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ROMOLAND EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROGRAMS

Participant Handbook

Early Head Start & State Preschool

2023-2024

Updated 7/2023



Vision

Develop positive relationships with children and families that encourage lifelong learning.

Mission

Partnering with families to support students in achieving academic and lifelong excellence through quality education and health services during their child's early years.





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Welcome

Welcome to Romoland Early Childhood Programs!

We know that every child can learn and every child can be successful. This however, looks different for each of our students. Our hands on learning experiences deepen our student's understanding of foundational early learning skills in each area of development. This approach prepares students with not only school readiness skills, but also to be successful lifelong learners.

We look forward to partnering with you to best support your child's education. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to work with your child and your family. Please feel free to come to us at any time with your questions, comments, and concerns.

Program Information

Early Childhood Office:

Address: 25890 Antelope Road, Menifee, CA. 92585

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Phone Number: 951-928-2924

Fax number: 951-928-2923

Contact Us:

Director: Jessica Huffman
jhuffman@romoland.net

Program Assistant: Annie Alvarez
aalvarez@romoland.net

ECE Clerk/ Attendance: Miriam Reyes
mreyes@romoland.net

Early Head Start Home Base Teacher: Nancy Corral
ncorral@romoland.net

School Sites:



Boulder Ridge State Preschool:

Address: 27327, Menifee, CA. 92585

AM Session Hours: 7:40 - 10:40 am.

PM Session Hours: 12:00-3:00

Teacher: Michele Jimenez, mjimenez@romoland.net

Harvest Valley State Preschool:

Address: 29955 Watson Road, Menifee, CA. 92585

State Preschool AM Session: 7:40 - 10:40 am.

State Preschool PM Session: 12:00-3:00

State Preschool Full Day 7:40-2:10

Teacher: Deisi Varela, dvarela@romoland.net

Teacher: Karen Guerra, Kguerra@romoland.net

Romoland Head Start & State Preschool:

Address: 25890 Antelope Road, Menifee, CA. 92585

State Preschool AM Session: 7:40 - 10:40

State Preschool PM Session: 12:00-3:00

Teacher: Yesenia Salinas, ysalinas@romoland.net

Teacher: Deborah Maitrejean, dmaitrejean@romoland.net

Teacher: Zulet Contreras, zcontreras@romoland.net

State Preschool Full Day Session: 7:40am - 2:10

Teacher: TBA

**All phone calls should be directed to our office line. We can connect you to your student's*

classroom from here: Phone Number: 951-928-2924

Program Options

Our State Preschool programs are fully licensed facilities with fully qualified and highly trained staff. Our programs operate Monday-Friday from 7:40 am -3:00pm. Each school site's hours will vary, as will the program(s) that are offered at that school site.



Early Head Start Home Base

This option is available to families with children ages 0-3 years old. Each family will have a ninety minute home visit, once a week, with two group socializations a month. Our home base option capitalizes on the home as the child's primary learning environment and their parent/guardian as their primary and most influential teacher.



State Preschool

State Preschool is a 3.0 hour program that operates Monday-Friday. Families can select a morning session or afternoon session. State Preschool Full-Day is a 6.5 hour program that operates Monday-Friday. Families will be prioritized based on income guideline.

Enrollment Process

In order to enroll in any of Romoland Early Childhood Programs, one must complete the following:

- Submit a completed application
- Submit the following items:
 - Income Verification
 - Student's birth certificate
 - All family members birth certificates
 - Completed Physician's Report (must be within last year)
 - Up to date Immunization Record



If a child is deemed eligible for any of the Early Childhood Programs, the parent will be notified by the program Clerk and an intake meeting will take place with the Program Clerk. Applications and Enrollment will be processed online. Student selection is based on family ranking. Once the enrollment is complete, the parent/guardian will be provided with a "Notice of Action" via email.

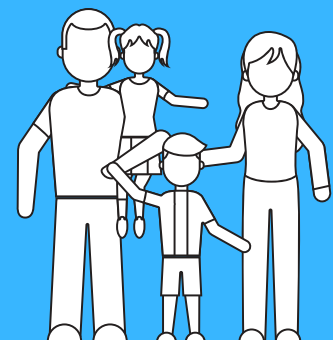
"Admission Agreement," which will indicate the child's schedule and classroom assignment along with a start date. If there is a wait list, the family will be informed of the placement and will be contacted when they are the next to be enrolled. When the child has a spot in the program the family will be notified and the parent/guardian will then be required to participate in an Orientation to become familiar with program policies and procedures.

Family Engagement

Below, you will find the different ways to engage with and support the program that you are enrolled in. Family Engagement can and will look different for each family. We do, however ask that you participate in whichever manner that you are able to. Our engagement opportunities are a great way to support your child's learning and to learn more about your program. In addition, family participation is not only a way to support your child's learning, but it speaks to program success in supporting our community. When you engage in our activities you strengthen our program.

- Join the Parent/Guardian Committee - Each classroom is asked to have 1-2 participants sit on our committee as a classroom representative. All parents/guardians are invited to attend regularly scheduled committee meetings. At these meetings, the elected class representative(s) will contribute to discussions and provide feedback on program happenings.
- Conferences/Home Visits - There will be two conferences for all programs, and two home visits for Early Head Start. *****Conferences/Home Visits will be held on-site or at family home.**
- Take projects home – There are hours of preparation that go into daily projects. If you are available to take a project home to trace, cut, hole punch, or staple you would greatly support the instructional staff in your child's classroom.
- At home activities - Participate in learning at home with your child. Document the time that was put into the activity and return that to your child's teacher weekly/monthly.

Volunteer – Parent / Guardian volunteers are always welcome. To become a volunteer please refer to the “Volunteer” section of this handbook. All volunteers are required to have a minimum of a health clearance as well as training before volunteering in the classroom.

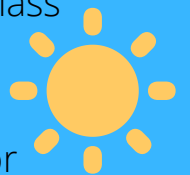


Confidentiality

Release of information regarding a family's eligibility and student records will be limited to the program's site and administrative staff. Documents are subject to review by auditors, representatives of Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE), Community Care Licensing (CCL), The Office of Head Start (OHS), or California Department of Education (CDE). Any site may have unannounced visits from the above entities at any point during the year. During an unannounced visit, the staff may speak to staff, parents/guardians, and children, as well as examine files and records. No other use of this information shall be made without prior written consent from the parent(s)/ guardian(s).

Code of Conduct

In an effort to ensure the safety and well being of children, families, and staff, as well as to be in compliance with the federal, state, and local regulations regarding safety, Romoland Early Childhood programs have the right to exclude parents/guardians or any adult who willingly interfere with the discipline, good order, lawful conduct or administration of a school, class or activity of its child development programs.



When a child's parent/guardian or other adult threatens another family or staff member in anyway, including intimidations, bullying, belittling, yelling, and/or disregards program policies and procedures, this will be cause for immediate exclusion from the program.

When an adult is excluded from the program, the child belonging to this adult will not be affected and will continue to attend the program . The adult will be provided the reason for the exclusion. A meeting will then be established with the program director to address the issues related to the exclusion.

If the adult feels that the exclusion is unwarranted, they may appeal to the district office and request an appointment to meet with Human Resources to request mediation. They also have the right to appeal through the Uniform Complaint process.



Volunteers

All parent(s) and or guardian(s) are welcome to become volunteers with the Early Childhood Program. In order to become a volunteer one must:

- Complete an on-line volunteer application at the front office of your school site.
- Provide a copy of a current photo identification card.
- Present verification of a current Tuberculosis (TB) test.
- Present verification of immunizations for: Measles, Pertussis (Whooping cough), COVID and Influenza (flu) to the Early Childhood Office.

All of the above requirements must be met before one can be authorized to volunteer.

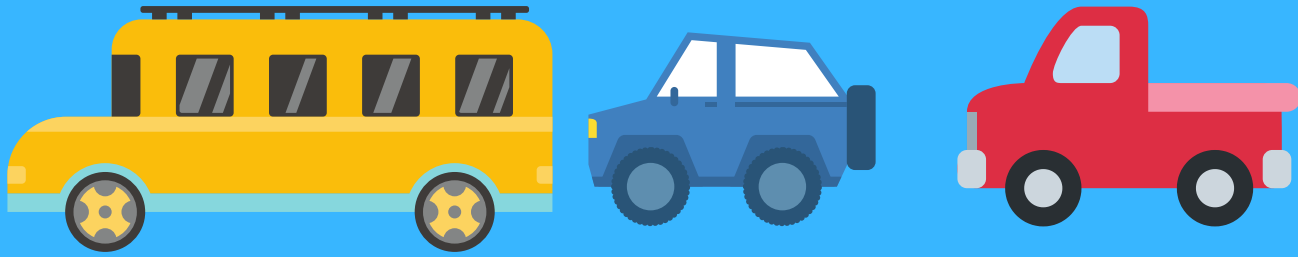
Celebrations

As a standard practice of government funded programs, our Early Childhood programs do not celebrate holidays, birthdays, or "graduation." We also do not accept outside food for special occasions. Sometimes there might be special events, *Students are not required to participate in these events if a family elects not to.

Our classrooms engage in meaningful, culturally responsive learning experiences for all of our learners, and do not wish to exclude students who do not celebrate or understand certain practices.



Arrival & Departure



Arrival:

Always walk your child into the classroom or designated drop off area. Do not leave until you have completed the drop off process. Prior to signing your child into the program, a health check will be conducted. Once your child is cleared to stay for the day you must sign your student into the program. Please sign your full legal signature (initials are not accepted) next to the current date and put the time that you are signing in.

Departure:

Upon arrival to pick up your student, you must sign your student out of the program. Please sign your full legal signature next to the current date and put the time that you are signing. Be sure to bring a valid photo ID every day to pick up your child.

Only adults, 18 years or older who have been authorized by you will be permitted to pick up your child. Authorized adults must be on the emergency card and will be required to present a photo ID.

Please maintain an updated Emergency card at all times. If an emergency occurs and we cannot reach anyone, we will have to call CPS or the Sheriff department.

Transportation:

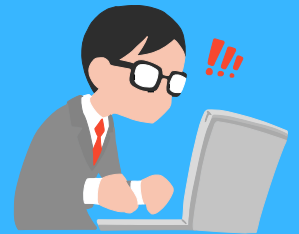
Romoland Early Childhood Programs do not offer any transportation.



Attendance

Your child is expected to attend school daily in whichever learning model that you selected. Regular attendance has a direct correlation with school success, even in preschool. It is the parent(s)/ guardian(s) responsibility to call staff every day that a student is absent and provide the reason for the absence. **Please call the Early Childhood office to report absences, with your questions about if you should bring your child to school that day. You may also report your child's absence by logging into your iPinwheel parent portal.** Absences that are not called in to the school by 3:00 pm on the day of the absence will be considered Unexcused. **Excused Absences (verification may be requested/ required):**

- Student or parent illness
- Family emergency
- Death in immediate family
- Court hearing or court ordered visitation
- Medical/dental appointments for child
- Public Assistance appointments (e.g. CalWORKS, WIC, Social Security, Medical)
- Extended absences due to medical emergencies for child or parent (must be requested in writing, in advance with proper documentation and approved by program administration)



Your child is too sick for school if they have: flu like symptom that may include a persistent cough, runny nose (allergies are permissible, a doctors note may be requested), rash, fever, diarrhea, vomiting, fever (100 degrees or higher), pink and crusty eyes, or they have asthma and they are exhibiting signs of difficulty breathing after they have used their inhaler. **Children must be symptom free and medication free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

All other absences are considered Unexcused

Students have 10 best interest days where absences will be excused regardless of the reason. After the best interest days have been used, the absences will be unexcused, except in the case of illness (a doctors note will be required for absences to be excused). Excessive absences may result in a program transfer or otherwise jeopardize participation in the program. The program will issue up to four written notices including but not limited to staff and parent meetings as well as conducting a Home Visit the implementation of It's unexcused absence policy. *Every effort will be made to support the family in maintaining consistent attendance.

Program staff will support families in maintaining their enrollment during extended absences. We understand that regular communication can become a challenge if there is an illness in the home. We will reach out to families on extended leaves only after the child was scheduled to return to school and they have not returned.

Sporadic Attendance/ Chronic Absenteeism:

Sporadic attendance is defined as attendance that is irregular, not consistent, occasional or unpredictable. Chronic absenteeism is defined as overall absences in excess of 15 percent or more school days during a student's enrollment. The program will issue up to two written notices in the implementation of its Sporadic Attendance/ Chronic Absenteeism policy and failure to improve student attendance may result in a program transfer or otherwise jeopardize participation in the program.



Clothing

Choosing the right clothing for Preschool:

Preschool is sometimes a messy place. Save your child's "dressy" clothes for your special occasions. Play clothes are best for preschool because some of the activities will get your child's clothes dirty or messy. We use items like: paint, soil, sand and glues – just to name a few.

Appropriate clothing: Weather appropriate clothing is always recommended. If you are hot or cold, so is your child. Clothing with adult humor, images, or words is not allowable.



Each child will need two (2) extra pair of clothing. They will be maintained in their cubby. Please include: a top, a bottom, underwear and socks. Tennis shoes, are preferred, sandals with closed toes and back straps are OK, but no 'flip flops' or thongs.

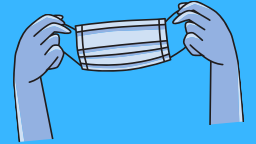




Health

Face Coverings:

Students and adults are expected to wear a face covering while indoors.



Medication:

If your child is taking a medical prescription; DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL. We do not dispense any medicine. If you are giving your child medicine because they are sick, keep them home.

If your child has rescue medication such as an Epi-pen or an Inhaler, you must fill out the appropriate medication forms, have the physician sign the forms, and provide the medication in the original container with the prescription box to the Elementary School Office. Please inform the Early Childhood Office of any medication needs prior to bringing any medication to the school office. Our office will review all your paperwork and inventory it in our computer system for record keeping.

Daily Health Check:

Every family will be asked to conduct a "Morning Health Check" prior to bringing the child to school. This list of symptoms and things to look for will be sent home and asked to be posted somewhere that the family will see it before leaving the dwelling.

Everyday upon drop off, your child will receive a Health Check from a Staff member. These checks will include but are not limited to:

- Asking the adult dropping the child off if they noticed any symptoms from the "morning health check."
- Asking the adult dropping the child off if they have noticed any changes in the child's mood or behavior
- A Temperature check with a touch-free thermometer
- Checking exposed body parts for new markings (rashes, scratches, bruises, bumps, etc.)
- Asking the child how they are feeling





Nutrition:

Students are provided nutritious meals and snacks from the Romoland School District Nutrition Services Department. Students may not bring food from home. Children with dietary allergies will have an appropriate substitution made. All dietary allergies requiring meal substitutions must have all required documentation from the physician on file before any substitutions are provided.

State Preschool:

The morning session will receive a balanced breakfast. The afternoon session will receive a balanced lunch.

Full day State Preschool will have a balanced breakfast and a balanced lunch.

Early Head Start:

Twice a month Early Head Start families have the opportunity to participate in a two hour group socialization. A nutritious meal is provided to our students during this group social.



Physicals & Immunizations:

All children entering the Early Childhood programs must have a current physical completed within the last year, as well as verification that they are free from the risk of TB, and be completely up to date with all immunizations for their age group. If your child does not have the needed medical paperwork, they will not be able to start our Early Childhood Program until all proper paperwork is received. **** All Early Head Start families will need to provide a new physical form for each of their child's well baby checks: 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, and 30 months.***

Medical or Dental Emergencies:

In the event of a medical or dental emergency your child will be sent to the Health Technician's office and medical personnel may be notified. You will receive notification via telephone of any such event.

Mental Health:

Mental health is how we think, feel, and cope. Mental health services serve as a resource to assist with exploring options in solving and coping with everyday stressors. These resources are available to all students and families in the Early Childhood programs. They are provided by a qualified mental health clinician with experience and knowledge in children, marriage, and family therapy.



Special Education

Romoland Early Childhood programs welcome all children, including children with special needs. Our staff work collaboratively with our district special education department to provide the best learning environments for all learners. In addition, our staff are trained by district personnel on best ways to support students with special needs within the early childhood classrooms.

We provide comprehensive screenings and other related services to all students. Families of students suspected of needing special education services will be supported throughout the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process provided by Romoland School District Special Education Department.

Students enrolling with an active IEP/IFSP will be required to provide a copy of the plan in order to determine the best placement.



Child Abuse

All staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. As mandated by the California Child Abuse Reporting Law Penal Code Sections 11165-11174.3, each staff member must report an incident of known or suspected child abuse. As required by law, a report will be made to the appropriate authorities. Reports are confidential and will only be disclosed to the appropriate agencies. Staff is not legally required to inform the parent/guardian when a report is made. In addition, staff is not legally required to inform program or district administration when a report is made.

Categories of Child Abuse include the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

*Kaitlyn's Law: Never leave children unattended or unsupervised in a car.

Classroom Routine

Each classroom will have a different schedule based on their operating hours and drop off /pick up times. Below, you will see a typical routine that will take place daily. All routines are subject to change based on student needs and interests.



Morning Routine:

- Health check, drop off, morning meal, opening meeting
- Small and large group activities including outdoor time and music & movement
- End of day routine

Afternoon Routine:

- Health check, drop off, lunch, opening meeting
- Small and large group activities, including outdoor time and music & movement
- End of day routine



Nap Time:

Romoland Early Childhood part-day programs do not offer a rest period.

Full-day Head Start offers a sixty minute rest period where children are offered an opportunity to relax their bodies. Children may choose to sleep or stay awake during this rest time.

Home Base:

- Greeting, hygiene, and literacy
- Planned activities, follow up from the weeks events, plan for next week
- Parent/Guardian discussion on topics of interest or need



Program Rules

Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be Safe



Discipline

We promote positive behaviors among all students. If an unsafe behavior occurs, it will be addressed immediately. **Keep in mind, that working through undesirable behaviors in a publicly funded program will look different from how you handle it at home.**

In our classrooms we use: Positive Reinforcement, social reinforcement, redirection, and natural consequences. Your child will never be: shamed, embarrassed, yelled at, or belittled.

At some point during the school year we may approach you about an incident that has taken place during program hours. The intention of speaking with you, is not to have you punish the child. It is to maintain open school and home communication. We ask that you speak with your child about the incident and help them practice the acceptable ways to handle situations. When they are successful with showing any growth with positive behavior, recognize their accomplishment.

*If unsafe behaviors continue or escalate your child may be referred to the mental health consultant for further support. Parents will be notified prior to referral.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian Safety for Parents/ Gaurdians

- Hold hands with an children when walking to and from the car.
- Supervise preschoolers at all times.
- Keep preschoolers away from any vehicle, particularly emergency vehicles.
- Never allow preschoolers to cross the street alone.
- Designate safe play areas for preschoolers away from the street and driveways.
- Cross the street by first stopping at the curb and then looking left for approaching vehicles, looking right and then looking left again. Keep looking while crossing. Encourage their child to practice with them. At this age preschool children can't distinguish between right and left, therefore it may be helpful for parents to say let's look at this side of the street, now lets look at the other side.
- Set a positive example for preschoolers by practicing safe pedestrian habits.
- Make pedestrian safety and ongoing activity with your child. There are songs and other activities you can do with your child which will help him/her to remember these safety rules.



Pedestrian Safety for Children

- Recognize emergency vehicles and stay out of their way.
- Recognize streets and driveways and their part; the sidewalk, where they walk, the curb or edge where they stop, and the apron of a driveway where toys can roll into the street.
- Stay away from streets and driveways.
- Always stop at the curb, or if there no curb, at the edge of the roadway or driveway.
- Recognize the people who can help them cross the street safely and cross only with these people.
- Stay in safe play areas.
- Never play or ride toy vehicles in the street or driveway. When entering or leaving the buildings
- Hold hands with an adult when walking to and from the car.