished by:

- an inclusive culture
- an engaged community
- and robust opportunities that challenge learners to achieve their full potential

To achieve this, the district mission is articulated as three objectives:

Every student will achieve academic success through a challenging, relevant personalized learning plan.

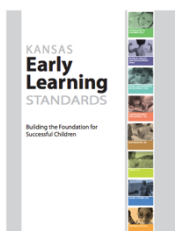
Every student will develop and utilize personal resilience while mastering essential competencies that lead to college and career readiness

Every student will develop interpersonal skills to be an engaged, empathetic member of the local and global community.

These objectives are carried out beginning in our early childhood program.

Early Learning Curriculum

Kansas Early Learning Standards



We use the Kansas Early Learning Standards as the foundation of our educational program. These standards are based upon the Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards used by our K-12 partners. The Standards can be found at www.ksde.org/ksearlylearningstandards. District early childhood staff members have created curriculum maps, identified priority standards, and developed common assessments and progress reporting based upon the standards.



Positive Behavior Intervention and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

We base our work on a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support academically and behaviorally. Tier One describes universal supports that are important for all children, every day. All students have access to the curriculum, high quality instruction, nurturing and responsive relationships, and supportive environments. Our staff members have been involved in specific professional learning to ensure that these foundations are in place. Tier Two involves targeted supports, recognizing that even in effective settings, sometimes children need specific supports to solve problems or practice skills. Finally, some children will need intensive supports and instruction in order to have positive interactions, participation, and success in learning. Tier Three involves using a systematic approach to assessing persistent challenging behaviors and addressing them in ways that promote healthy social emotional development.

Social Emotional Learning

Independence, participation in routines, and positive social interactions are important goals for early learners. Development of these skills and others that are collectively considered Executive Function skills is supported in a number of ways. Direct instruction, including the use of a published social skills curriculum – Second Step – supports this work. You will receive regular updates related to the specific social skill being taught. Our social skills curriculum is part of our larger, program-wide system of positive behavior interventions and supports.

Partners

Shawnee Mission Parents as Teachers

Also located at the Early Childhood Education Center is Shawnee Mission Parents as Teachers, a free voluntary program that serves Shawnee Mission School District families prenatally to 36 months. Parents as Teachers provides home visits, group connections, playgroups, and optional classes for enrolled families. In addition, they provide screenings for hearing, vision, language, dental, nutrition, motor, intellectual, and social development. Parents as Teachers staff partner with our early childhood staff to provide supports, including smooth transitions for children and families. For more information, call the Parents as Teachers office at 913-993-2610 or visit them on the web at <https://www.smsd.org/academics/early-childhood/parents-as-teachers>.



Shawnee Mission Area Council PTA



The Shawnee Mission School District receives support from the Shawnee Mission Area Council (SMAC) PTA. In addition to supporting schools districtwide, SMAC PTA operates a Clothing Exchange that offers gently used clothing and shoes to families living within the Shawnee Mission School District boundaries. The Clothing Exchange is located in the lower level of the Early Childhood Center, and more information can be found online, <https://www.smac-pta.org/clothing-exchange>.



Additionally, the Parents as Teachers PTA supports families of children birth to three years of age. The Parents as Teachers PTA Executive Board plans monthly events through the school year. For more information or to become a member, contact smsdpatmembership@gmail.com.

Details

Communication Between Home and School

Back-To-School Conferences provide an opportunity for the parents to meet their child's teacher and gain information about the program here at SMECEC. The teachers share information about your child's individual goals and how they will work to achieve them.

Formal conferences are held with every parent at the end of the first and third quarter. Information will be sent home at the end of each quarter updating you on your child's progress. Additional in person conferences may be scheduled throughout the year, whenever you or the teacher perceives the need. If you have concerns about your child, please contact your teacher at any time via e-mail or a phone call.

Opportunities for parent and family involvement are scheduled throughout the school year. Information will be sent home as these events draw near. You may also check our website for information regarding these events.

The Communication Office of the Shawnee Mission School District provides a twenty-four-hour information line. By dialing (913) 993-7380, patrons can receive information about board meetings, school closings, the sports calendar, fine arts activities, and the school lunch menu.

Board of Education Meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Center for Academic Achievement at 8200 W 71st St. The public is invited to attend.



Visitor Information

We encourage parents and other visitors to visit our school to see the many wonderful things that are happening on a daily basis. If you plan a visit to a classroom, we ask that you please let the teacher know when you would like to visit and pre-arrange your visit with them. The principal reserves the right to limit visitors as necessary to protect instructional time and the learning environment. For security reasons, it is important that our school personnel be knowledgeable about every adult who enters and leaves the school. **When visiting the school, please come to the school office to check in upon arrival and check out prior to leaving.** Parents and other visitors will be given an identification badge or sticker to wear while they are in the building.

Attendance and Tardy Procedure

Encouraging your child to attend each day will give your child the greatest chance for success. Parents are requested to schedule doctor/dentist appointments before and after school, whenever possible. Vacations should be scheduled when school is not in session.

When a student is absent, parents are requested to notify the school at the attendance line (913-993-2688) by 7:30 am for morning students and by 11:30 am for afternoon students. Please include student name, classroom teacher, and reason for the absence. All messages left in Spanish will be interpreted and shared with early childhood staff. If your child is a bus rider, please contact DS Bus Lines (913)-384-1190 to let them know if your child is absent.

If no parent call has been received, the school will attempt to call the home or place of employment. Notes do not need to be presented upon re-entry if parental contact has been made with the school. Students entering school when no parent contact has been made should present a parental note, giving reason and days absent, and have the parent's signature and date.

Students who accumulate five days of absence in a semester will have their attendance record reviewed by school personnel. If it is felt that there are unnecessary or excessive absences, the parent/guardian will be notified. If there are additional absences, a conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian.

Tardiness must be kept to a minimum. Please be considerate of the classroom schedule. Tardiness is a disruption to the classroom teacher as well as the other children. Ten unexcused tardies will be counted as one day absence



Celebrations

Birthdays

A birthday is a special day in the life of a child, and birthdays can be celebrated at SMECEC. We encourage families to send commercially prepared treats, in individual serving sizes, to share with their peers. Please contact your child's teacher for information about food allergies in the class prior to sending treats. Parents are welcome to come and share the snack time with them. Please check with your child's teacher to arrange the best time for you to arrive and check in and out of the office. We also request that balloons not be sent to school due to potential latex allergies.

Class Parties

We enjoy celebrating various events throughout the school year. You will be notified by the early childhood teachers when classroom parties may occur. Details will be sent accordingly.

School Meals

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast is available to students who attend during the morning session; lunch is available to students who attend SMECEC during the afternoon session each school day. Menus for breakfast and lunch are available online at <https://www.smsd.org> in the Food Services section.

	Breakfast	Lunch
Full Price	\$1.50	\$2.75
Reduced Price	\$0.30	\$0.40
Free	\$0.00	\$0.00

Special Diet

If you have an allergy or specific dietary concerns, contact your school nurse for a medical form to be filled out by your doctor.

SchoolCafé

Parents may monitor student meal activity through their SchoolCafé accounts. This provides a quick and easy access to view account balances at any time, see what items are being purchased, apply for free or reduced meals and view menus with nutrition and allergen information. A username and password is needed for the SchoolCafé set up. The account should be set up in the parent's name.



Payments

Payments can be made by check or cash at the school, or by credit card online through E-Funds (fee) at <https://www.smsd.org> or by calling the Food Service office with a credit card (no fee). All students may receive a full meal regardless of the money they have in their account. Reminder phone calls will be made when student accounts are running low or are negative. Account balances (positive or negative) will follow the student each year within the district. Students withdrawn from district with a positive account balance will be refunded.

When an account is -\$75.00 food service staff will contact the parent by phone or email alerting them to the situation and let them know that if the account is not paid it will be turned over to the collection agency. As of December 1st and June 1st any account that is -\$75.00 or more a letter will be sent through US Mail to the parents or guardians requesting payment. If payment is not received within 30 days the account will be turned over to the district business office and will be submitted to the district collections agency.

Safety and Security

Crisis Plan

We know that your child's safety is your utmost concern. We take this very seriously as well and staff are trained in what to do in the event of a crisis. Additionally, to ensure student and staff safety, **all visitors must report to the office**. The faculty will immediately report any stranger in the building or on school grounds who is not wearing the appropriate sticker provided by the office. If a potentially dangerous situation should occur, an emergency plan designed to keep children out of harm's way will be immediately implemented and the police will be called.

Supervision

All staff recognizes that it is our responsibility to control, to the best of our ability, what goes on among the children at school. One way of doing this is to provide adequate supervision during less-structured time like recess and restroom breaks. Staff members will intervene when possible bullying situations occur and give clear messages to the students; bullying is not accepted at SMECEC.

Research shows that schools that are characterized by a warm, positive school climate while having firm limits on unacceptable behavior, result in a safe nurturing environment for all students.

Disruptions During the School Day

Instructional time has a direct effect on the amount of learning for the students; therefore, we do not want to disrupt instruction unless it is absolutely necessary. **In an effort to reduce disruptions, we are asking parents to bring items needed by a student to the office rather than deliver them to the classroom.** Phone calls placed to the teacher will be returned at the end of the school day.



Drills: Fire and Civil Defense

Fire drills are conducted quarterly, and safety drills are conducted monthly. Tornado drills are practiced during the first three quarters of the school year, so we are prepared in the event of severe weather in the Spring. During a tornado warning all children are taken to the designated storm shelter area and kept there until an “all clear” is sounded. In the event of an actual severe weather warning, students may only be released to their parents or to an authorized adult. In the event of a warning which extends beyond the school day, children will be kept at school until the “all clear” sounds or they are picked up by their parents. _

Health

A registered nurse is on staff at the early childhood center from 7:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The responsibilities of the school nurse include screening of vision and hearing; maintaining health records; providing first aid; assessing illness; notifying parents of communicable diseases; monitoring daily attendance; administering medications as ordered by physicians; and planning with the staff to provide a safe environment for students. The nurse can give non-prescription medication with signed permission from the parent. The nurse also participates in planning programs for the exceptional child and serves as a health consultant to students, parents, and teachers providing resources related to health and safety.

Medication should be sent to school in the original container with a current prescription label showing the child’s name and dosage, this prescription may serve in lieu of a written order from the physician, if accompanied by a signed note from the parent. Medication should be delivered to the nurse’s office upon arrival to school; parents must give signed permission for medication to be dispensed at school. **Do NOT send medications with students to school. Students may not keep any medicine in their possession while at school.**

The school nurse gives each student individual vision and hearing screens each year. Parents are notified if the student needs further examination by a health care professional. If you need help with resources for additional screening, please contact the school nurse. The district provides an audiologist to examine hearing at no charge when the child is referred by the school nurse.



Shawnee Mission Health Policies require that students be excluded from school with the following symptoms:

1. Fever with or without other symptoms.
2. Severe colds and cough
3. Eyes inflamed or with discharge
4. Drainage from the ear
5. Diarrhea [2 or more loose or watery stools]
6. Vomiting
7. Skin afflictions will be assessed by the nurse. A child may be excluded from school based on the nurse's assessment.

Students should be symptom and fever-free, ***without medication***, for 24 hours before returning to school. Parents are asked to call the school the first day their child is absent. Parents should also notify the school if their child has a communicable disease. Please call the school at 913-993-2688 to report an illness. If you leave a message, please leave the nature of the illness.

Students who have a cast, sutures, or an incapacitation injury should bring a doctor's note detailing any limitations in school activities.

Kansas law requires written proof of immunizations before attending any classes. A completed Health History and Permit Form are required at the time of initial enrollment. All students up to the age of 9 years who enroll in a Kansas school for the first time will be required to have a physical examination. This physical examination must be completed within 12 months before enrollment or within 90 days after school enrollment. If the physical form is not returned within 90 days, the student will be excluded from school. Shawnee Mission Physical Examination Record forms are recommended, but documentation on any physical form will be accepted. Yearly dental check-ups are recommended, but not required.

Parents are encouraged to make appointments for medical and dental services around school hours. The school recognizes that this is not always possible. Students will be excused for appointments during school hours if a note from the parent is presented to the teacher. Students will not be marked late if the lateness is due to a medical or dental appointment. However, a student who is absent for more than two hours (excluding lunch and recess) because of an appointment will be marked absent one-half day.



Playground Equipment

Students are not to bring privately-owned play equipment to school. Whistles, water guns, or other items brought to school will be confiscated and returned only at the parent's request. We request that students leave all other toys at home as well. These items can be lost or broken, and the SMECEC staff cannot be responsible for these items. If a toy or other item is found at school, it will be kept in the child's backpack and sent back home.

Recess Guidelines

All students are expected to participate in recess. If a medical condition prevents a child from participating in recess, it must be accompanied by a note from a physician. **Generally, if a child is well enough to be at school, they are well enough to go to recess.** There are exceptions to this rule, but it is a reasonable guideline. There will be no outside recess when:

1. The temperature is 25 degrees F. or below, or the wind chill index is 25 degrees F or below
2. There is significant falling moisture.

Teachers may take their class out briefly for fresh air at their discretion.

Records

Student records are kept for each child. All important information is incorporated into each student's cumulative record folder and is for school use only. Records may include academic work, level of achievement, grades, attendance data, scores on standardized aptitude and achievement tests, health data, family information, teacher ratings or observations, and verified reports of serious or recurrent learning or behavior problems. Students' records are confidential. Only the student's parents or guardians and designated school officials shall have access to them.



School Closing

Inclement Weather

In the event that school is closed due to inclement weather, families will be notified in a number of ways that Shawnee Mission School District is closed:

- Shawnee Mission School District Website – an announcement will be posted on the home page, www.smsd.org.
- Social Media – Follow @thesmsd on Twitter or like Shawnee Mission School District on Facebook.
- Shawnee Mission Alerts – Sign up for Shawnee Mission Alerts in Skyward via Skylert to receive weather-related school closing messages via text or email.
- Media Outlets - Announcements are made on local radio and TV stations. Parents should look for information that indicates that **Shawnee Mission USD 512** is closed due to inclement weather.
- Shawnee Mission Information Line - For school closing information, you may also call the Shawnee Mission 24-hour information line at (913) 993-7380.

If weather conditions deteriorate during a school day to the extent that school is dismissed early, the school will activate the Skylert list and will attempt to contact all parents.

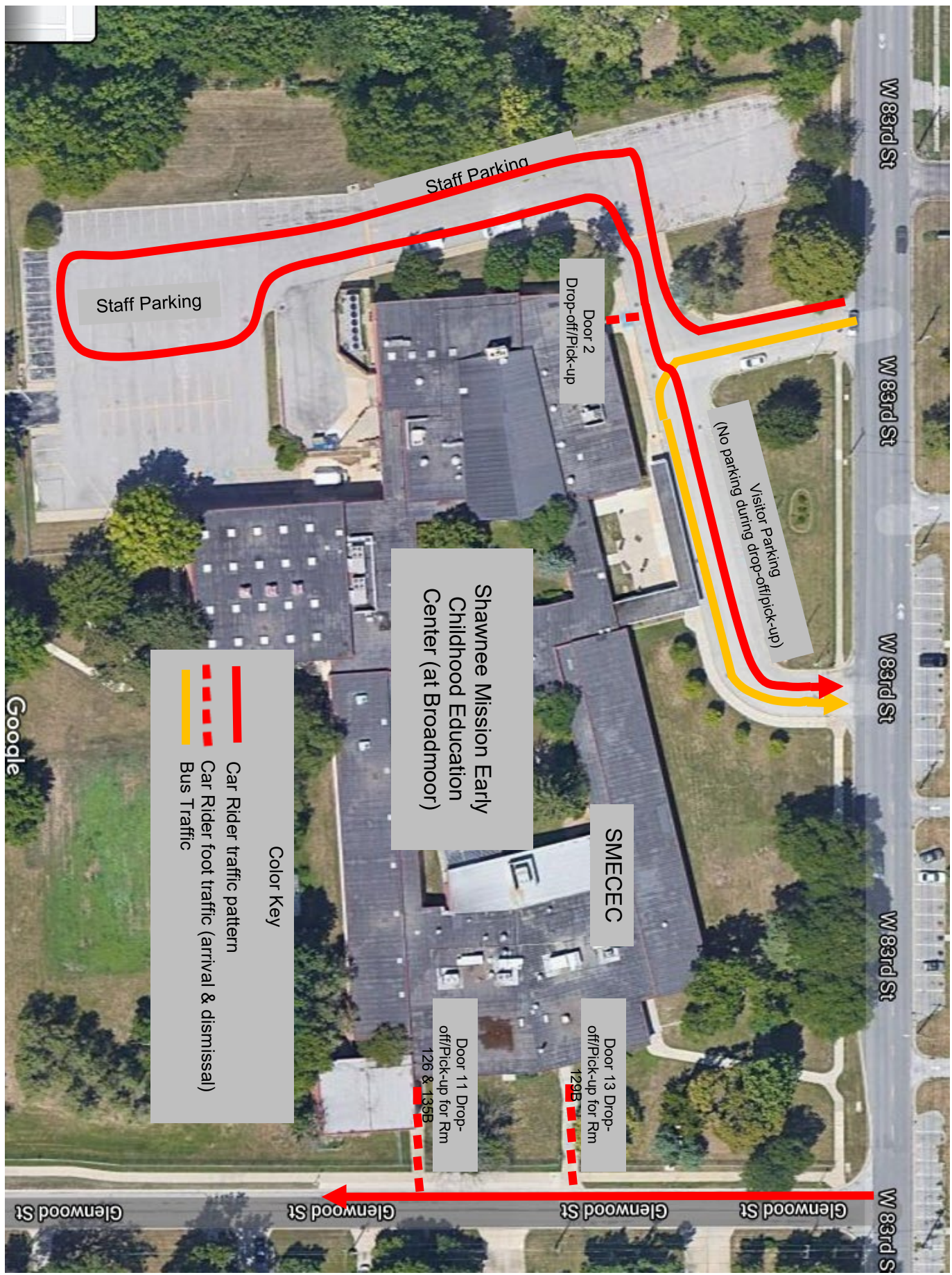
Emergency Closures

There could be other reasons the Early Childhood Center would be closed (i.e. a water main break or power outage). For these building-specific announcements, we will use Shawnee Mission Alerts to communicate.

It is imperative that your contact information (phone number and email address) is kept up-to-date to ensure we can reach you in case of emergency.



Map of Parking and Car Line for Drop Off and Pick Up



Color Key

- Red solid line: Car Rider traffic pattern
- Red dashed line: Car Rider foot traffic (arrival & dismissal)
- Yellow dashed line: Bus Traffic

Google