

‘Lil Learners Preschool 2022-2023 Handbook



Program Directory of Instructional and Support Services

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Owatonna, MN 55060

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'Lil Learners Preschool

The staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your children to the 'Lil Learners Preschool Program. The Owatonna School District #761 program is designed to provide a safe and supervised environment for children ages 3 – 4 years old.

This program is operated through Owatonna Community Education. The program is staffed with an early childhood educator and one educational assistant. The Early Childhood Advisory Council provides staff with advice and guidance in meeting the early learning needs of Owatonna's children. 'Lil Learners' is funded in partnership with state educational aid dollars and fees paid by participating families. Some classrooms are co taught with an ECSE teacher.

'Lil Learners' offers a variety of activities to channel children's energies into positive growing experiences. The purpose of 'Lil Learners is to provide all eligible children adequate opportunities to participate in child development programs that enable the children to enter school with the necessary skills and behavior and family stability and support to progress and flourish. Children with the greatest needs, as identified through self-assessment and the early childhood screening process receive priority for 'Lil Learners services. Our program builds upon existing services and resources in the Owatonna community to meet the health, nutrition, education and social service needs of participating children to enhance their learning and development and future success in school.

Children Served

'Lil Learners' serves preschool children who are at least **3 years old by September 1, 2022**. The program is designed to serve children and their families based on individual and family needs.

Program Services

The curriculum used in 'Lil Learners focuses on the whole child. Lesson plans are designed to promote growth in all areas of a child's development through a variety of small and large group activities. Weather permitting, children will spend time outdoors. Please bring your children to 'Lil Learners each day appropriately dressed for playing outside.

Free choice time is provided each day for the children to pursue their own interests in a safe, friendly and stimulating environment.

Preschool classes

For the 2022-2023 School year we offer the following schedule of preschool classes:

Monday/Wednesday:	10:15 –12:00 p.m
Tuesday/Thursday:	8:15 – 10:00 a.m.
Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday	1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Parent-Child Partnership

'Lil Learners is very proud of the parent-child partnership included in our preschool. We respect that you are your child's first and most important teacher. We provide families with multiple ways to participate in early learning experiences with their child. Early learning opportunities with the whole family involved is supported by research that indicates preschool children who have families that actively support learning beyond the classroom are more successful in school and life! For these

reasons, we offer a menu of parent-child learning options that will help you and your child with a successful transition into kindergarten.

To participate in 'Lil Learners, a family must agree to contribute 25 hours towards their child's school readiness by participating in a combination of the following required and optional choices. **Families that are enrolled by the end of September, and that contribute 25 hours towards their child's school readiness by May 1st will be rewarded with a 50% discount off their May tuition payment** (Tuition account must be kept current to receive a discount.)

Required Participation

- A. Participate in **Early Childhood Screening** within 30 days of the school year starting.
- B. Attend **two parent-teacher conferences** to discuss your child's development. The focus of the conference will be your child's development and how the school can partner with you to meet your child's developmental and educational needs. Conferences are approximately 20 minutes in length. The classroom teacher will post a notice for families to sign-up for conferences two-weeks prior to conference dates.

Additional Parent-Child Activities:

- Classroom "take-home" activities (*provided by your child's teacher*) – Reading Log (1hr), Weekly Activity Sheets (1/2 hr).
- Early Childhood Family Education Classes: Our latest brochure can be found here [Early Childhood Family Education Brochure](#). (*Fun shops are not included*)
- Family Night at the Library (Dates and themes are listed in the ECFE brochure, on the monthly newsletters and on the Library website).
- Family Enrichment Events (*Check out the Community Education and ECFE brochure for one-time events you and your child can enjoy together.*)
- Participate in Adult Learning Center programs to earn a GED or practice basic skills, including English as a Second Language.
- Classroom Volunteer, come and join us for a day!

Program Calendar

This calendar is customized specific to your family and indicates the days that class will be in session, when payments are due, and when parent/teacher conferences are scheduled. If there are changes in the calendar for any reason you will be notified on Class Dojo and with messages sent home in your child's school bag.

Tuition Payments

Tuition is based on a sliding fee scale. Sliding fee scales for the 2022-2023 school year are listed below. Families self-declare their income bracket and family size that then calculate the monthly tuition rate. Tuition rates are confirmed with families at the time their child's application to 'Lil Learners is accepted. If family circumstances change, families must notify the Community Education Office so tuition can be calculated to reflect the change(s).

Payments may be made with cash, check, debit or credit cards. If sending payments with children, please place cash or check in a sealed envelope with the word "Payment" and your child's name written on the envelope. Staff will retrieve the payment from your child's bag and deliver it to the

Community Education office for credit to your account. Payments can also be mailed directly to Owatonna Community Education at 122 E. McKinley Street, Owatonna, MN 55060. Also, a drop box is located next to our main west entrance for your convenience in dropping off payments after hours.

Cash payments are not entered onto a family's account without a printed receipt. When presenting cash for payment, be sure to ask for the original receipt copy. Under normal operating procedures, staff will always offer you this copy.

Late Payments

Families will be mailed, or sent an email statement for payments not received by the due date. This statement will notify you of the past due balance and request a communication from you about your intentions to remain in the program.

Payment Collections

Checks returned for non-sufficient funds, plus all applicable bank-processing fees will be collected through established Owatonna Public Schools, ISD #761 procedures.

When you provide a check as payment, you authorize Owatonna Public Schools either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check. When we use information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day you make your payment, and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution.

In the event that any unpaid tuition is placed for collections with Advantage Collection Professionals, Inc., and/or placed with an attorney to obtain judgment or otherwise satisfy payment of your tuition account, a fee of 40% of the unpaid balance will be added to the total amount due. This amount shall be in addition to any other costs incurred directly or indirectly by Owatonna Community Education and Owatonna Public Schools, ISD #761 to collect amounts owed under this agreement such as court costs, sheriff's fee, and interest, late fees, etc.

2022-2023 Monthly Tuition Schedule

*Find your family size in the first column on the left. Follow the line to the right. Stop when you find the income column that reflects your total income (from **line 9 of 1040 federal form**) for 2021. The front office needs to confirm your income with the 1040 tax form or the tuition is automatically \$55/\$60. **All checks should be made payable to Owatonna Community Education.**

Family size		What was your total income for 2021?			
		Less than	Less than	Less than	Greater than
	2	18,310	23,803	33,873	33,873
	3	23,030	29,939	42,605	42,605
	4	27,750	36,075	51,337	51,337
	5	32,470	42,211	60,069	60,069
	6	37,190	48,347	68,801	68,801
	7	41,910	54,483	77,533	77,533
	8	46,630	60,619	86,265	86,265
	+1	4,720	6,136	8,732	8,732
Monthly Tuition	2-day	\$25.00	\$35.00	\$45.00	\$55.00
Monthly Tuition	3-day	\$30.00	\$40.00	\$50.00	\$60.00

Attendance Procedures

Drop Off and Pick-up

Children should arrive ***no earlier than 5 minutes*** before class starts. The classroom door will open promptly at the start of each class time.

Please pick up your child **immediately** after class. An adult listed on their registration form should meet your child at the classroom door. Please note that your child will not be released to any individual not listed on the enrollment form. Your child will remain at school until you can be reached by phone or in person.

Families that repeatedly allow children to remain at school after class time will receive:

1. a verbal reminder of the procedure
2. a written reminder of the procedure
3. a penalty of \$1.00 per minute for late pick-up

Children enrolled in 'Lil Learners are not allowed to walk to or from Roosevelt Community School unaccompanied for liability reasons. All children must be accompanied by an adult or sibling, age 13 and up that are named on the child's Registration Form.

If You Are Running Late

Please call your child's classroom to inform staff that you are running late. If the line is busy, or no one answers, please redial 444-7900. This is the main desk in the Community Education Office. They will take your message and deliver it in person to the 'Lil Learners staff.

If Your Child is Going to be Absent

If your child is not going to be in school because of illness, vacation, etc., please call the 'Lil Learners classroom and leave a message for the staff at 444-7900.

School Closing Announcement

In case of inclement weather (severe thunderstorms, ice storms, blizzards, extremely cold conditions, etc.), or other building emergencies such as a power outage, you should receive a phone call from the School District and there will be a message posted on Class Dojo. You can also listen to **KRFO (1390 AM)** or **KOWZ (100.9 FM)** for closing. **Please Note:** When the Owatonna School District announces that we will be starting 2 hours late due to weather conditions, the 10:15 and 1:00 preschool class will run as usual, the 8:15 class will be canceled.

WHILE YOUR CHILD IS AT SCHOOL. . .

Label Belongings

All personal belongings (coats, boots, hats, etc.) that are brought to school should be **labeled** with the child's name.

Toileting

If your child is **not toilet trained**, our practice is that we do **not** change diapers, change soiled underwear or otherwise assist with toileting. A staff member will call and request parents to return to Roosevelt Community School to attend to the situation.

For **ease of toileting**, please dress your child in clothing that your child can remove in order to attend to his/her own needs (ex: snaps, suspenders, jumpsuits and belts may be difficult for your child).

Snack Time

A snack is served to the children during each class. To keep expenses low, parents are encouraged to contribute nutritious snacks and beverages. State program guidelines require a strong nutrition component to all snacks served. Following are suggestions for healthy snacks that could be donated.

Animal Crackers	Graham Crackers
Cheese Nips	Ritz/Townhouse
Saltines	Wheat Thins
Crackers with Cheese	Orange Wedges
Apples	Bananas
String Cheese	Pineapple
Peaches	Pears
Banana Bread	Raisins
Muffins	Grapes
Breakfast Cereal Bars	Goldfish crackers
Applesauce	Pudding
Fruit Juices – large bottle preferred	
Carrot & Celery Sticks	

The classroom teacher will notify families when there is a need for more snacks. **Please contact your child's teacher in advance if the snack you are contributing** is perishable or a birthday treat. **Tell your teacher if your child has any food allergies before classes begin.** Do not send candy or gum with your child or any food item not meant to be shared with the class.

PLEASE NOTE

The Owatonna School Board has the following policy regarding the use of home-prepared foods:

In line with recommendations and rules from the Department of Health, the use of home, class, or school prepared foods will follow all requirements and standards as instituted for food and beverage establishments. Foods used in classrooms must be obtained from a supplier licensed by the USDA or MN. Dept. of Agriculture, or prepared in a licensed food establishment, such as:

- School Food Service Department
- Commercial Food Supplier
- Grocery Store
- Licensed Caterer

The use of home-prepared food items for classroom use is prohibited unless it is supplied in its original, unopened, commercially prepared package. Exceptions to this policy must be reviewed with the building administrator in which the food will be served and with the Director of Food Service.

Communication

Please send a school bag to school with your child each day. The bag will be used to send home projects, special notices, etc.

It is very important that you check your child's bag every day and take out the papers and artwork that are being sent home.

Class Dojo is a free app that can be added to your cell phone. This app is used to communicate messages, share pictures from the classroom, links to sign up for conferences and a private messaging feature between you and the teacher. The classroom teacher will be providing class codes to help get you registered.

Parent-Teacher Conferences As a reminder, this is one of the requirements in the Parent-Child Partnership. You will be reminded of the conferences in advance and sign up on PTCFast. In addition to the conferences, if you have any concerns that you wish to discuss, please contact your child's teacher. A "Consent To Release Information" form must be signed prior to conferences if someone other than the parent or legal guardian will be attending. Your child's teacher has these forms available.

Photo Release

Families enrolling in the 'Lil Learners Preschool shall be given the opportunity at orientation to sign a written release allowing ISD 761 the opportunity to photograph or videotape family members participating in the preschool program. Likenesses in photograph or video form may be published in local media, social media, newsletters, and promotional brochures for the purpose of promoting program opportunities and recruiting new participants. Photographs may also be used in wall or poster displays in public areas.

Curriculum

The following curriculums are used at 'Lil Learners:

Read, Play and Learn! – Play Based Curriculum – main focus on literacy skills

Everyday Math – Preschool Math Curriculum

Second Step – A Violence Prevention Curriculum – focus on social skills

SMART – Stimulating Maturity through Accelerated Readiness Training

Transportation

Little Learners does have a transportation option this year. We will be partnering with SMART transit to provide rides either to or from Roosevelt Community School. This is based on an application process and based on route availability.

ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CHILD'S TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE REPORTED IN ADVANCE TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER.

Children will not be released to anyone not identified on the Registration Form.

Health and Safety

We will be going outside to play or take walks during nice weather (in the winter, too!), so please dress your child appropriately.

Current immunization records are **required** for all children in 'Lil Learners Preschool. Minnesota Department of Health rules do not allow children to begin school without the immunization records on file.

Please inform staff if your child has food allergies, special needs or physical limitations.

While some sniffles are winter-long, please do not bring sick children with fevers, vomiting, chicken pox, etc. *A child must be fever free for 24 hours to return to preschool. Children taking antibiotics must be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Children who have been vomiting or had diarrhea during the night, should not be attending 'Lil Learners the next day.*

You must report to your child's teacher within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, if your child is diagnosed as having a contagious, reportable disease, head lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, pink eye, COVID or chicken pox. 'Lil Learners' follows the school district's health service protocols for contagious diseases. You are welcome to ask for information on these protocols at any time.

If a child becomes **sick during the school day**, we will call the parent to come pick up the child. If the parent cannot be reached, we will **call the persons** (in the order listed) on the **Child Information Sheet**.

In case of an **emergency** or **injury** at school which requires professional medical attention, parents will be notified immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, we will call the persons (in the order listed) on the Child Information Sheet. If necessary, we will immediately dial **9-1-1** and proceed with medical/dental help. Every effort will be made to contact the parents as soon as possible.

Medication

Although Little Learners may not dispense medication for your child on a daily basis, there may come a time when we need to dispense medication. Please become familiar with the following guidelines.

1. **Prescription medications** require a **"Medication Request and Authorization"** form that is completed and signed by both the parent *and* physician. Staff cannot dispense medication without the *Medication Request and Authorization* form on file and without a doctor's signature.
2. Prescription medication must come to school in the **original prescription container** appropriately labeled for the student by pharmacy or physician. Mixed dosage in a single container or dosage that needs to be altered will not be accepted. Medication in envelopes, baggies, etc. will not be administered.
3. **Non-prescription / over the counter medications** follow the same requirements as prescription medications if the parents want them administered in school. A *"Medication Request and Authorization"* form needs to be completed by the parents and physician. Medication must be in the original container which clearly identifies the medication.
4. **Medications are generally not to be carried by the student.** If an exception is to be made (e.g. bronchial inhalers, bee sting kits), there must be a *"Medication Request and Authorization"* form on file with 'Lil Learners. Medication should be brought to school by the parent or guardian and left with the appropriate school representative, except as noted in a written agreement between the school district and the parent.

5. The **school and 'Lil Learners staff must be notified immediately of any change** in the student's medication or if the medication is no longer required. For medication dosage changes, the school district must receive notification from the physician.
6. Planning for students who require medication on **field trips** must be done prior to the day of the field trip. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the staff of medication needs in advance of the field trip. *"Medication Request and Authorization"* forms are available at Roosevelt Community School's front desk and most local doctor's offices.

Pets on School Premises

Because of the number of students who are either allergic to or fearful of animals, and because of the potential for a student to be bitten or scratched by an animal, animals may not be brought into the community school building (or onto school grounds during school hours).

Child Guidance Procedures

The 'Lil Learners preschool views discipline as an opportunity to teach children social skills needed to function successfully in daily life. Staff encourage appropriate behavior through clear guidelines, consistent consequences and positive staff interaction. When working with children, 'Lil Learners staff remain proactive, guiding children in making appropriate choices and redirecting them as needed.

To be more effective in working with children, 'Lil Learners staff team up with parents to work on issues together. Our ongoing communication between home and 'Lil Learners helps to promote success for children.

Specific behavior guidance procedures adhered to the 'Lil Learners preschool include:

- ◇ Children will be provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior.
- ◇ Behavior expectations will be developmentally appropriate for the children served.
- ◇ The staff will clearly explain to the children what behavior is expected of each person in the classroom.
- ◇ Children will be redirected from problem situations to more constructive activities in order to reduce conflict.
- ◇ The staff will help children develop problem solving skills by using the following steps:
 1. Staff will name the unacceptable behavior for the child.
 2. Staff will explain how the behavior is affecting the classroom.
 3. Staff will suggest or get other ideas from the child for new acceptable behaviors.
- ◇ Children will be taught acceptable behavior using natural and logical consequences.
- ◇ A positive behavior support plan might be created with caregivers to help support the child within the classroom.

PUBLIC NOTICE REGARDING PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF PUBLIC RECORDS

Independent School District No. 761 gives notice to parents of students currently in attendance in the District, and eligible students currently in attendance in the District, of their rights regarding pupil records.

1. Parents and eligible students are hereby informed that they have the following rights:
 - a. That a parent or eligible student has a right to inspect and review the student's education records. A parent or eligible student should submit to the school district a written request to inspect education records which identify as precisely as possible the record or records he or she wishes to inspect. The parent or eligible student will be notified of the time and place where the records may be inspected;
 - b. That the parent or eligible student has a right to seek amendment of the student's education records to ensure that those records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. A parent or eligible student may ask the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. The request shall be in writing, identify the item the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student, shall state the reason for this belief, and shall specify the correction the parent or eligible student wishes the school district to make. The request shall be signed by the parent or eligible student. If the school district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing;
 - c. That the parent or eligible student has a right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that federal and state law and the regulations promulgated thereunder authorize disclosures without consent;
 - d. That the school district may disclose education records to other school officials within the school district if the school district has determined they have legitimate educational interests. For purposes of such disclosure, a "school official" is a person employed by the school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or other employee; a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school district has consulted to perform a specific task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, public information officer or data practices compliance official); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or any individual assisting a school official in the performance of his or her tasks. A school official has a "legitimate educational interest" if the individual needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility and includes, but is not limited to, an interest directly related to classroom instruction, teaching, student achievement and progress, discipline of a student and student health and welfare and the ability to respond to a request for educational data;
 - e. That the school district forwards education records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, including information about disciplinary action taken as a result of any incident in which the student possessed or used a dangerous weapon, suspension and expulsion information pursuant to section 4155 of the federal No Child Left Behind Act and data regarding a student's history of violent behavior, and any disposition order which adjudicates the student as delinquent for committing an illegal act on school district property and certain other illegal acts;
 - f. That the parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding an alleged failure by the school district to comply with the requirements of 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, and the rules promulgated thereunder, the name and address of the office that administers the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act is:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
2. Copies of the school board policy and accompanying procedures and regulations are available to parents and students upon written request to the Superintendent.
3. Pursuant to applicable law, Independent School District No. 761 gives notice to parents of students currently in attendance in the school district, and eligible students currently in attendance in the school district, of their rights regarding "directory information." **"Directory information" includes the following information relating to a student: the student's name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; grade level;**

participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, and honors and awards received. "Directory information" also includes the name, address and telephone number of the student's parent(s). "Directory information" does not include identifying information on a student's religion, race, color, social position or nationality.

(Student photographs are not directory information, but are published annually in the school year book.)

a. The information listed above shall be public information which the school district may disclose from the education records of a student or information regarding a parent.

b. Should the parent of a student or the student so desire, any or all of the listed information will not be disclosed without the parent's or eligible student's prior written consent except to school officials as provided under federal law.

c. In order to make any or all of the directory information listed above "private" (i.e. subject to consent prior to disclosure), the parent or eligible student must make a written request to the building principal within thirty (30) days after the date of the publication of this notice. This written request must include the following information:

- (1) Name of student and parent, as appropriate;
- (2) home address;
- (3) school presently attended by student;
- (4) parent's legal relationship to student, if applicable;
- (5) specific category or categories of directory information which is not to be made public without the parent's or eligible student's prior written consent.

4. Pursuant to applicable law, Independent School District No. 761 hereby gives notice to parents of students enrolled in the 11th and 12th grades and eligible students enrolled in the 11th and 12th grades of their rights regarding release of information to military recruiting officers. The school district must release, without parent or student consent, the names, addresses, and home telephone numbers of students enrolled in the 11th and 12th grades to military recruiting officers within 60 days after the date of the request. Data released to military recruiting officers under this provision may be used only for the purpose of providing information to students about military service, state and federal veterans' education benefits, and other career and educational opportunities provided by the military and cannot be further disseminated to any other person except personnel of the recruiting services of the armed forces.

a. Should the parent of a student or the student so desire, any or all of the listed information will not be disclosed to military recruiting officers.

b. In order to refuse the release of this information, the parent or eligible student must make a written request to the responsible authority, the building principal, within 30 days of the annual public notification each year. This written request must include the following information:

- (1) name of student and parent, as appropriate;
- (2) home address;
- (3) student's grade level;
- (4) school presently attended by student;
- (5) parent's legal relationship to student, if applicable;
- (6) specific category or categories of information which is not to be released to military

recruiters.

(7) specific category or categories of directory information which are not to be released to the public, including military recruiters.

NOTICE: *Refusal to release the above information to military recruiting officers alone does not affect the School District's release of directory information to the public, including military recruiting officers. In order to make any directory information about a student private, the procedures contained in the Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records Policy also must be followed. If you do not want your child's directory information released to military recruiting officers, you also must notify the School District that you do not want this directory information released to any member of the public, including military recruiting officers.*