



ROBERT C. WOOD EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER



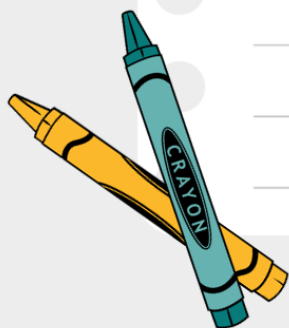
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Parent Handbook

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Little Egg Harbor
School District





Little Egg Harbor School District Board Of Education

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Robert C. Wood Early Childhood Center School Administration

Dr. Anne Flynn, Principal

The Mission of the RCWECC:

We aim to teach children the skills they need to deal with strong emotions, feel empathy towards others, understand perspectives, and problem solve to best prepare them for a life of learning.

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DISTRICT CONTACTS

(609) 296-1719

Superintendent

Dr. Lisa Antunes (Ext. 1010)

lantunes@lehsd.org

Business Administrator

Robert Green, Business Administrator (Ext. 1013)

rgreen@lehsd.org

Special Services

Kelly Lindenfesler, Interim Director of Special Services (Ext. 1013)

klindenfelser@lehsd.org

Curriculum and Instruction

Melissa Gallagher, Director of Curriculum and Instruction (Ext. 1051)

mgallagher@lehsd.org

District Affirmative Action Officer & District Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Jacqueline Truzzolino, Director of Personnel, Planning & Evaluation (ext. 2100)

jtruzzolino@lehsd.org

ECC SCHOOL CONTACTS

Principal – Dr. Anne Flynn

(Ext. 4213)

aflynn@lehsd.org

Principal's Secretary – Jackie Harned

(Ext. 4213)

jharned@lehsd.org

Social Worker – Joni Burns

(Ext. 3603)

jburns@lehsd.org

Nurse – Lori Gribin

(Ext. 4108)

lgribin@lehsd.org

**Community Parent Involvement
Specialist – Donna Cavvicchio**

(Ext. 4112)

dcavicchio@lehsd.org

**Instructional Coach/Inclusion
Specialist – Cheryl Yatauro**

(Ext. 3622)

cyatauro@lehsd.org

**PIRS Case Manager – Meghan
Gunsten**

(Ext. 4383)

mgunsten@lehsd.org

Family Partner – Erica Napolitano

(Ext. 4216)

enapolitano@lehsd.org

**PIRS Case Manager - Christina Cofer Instructional Coach/MLL Specialist –
Jacqueline Anderson**

(Ext. 4218)

ccofer@lehsd.org

(Ext. 3602)

janderson@lehsd.org



General Information



MISSION STATEMENT OF RCWECC

We aim to teach children the skills they need to deal with strong emotions, feel empathy towards others, understand perspectives, and problem solve to best prepare them for a life of learning.

TEACHING STAFF

ECC Classrooms

Kim Burt
Kelly Spinner
Darcee Chaplick
Colleen Minissale
Nicole Brown
Nicole Rendzia
Amanda Clifton
Nicole Carreno
Dina Wennlund
Melissa Lehto
Brienne DeAngelis
Kelly Valente
Sheryl Decasse
Alanna Lupo

600 Wing Classrooms

Jaclyn Finnigan
Amy Craig
Anna Atkinson
Taylor Sprague
Robyn Catalano
Jennifer Tedeschi
Antonia Bebel
Doreen Ferraro
Melissa Holst
Nora Maloney
Mikekelle Thomas

EMAIL ADDRESS

Teachers can be contacted via email. Use first initial last name @lehsd.org

Example: Dr. Anne Flynn can be reached at **aflynn@lehsd.org**

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear Families,

The preschool teachers and all staff of the Robert C. Wood Early Childhood Center are committed to providing your child with opportunities that foster creativity and growth in a learning environment which encourages your child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. We are committed to working together with you to ensure the best educational experiences for your child. We are committed to supporting your child and you, as parents and as a family.

To help answer some frequently asked questions, we are providing you with this handbook. If you have a question about something not covered in this handbook, please do not hesitate to call me at 609-296-7131, ext 4213. Please be sure to sign and return the last page of the handbook to acknowledge that you have received this information.

I am very excited about this upcoming year and look forward to working with you as partners in your child's education during this very exciting time in your child's life!

- Dr. Anne Flynn
Principal





OUR MISSION

We aim to teach children the skills they need to deal with strong emotions, feel empathy towards others, understand perspectives, and problem solve to best prepare them for a life of learning.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Robert C. Wood Early Childhood Center Program promotes the belief in the “whole child” approach to education. We are dedicated to the development of the whole child, intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and personally.

WE BELIEVE...

- Students, families and schools should work together in ongoing partnerships.
- Families should be actively involved in their child’s education.
- Active learning is an essential component to the full development of the child.
- Safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate learning environments provide lifelong learning experiences for children
-

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN IN PRACTICAL TERMS?

- Subjects and skills are integrated within the daily routine, not taught separately.
- Learning takes place through active exploration and interaction with peers and materials.
- Activities are concrete, real and relevant. (For example, counting is taught while setting the table for family-style dining.)
- Balance of child-directed activities and teacher-directed instruction through small groups.
- Students are given choices in the areas where they would like to “work in.”
- Teachers are alert to students’ stress or frustration, and act quickly using problem solving techniques with the students.
- Teachers foster competence and interdependence in students.

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM



We believe that active learning is an essential component to the full development of the total student. *The Creative Curriculum* is our chosen curriculum model combined with the on-line assessment *My Teaching Strategies* which supports children's learning experiences through:

- Engagement in problem-solving and decision-making
- Participation in early literacy and pre-math activities
- Development of positive self-esteem
- Employment of cooperative learning experiences and differentiated instruction in small / large group instruction
- Participation in gross motor activities
- Positive adult / child interactions
- Child friendly (developmentally appropriate) learning environment
- Consistent daily routine
- Team-based daily child assessments

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is a comprehensive, scientifically-based, research-tested curriculum, linked to an assessment system (*My Teaching Strategies*) that addresses what teachers need to teach and how children learn best. It is a New Jersey Department of Education approved curriculum. Its distinguishing features are a framework for decision making and a focus on interest areas.

The Creative Curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interests. It specifies the literacy, math, science, social studies, arts, and technology content to be taught, based on published standards. It relates directly to the subject area curricula used in elementary schools, so children's learning in preschool forms the basis of all of the learning that will follow. It provides clear guidance on the teacher's role in addressing content in literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology, yet never loses sight of the primary importance of social/emotional development in children's learning. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* is inclusive of all children—those developing typically, children with disabilities and English language learners (Teaching Strategies, 2005).

PRESCHOOL LEARNING GOALS



The New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards set the standard for what your child will be learning this year in the Little Egg Harbor Preschool Program. The Preschool Standards are aligned with the NJ Core Curriculum Standards that define the goals and objectives of what our students learn.

The Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards support and enhance the development of the learning outcomes for students. They present standards for working with the home, school, and community; for creating and sustaining the learning environment; and for identifying and using appropriate assessment tools and practices. The following areas are addressed in the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards*:

Social/Emotional Development

- Children demonstrate self-confidence
- Children demonstrate self-direction
- Children identify and express feelings
- Children exhibit positive interactions with other children and adults
- Children exhibit pro-social behaviors

Visual and Performing Arts

- Children express themselves and develop an appreciation of creative movement and dance.
- Children express themselves through and develop an appreciation of music.
- Children express themselves and develop an appreciation for dramatic play and storytelling.
- Children express themselves and develop an awareness of and appreciation for visual arts (e.g., painting, sculpting, and drawing)

Health, Safety and Physical Education

- Children develop self-help and personal hygiene skills
- Children begin to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices.
- Children begin to develop an awareness of potential hazards in their environment.
- Children develop competence and confidence in activities that require gross motor skills.

PRESCHOOL LEARNING GOALS



Preschool English Language Arts

Reading: Literature and Informational Text

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- Ranges and Level of Complexity

Reading: Foundational Skills

- Print Concepts
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics and Word Recognition
- Fluency

Writing

- Text Type and Purposes
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- Range of Writing

Speaking and Listening

- Comprehension and Collaboration
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Language

- Conventions of Standard English
- Knowledge of Language
- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Approaches to Learning

- Children demonstrate initiative, engagement, and persistence.
- Children show creativity and imagination
- Children identify and solve problems
- Children apply what they have learned to new situations

PRESCHOOL LEARNING GOALS



Mathematics

- Children begin to demonstrate an understanding of numbers and counting.
- Children demonstrate an initial understanding of numerical operations
- Children begin to conceptualize measurable attributes of objects and how to measure them.
- Children develop spatial and geometric sense.

Science

- Children develop inquiry skills.
- Children observe and investigate matter and energy
- Children observe and investigate living things.
- Children observe and investigate the Earth.
- Children gain experience in using technology.

Social Studies, Family, and Life Skills

- Children identify unique characteristics of themselves, their families and others.
- Children become contributing members of the classroom community
- Children demonstrate knowledge of neighborhood and community.
- Children demonstrate awareness of the cultures within their classroom and community.

World Languages

Children know that others may use different languages (including sign) to communicate and will express simple greetings, words and phrases in a language other than their own.

Technology

There are five preschool standards for technology:

- Navigate simple on screen menus
- Use electronic devices independently
- Begin to use electronic devices to communicate
- Use common technology vocabulary
- Begin to use electronic devices to gain information

ASSESSMENT



Assessment of young children is an ongoing process, which includes identifying, collecting, describing, interpreting, and applying classroom-based evidence of early learning in order to make informed instructional decisions. This evidence may include records of children's conversations, their drawings and constructions, as well as photographs of and anecdotal notes describing their behaviors. (NJ Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Education)

The following tools will be part of our ongoing assessment of our preschool students:

- Portfolio Assessments
- Developmental Screenings
- My Teaching Strategies Online Assessment

Home Language

Families are asked to complete the Home Language Survey as part of the registration packet. Children entering preschool who come from homes in which English is not their first language are considered English language learners and will be acquiring English as a second language (ESL). Classroom support for children's language acquisition and development will occur in the context of natural interactions and environments. Preschool English language learners will be provided with daily activities and experiences that promote oral language development and phonemic awareness in both their home language (to the extent possible) and English.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE



It is our belief that the Robert C. Wood, Sr. Early Childhood Program provides a learning environment for children that is “safe, secure, accessible, organized, comfortable, predictable and consistent.” Our preschool program is committed to:

- Assisting children in developing social competence and confidence
- Listening carefully and adapting responses to children’s individual social and emotional needs
- Supporting and developing self-concept and self-esteem by describing with the children their actions and accomplishments
- Coaching and guiding children as they interact with each other and test their social skills and problem-solving abilities

Our preschool program’s behavior guidance model is the Preschool Positive Behavior Support Model. Training in the Positive Behavior Support Program is provided to teachers and staff who work in our early childhood programs.

Resources can be found here:

<https://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html>

<https://challengingbehavior.org/resources/>

Behavior Assessment

If a child engages in frequent disruptive or destructive behaviors that are impeding their ability to play with their peers, learn during large or small groups, or are harming themselves or others then a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), with consent, may be warranted. An FBA is a collection of data, either directly or indirectly, which allows the Behavior Analyst to determine the function of the behavior and develop a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) to help the student be more successful in the general education preschool classroom.

The Behavior Analyst also provides observations and support throughout the school year to address a variety of needs in the classroom such as, but not limited to: social skills; play skills; academic skills; and self-care.

EARLY SCREENING INVENTORY - REVISED (ESI-R)



Preschool program regulations require the administration of a developmentally based early childhood screening assessment, such as the Early Screening Inventory—Revised (ESI-R), to each child upon entry into the preschool program. The ESI-R is designed to be a brief developmental screening tool. It enables teachers to quickly address any possible learning blocks, such as developmental delays, learning problems, or lack of school preparedness. The ESI-R consists of performance-based items that test the child's capabilities in the areas of visual motor/adaptive, language, and cognitive development.

Beginning in October and continuing throughout the school year, the classroom teachers will screen all new preschoolers to the program. Parents will be notified before screenings are given; usually within the first few weeks of enrollment into the program.

PROGRAM POSITIONS

Preschool Intervention and Referral Services (PIRS)

The Preschool Intervention and Referral Team (PIRS) is a school-based, collaborative problem-solving team to assist teachers in generating intervention strategies to meet the needs of pupils in the general education classroom who display learning, behavioral or health difficulties.

The members of PIRS team include: Early Childhood Administrator(s); Instructional Coaches(s); Social Worker(s); Speech Language Pathologist(s); Behavior Specialist(s); Family Partner(s); General Education Teacher(s); Special Education Teacher(s); Parent(s)/Guardian(s); and anyone else who is relevant to the child's education or life. A parent may request the principal to convene a PIRS meeting to address concerns that have been identified. Most often, requests for PIRS assistance will come from the classroom teacher or an early childhood team member.

PRESCHOOL INTERVENTION & REFERRAL



What do the Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialists (PIRS) do?

- Provide support and suggested interventions to teachers so that all children can succeed within the general education classroom.
- Support classroom teachers in order to provide strategies for children who are exhibiting difficulty in the classroom as indicated through the screening process or the observations of the classroom teacher and master teacher.
- Provide support including written strategies for classroom staff, modeling strategies in the classroom when appropriate, providing professional development and providing consultation to classroom staff, parents, administrators and master teachers.
- Consult with necessary professionals as applicable (i.e. classroom teacher, instructional coaches, administrators, social workers, family workers, parents).
- Create and implement a PIRS intervention plan for which each child a RFA is received.
- Conduct classroom visits as necessary to implement intervention plans. These visits may include observations, providing feedback regarding the child or support plan, providing recommendations and modeling strategies when appropriate.
- Evaluate the progress of referred students and if necessary facilitate a written referral to the school district Child Study Team as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14.
- For children with persistent behavior-related difficulties develop and implement a behavior support plan.

INSTRUCTION & INVOLVEMENT



Instructional Coach

Instructional Coaches play an essential role in implementing and maintaining high levels of program quality by supporting preschool classroom teachers. Their primary role is to assist in curriculum implementation by conducting classroom observations and coaching teachers using the principles of reflective practice to improve instruction.

Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS)

The Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) is a district position that oversees the district's family services. The CPIS is responsible for facilitating the community needs assessment, staffing the Early Childhood Education Advisory Council, facilitating the PIRS, organizing family involvement plans and activities, and coordinating work with other school district personnel.

Preschool Social Worker

The social worker is a district position in the role of collaborating with the classroom teachers, master teachers/coaches, and other school district professionals to support families. The social worker will reach out to families, determine individual needs, provide advocacy services and help obtain available community services. Responsibilities also include assisting parents in learning about child development, nutrition, providing a safe environment and how to support the curriculum. The social worker will accomplish this by designing and providing family workshops based on identified needs and topics revealed on parent surveys.

In addition, the social worker will provide counseling for students based on referrals only. Referral forms must be completed and turned into the social worker for review of next steps. In collaboration with the teacher and/or family, the social worker will determine next steps. In order for the social worker to begin any counseling with the student, a guardian/parent consent form must be completed and returned to the social worker.

INSTRUCTION & INVOLVEMENT



Family Partners

The Family Partner works with families in the home and community settings with the intent to support parent-child relationships and child development. The Family Partner will partner with families by engaging in ongoing and collaborative home visits throughout the year. The Family Partner will provide learning opportunities for families that will emphasize; family safety, health, economic stability, connection to peers, connection to community resources, development of parent advocacy skills, support child learning and development and foster life-long learning based on the individual interests and aspirations of the family. The Family Partner will collaborate with families as long as the child remains in the ECC Program based on family interest and need.

HOME VISITS

Home visits are completed by teachers, paraprofessionals, our Family Partners, or other early childhood staff members. Home Visits are typically completed in August, at the beginning of the school year, and ongoing or as needed/requested throughout the year.

Home Visits create a relationship between school and families and support collaboration with families in developing sustainable individualized goals to promote the growth and well-being of our preschool families. Home visits will focus on discussion and connection to local resources within the community, early childhood development topics, family focused topics, parenting skills and behavioral management strategies that can be used to increase their child's level of independence and competence with social/emotional skills.

We honor and emphasize the parental role as the foundational influence in their child's education and development. Home visits work towards continuing to strengthen and support that role. Parents are welcome to request a Home Visit at any time. Home visits may range from one visit to 32 visits per calendar year. Topics addressed may include: health; nutrition; parenting issues; behavior concerns; and assistance accessing local resources.

All District Policies can be found on the district's website under Our District- Board of Education- Board Policies. You may also enter this web address to go directly to the district's policies:

<https://www.straussesmay.com/seportal/Public/pubElanOnline.aspx?id=aca34249443e4f57b5312b9962a8f8b2>

SCHOOL PROCEDURES



ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL SCHEDULE

Arrival: Doors open at **9:40 AM**

Parent Pick-up for Dismissal: **3:30 PM**

Delayed Opening: Doors open at **11:40 AM**

Early Dismissal Parent Pick-up: **1:10 PM**

ARRIVAL

Our doors open at **9:40 am for students** who are not riding the bus and will be dropped off at the main office or the flagpole (600 wing classes).

Please walk your child to the main doors/flagpole. Please do not enter the lobby unless necessary. Children will not be permitted to arrive unattended. A staff member will be at the main doors/sidewalk to greet your child and guide him/her to their classroom.

Parents are not permitted to walk their children to the classrooms or to the doors of the 600 wing hallway. Students who arrive on the bus are monitored as they walk to their classroom. Adults are stationed throughout the route from the bus area to the classrooms to ensure the safety of your child.

Parents/Guardians are asked to be cautious when entering and exiting the parking lot.

ATTENDANCE

Research shows that preschoolers who miss 10 percent or more of the school year arrive at kindergarten with lower levels of school readiness skills.

In New Jersey, attendance is not mandatory under age 6; however, excessive absences and tardiness disrupt the learning process for your child and others as well as the teacher's lessons. The District is responsible for limiting the number of students who are chronically absent. The State of NJ considers all students who are absent for 10% or more of the school year to be Chronically Absent. Students ages 5 and under with truant matters cannot be taken to court; however, students ages 5 and under with truant matters can be dropped from enrollment.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES



ATTENDANCE (CONT'D)

After **ten (10) consecutive absences**, your child may be dropped from the roster. Dropping a student is neither expulsion or punitive. Before any student can be re-enrolled, the parents/guardians of children with chronic absenteeism must consult with the preschool social worker and/or administration where information concerning the importance of attendance will be discussed. An official agreement, resources and services will be offered.

A re-enrollment conference is a preventive measure that will deter patterns of behavior that ultimately cause children to become truant in later years. A request to cease all truant attempts will be determined by the social worker and/or administration as a result of a current action plan to improve and educate parents on the importance of school attendance.

If a child's welfare is in question, the Division of Child Protection & Permanency and/or law enforcement will be contacted. The attendance policy above applies to students with disabilities where applicable, consistent with any student's individualized education program, accommodation plan, or individualized health care plan.

Children enrolled in our Preschool program are required to attend school regularly and must follow the district's policy on attendance. If your child will not be in school on a given day, please call the school's main office at: (609) 296-7131 ext 4213 to let us know of your child's absence.

Upon returning to school, a note explaining the cause of the absence is required. If your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time, please notify your child's teacher and the school's main office prior to his/her absence. Students benefit from a consistent routine.

Parents will be notified of individual absences as well as cumulative absences.

Please note: If your child is absent 10 consecutive days, without communication from parents/guardians to the main office, he or she will be removed from our school roster and enrollment.

Your child will be considered late if he/she arrives after 10:00 AM.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES



BACKPACKS

Please send your child to school with a **regular sized** backpack each day. Items are sent home daily. Your child will be able to keep the folder in his/her backpack for safe transport to and from school. Please remember to write your child's first and last name inside the backpack. For safety reasons, please do not write your child's name on the outside of the backpack.

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

Before and After Care services are available through Right at School. <https://www.rightatschool.com/get-started/>

Attendance at Before/After Care requires a **separate registration and monthly fee**. If you are using the Before/After Care program please notify Jackie Harned in the main office.

If your child is attending Before Care you will need to drop him/her off at the George J. Mitchell School and sign in. When the preschool school day begins, children will be walked to their classroom by the Right at School staff. Children attending After Care will be collected from the preschool classrooms. If your child is attending After Care you will pick up your child at the George Mitchell main office.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If you would like to send in a **snack** for your child's birthday, please let the teacher know in advance. Check with your child's teacher to find out the time the snack should be brought to school. Snacks are to be dropped off at the main office. If your child has a summer birthday, you can contact your child's teacher to arrange a time to celebrate their birthday during the school year.

All snack items sent into the preschool to be shared with the class must be packaged and from a store outlet. Please do not send in homemade treats. You are asked to limit the snack to a healthy food item.

CHILD CUSTODY DOCUMENTATION

A parent or guardian must present Official Court Orders to the Preschool Main Office. Please make every effort to keep your custody records in the main office up to date. In the event of a disagreement or question, the main office staff will refer to the records on file and act accordingly.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS



Your child's class will have class celebrations throughout the school year. Parents are welcome to attend but school policy dictates that siblings may not attend the parties. The school decides the date and time of the celebrations. You will receive information from your classroom teacher regarding celebrations.

CLOTHING - EXTRA & PULL-UPS OR DIAPERS

At the beginning of the school year, please send in a complete set of clothes (including shoes, if possible) in a zip-loc bag with your child's name on each article of clothing. The bag will be kept in the classroom in case your child needs to have a change of clothing. The clothes will be sent home at the end of the year. If you send in "summer" clothes at the beginning of the year, please remember to send in a new set of warmer clothes during the winter months. Reminders will be sent through the Weekly Newsletter.

If your child is **not toilet trained**, a supply of pull-ups and wipes must be sent with your child and should be labeled with your child's name. The teacher will send home a reminder letter when you will need to replenish the supply.

COMMUNICATIONS/NEWSLETTERS

We value the importance of continual communication (Board Policy 9200 - Cooperation Between Parents and School) with teachers, staff, and administration. Teachers will send weekly newsletters which contain classroom and program/district information. In addition to email, phone calls, and conferences, classroom teachers may connect with parents/guardians via apps such as Remind, Class Dojo, or Facebook as well as through the My Teaching Strategies Family Engagement page. Please be sure to check your child's newsletter each week. If you have any questions about your child or the program please reach out to your child's teacher or the main office.

DAILY PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE

Full Day schedule is: 9:45AM - 3:45PM

Early Dismissal schedule is: 9:45AM - 1:30PM

Delayed Opening schedule is: 11:45AM - 3:45PM

On a regular dismissal day, students will be dismissed to parents for pick-up starting at 3:30 pm. Students will be brought to the dismissal area by an adult.

All parents/guardians must sign the log indicating that you have been cleared to pick up a child. (On Early Dismissal days the time will be 1:00 pm.)

SCHOOL PROCEDURES



DENTAL/ORAL HEALTH

Effective oral health hygiene is promoted by ensuring that all children with teeth are assisted in brushing their teeth with toothpaste containing fluoride once daily. Each student will be provided with a toothbrush. Each classroom will be provided with toothpaste. Students will brush their teeth after rest/nap time as part of their daily routine.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Early Childhood Program adheres to a developmentally appropriate practice for the social and emotional development of young children. A goal in preschool is to help all young children, and those with challenging behaviors, by teaching them to control their own actions and reactions. If a child consistently demonstrates aggressive behavior, parents, teachers, and staff will work together to develop a plan that best meets the needs of the individual child.

DISMISSAL - PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Parents/Guardians who are **picking up their children are expected to be at the school by 3:30 pm.** We ask that you please send a note in your child's folder and / or call the main office by 2:45 pm to advise who is picking up your child. You will be asked to produce identification and sign the dismissal log. Your child will be escorted to the dismissal area and released to an adult only. As the lobby is not a large space we ask that you line up outside for dismissal.

Anyone picking up a child will be asked for identification. If someone other than the primary parent or legal guardian of a child comes to pick up and the main office has not been previously notified **you will be called to confirm before your child is released.** Please make every effort to notify the main office of who is coming to pick up your child. **Emergency contacts will only be used in an emergency. Please do not assume that because a person has been listed as an emergency contact they can pick up your child without parent notification to the main office.**

If a parent has not arrived to pick up a child at dismissal, he/she will be sent home on the bus. It is **VERY important that you communicate with the main office staff.** Our buses will not leave the parking lot until ALL students have been accounted for.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES



DONATIONS TO THE CLASSROOM

If you are donating items (party supplies etc.) to your child's classroom please drop them off at the main office marked with your child's name and teacher. We will make sure it gets to the classroom.

DRESS CODE

We ask that you dress your child in comfortable and modest clothing. When planning your child's outfit, please be aware that painting, play dough, and/or water play are part of your child's daily activities. We also play outside on the playground. **Children may not wear backless shoes or sandals. It is recommended that your child wear sneakers.** As the weather changes, please remember to send your child to school in appropriate outerwear so that he/she will be comfortable when playing outside.

END OF THE YEAR & CELEBRATIONS

Students moving up to Kindergarten participate in Transition Visits/Activities. Our school does not participate in formal graduation ceremonies. Please note: There is no need to re-register your student for the new school year.

There are times for celebrating and for bringing closure to the children's time together. As per the Department of Early Childhood, these large group times should be active, designed around children's interests, and take place for a length of time that is appropriate for the children. We do not hold a preschool "graduation" ceremony as it is not considered developmentally appropriate for our students. Our focus is always on what is best for our students.

Often, traditional preschool graduation ceremonies require a time period of practice that is too long for children and center on adult-planned activities. Sometimes, children are required to wait for long periods of time, and memorize speaking parts and new songs. The practice sessions may create a high level of stress for both children and teachers. Also, some children are uncomfortable and distracted when required to wear different clothing such as a cap and gown. Therefore, we do not endorse or schedule a preschool graduation ceremony.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES



END OF THE YEAR & CELEBRATIONS (CONT'D)

An appropriate end of the year celebration should be participatory and meaningful for all the children. Familiar music and movement activities, reciting poems and fingerplays, or acting out a familiar story are all appropriate choices to incorporate into the designated day. The celebration will be most comfortable for the children, if it takes place in a familiar location such as the classroom or familiar outside area. Of course, parents and family members are asked to join in the day as participants or observers.

ENROLLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN AT GEORGE J. MITCHELL SCHOOL

Parents do not need to register or enroll their child in kindergarten at the George Mitchell School. All students in the ECC will be placed in GJM kindergarten classrooms. Classroom assignment is based on many variables. It is the district policy that parent requests for a kindergarten teacher will not be accepted.

The district does not support skipping grades from P3 to Kindergarten or P4 to First Grade. Our program addresses the needs of the whole child including cognitive, social-emotional and physical development. Research has supported this theory especially in this early developmental age. Our teachers empower students on all levels by scaffolding instruction so they can all be successful.

Students who are age eligible to transition to kindergarten will be transferred. **Students will not be permitted to remain enrolled in preschool if they are age eligible for kindergarten.**

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers will plan a minimum of two field trips per year. Each classroom will be allowed two chaperones for the trip. Permission slips will be sent home and must be completed prior to the trip. Field trips are expected to be based on classroom studies, children's interests and our curriculum. Children are not required to attend field trips and accommodations will be made accordingly.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

FIRE AND EMERGENCY/SAFETY DRILLS



Monthly drills are held at the ECC in conjunction with GJM to prepare all students and staff to respond to emergencies. Teachers and staff will guide their students and any visitors according to the drill plan.

FOLDERS

There will be a folder sent home with your child at the end of each day. This folder is used to transport any information from your child's teacher to you and from you, as well as for the teacher to request items from you. Your child's teacher will check the folder every day. Please be sure to have your child return it to school daily.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING (HIB)

Conflicts vs. Bullying

When there's a conflict between preschool children, we may see name-calling, threats, and aggression, all which may appear to be bullying; however, conflict and bullying are different. Conflict is considered mutual, where both parties are more or less evenly involved. Conflict is based on some type of disagreement. Our preschool program's behavior guidance model is the Preschool Positive Behavior Support Model. Training in the Positive Behavior Support Program is provided to teachers and staff who work in our early childhood programs and support the students to use Problem Solving Steps to manage a conflict.

Bullying involves one person or several people who are intentionally committing a mean or violent act against another person or group of people. Unlike conflicts, bullying does not involve mutual participation in a disagreement and is one-sided. In accordance with NJ law, each school has a designated anti-bullying specialist, who serves as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and addressing incidents of HIB in the school.

The Anti-Bullying Specialist at the ECC is Meghan Gunsten. If you have questions or need clarification regarding a specific concern, please contact Meghan Gunsten or Dr. Flynn, our ECC Principal.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING (HIB)



How can parents help?

- Help your children develop empathy skills by encouraging them to label feelings.
- When reading books, have your children identify the facial expressions of the characters in the books. For instance, in The Berenstain Bears and the Bully book, ask questions on how they think Brother and Sister Bear feel. It may also help your children to see you and other adults in their lives model empathic responses.
- Try role-playing scenarios with your child on sharing; asking a friend to play with them; etc.
- Help your children develop assertiveness skills. Teach them to speak directly to other children rather than through an adult. When they are dependent on an adult, they are unable to develop self-reliance and self-confidence in social situations.

HEALTH OFFICE

Our school nurse, Lori Gribin, is available to assist you with any questions concerning medication procedures and the general health and development for your child, and can also provide guidance pertaining to when it is advisable to keep a sick child home from school. In the event that the nurse sends your child home from school she will indicate when it is advisable for your child to return. As with fevers, children are expected to be **fever free for 24 hours without the assistance of medication such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.**

The school nurse will conduct or facilitate the following screenings of children in the program: vision, hearing, dental, height and weight. The school nurse can be reached at the following number: (609) 296-7131 ext. 4108.

Please review the information below. This is to be used as guidance for health decisions for your child. Please refer to your health professional for specific recommendations.

HEALTH OFFICE



I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...

I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
Temperature of 100° F or higher.	Within the past 24 hours.	Within the past 24 hours.	Body rash with itching or fever.	Itchy head, active head lice.	Redness, itching, and/or pus draining from eye.	Hospital stay and/or emergency room visit.

I am ready to go back to school when I am...

Fever free without the assistance of medication for 24 hours (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, Advil).	Free from vomiting for 24 hours.	Free from diarrhea for 24 hours.	Free from rash, itching or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home.	Free from drainage and/or have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Released by my medical provider to return to school.
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If your child has strep throat or another bacterial infection, he/she should stay home until the antibiotic has been given for at least 24 hours and your health care provider has given permission for your child to return to school. We encourage you to seek medical attention when your child is sick and to follow your health care provider's recommendations about returning to school and other activities.

Please be advised that all Preschool children who are **under the age of 5 as of December 31st 2023 MUST receive an ANNUAL flu vaccination as per the State of New Jersey Administrative Code) 8:57-4.2.** Children that have not received a flu vaccination by December 31st will be excluded from school until proof of vaccination has been submitted.

IMPORTANT

Please Note: Children can NOT transport medication to and from school.

All medications that a child may need in school must be **prescribed by a physician** and brought to the school by a parent or guardian. The School Nurse will only administer prescribed medication. School staff (Teachers, Assistants, etc.) are not permitted to administer any medication, ointment, or other substances.

HOME-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS OR HOMEWORK



Throughout the school year, you may receive ideas for activities that you may want to do with your child. For example, you and your child may be invited to create a family portrait or draw a map of your home. In addition, we encourage all families to read to your child daily. However, it is our policy that mandatory homework for preschoolers is not developmentally appropriate. Activities that involve worksheets are not beneficial to the development of very young students.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe weather, the Superintendent will make the decision whether or not to have a delayed opening, early dismissal, or to close school. Once the decision has been reached, every effort will be made to share the information with you as quickly as possible. Notification will be on the district website and Facebook.

Blackboard Connect is our web-based call system. This system will notify parents by phone of important announcements and changes in the school day schedule. The primary phone number that you submit will receive these messages.

INCLUSION CLASSROOM/STUDENTS

At the ECC we actively promote inclusive practices in order to best meet the needs of the children at our center. All children are welcome regardless of ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender, or economic circumstances. As needed, we provide modifications and adaptations to help all children achieve success in our program and work closely with the Child Study Team to support students who have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) in the general education classrooms. As per Board Policy 2460; to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment according to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2 As such, children may be placed with their typically developing peers for a partial or full day schedule.

LABELING PERSONAL BELONGINGS



Please label all of your child's personal belongings. This includes snack bags, backpacks, hats, etc... Many children have similar or identical items and we want to be sure that everything goes home with the rightful owner. Please note: At the end of the school year or in the event of disenrollment, all personal items such as blankets, pillows, clothing etc. that are left behind will be donated as of June 30th.

LUNCH

Students may bring their lunch to school or utilize our school meal programs. You will receive a monthly lunch menu in your child's backpack. Monthly menus are also posted on the district website. Parents can pay for meals daily, weekly or monthly. The dollars will be added to your "cafeteria account." If your child is absent, you will not be charged for that day. We ask that you pay for meals regularly. If your account is not up to date, you will receive a bill from the cafeteria.

All students will receive an application for **Free and Reduced Price Meals**. Please return this completed form to school regardless of status for Free or Reduced Breakfast and Lunch. The district receives State funding based on the number of lunch applications that are returned. Please return the lunch application form even if you do not want to be considered for Free & Reduced Meals. Each form returned to the district helps with the State funding allotment. Please help with this initiative for our students.

MEAL TIMES



There are numerous studies that link the quality of a child's nutrition to their ability to learn. That is why we offer a nutritious breakfast every morning.

If you choose to send in breakfast and lunch foods for your child, please mark the breakfast with "B" and the lunch with "L." Your child can learn that these letters stand for "breakfast" and "lunch," and it makes it easier for him/her to discriminate between the two meals.

Student Breakfast: 9:45 am —10:00 am

Student Lunch: varies per classroom, 30 minutes, scheduled sometime between 12:00-12:45 pm

**** IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING FOOD ****

Please be selective when sending in foods for meals. Young children need fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy products and meats to grow and to stay healthy.

Typically, we encourage the children to eat healthy foods by eating healthy foods at the table with them. This practice will be paused until further notice. However, please note research shows that sugary foods can affect your child's mood, energy level, and behavior, which in turn affect his/her learning. Therefore we encourage families to limit sugary foods in order to support a good example in the classroom.

On occasion, some children may have extraordinary food allergies that potentially can interfere with their health. In the event that allergies are an issue in your child's classroom, you will be notified. Thank you for your cooperation.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Early childhood education is a team effort. We encourage family members to get involved in our school community. Christina Cofer, our Community Parent Involvement Specialist, organizes school-wide events and activities for parents/guardians. In addition, we offer various opportunities for our ECC families to learn about early childhood development and parenting. If you have any questions or suggestions for activities please contact Mrs. Cavicchio.



PUBLIC NOTICE

All programs are offered to all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

PROJECT CHILD FIND

This is a free referral service and public awareness campaign to assist in the identification of unserved/underserved youth with a delay or disability from birth through twenty-one years of age. Project CHILD FIND develops and distributes information to the public about early intervention services and special education programs throughout New Jersey. Information through Project CHILD FIND may be obtained by calling the toll-free number, 1-800-322-8174, which is in service 7 days a week, 24-hours a day. If you are interested in Early Intervention (birth through 2 years old, please call 1-888-653-4463). All calls received are confidential.

PM BUS STOP

It is expected that an adult is present every day at the bus stop for dismissal. Please communicate with the driver and aide if you (parent/guardian) are not the adult that will be at the bus stop to receive your child. **The driver will not release a child without prior approval.** If there are no adults at the stop the driver will contact the school's main office. **Your child will be returned to the preschool and you will need to pick up your child at the preschool. In the event that your child is returned to school it is expected that you will get your child promptly.**

RESIDENCY

Students and their parents/guardians **must** reside within the Little Egg Harbor School District to attend our free preschool program. Students and their guardians/parents that are found not to be living within the Little Egg Harbor School District will be asked to dis-enroll from preschool or pay the preschool annual tuition fee of \$15,092.00 per child. Any person who makes a false statement or permits false statements to be made for the purpose of allowing a non-resident student to attend Little Egg Harbor Schools, commits a disorderly persons offense pursuant to N.J. 18A:38-1 and may be prosecuted by law.



REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued for each session of data collection; Fall, Winter, Spring. Student growth and development will be created and documented in the My Teaching Strategies (MTS) platform. The MTS Report Card will share information regarding a child's skills, knowledge, and abilities, including a comparison of your child's current abilities to widely held expectations and a narrative of where your child's abilities are presently and where they'll be next.

REST TIME

In a full day program, 3 and 4 year-olds, by law, must have Rest Time in the daily schedule. Children are not required to sleep but are asked to have some quiet time. Children who do not sleep are offered an alternative, quiet activity. Your child will have a personal mat with his/her name marked on it. Mats are vinyl, so for optimum comfort, please provide a crib or cot sheet to cover it, a small blanket (e.g., receiving blanket) and a small pillow (travel size). Remember these items must fit into a small cubby, so please, no bulky comforters or pillows. On Fridays your child's rest items will be sent home to be washed and returned to school.

SNACK

Children should bring a healthy snack (including a drink) to school every day. We have found that too many snacks make it difficult for the child to choose which one to eat. Therefore, please limit the snack to one item. Please do not send in canned or bottled drinks. There may be days on which a birthday or another special event occurs in class. On such days, a snack will be provided to your child and he/she may return home with the snack you sent in with him/her. Snacks should be labeled with an "S" for snack. Children that are a parent pick-up at dismissal will have limited time for a snack in the classroom.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Our program uses Facebook to connect with our families and share events, activities, and announcements. The ECC Family Connections and Events page is a closed group and specific to those enrolled in our preschool. Parents/Guardians of our children will be approved for membership.

As we often include photos of children on our site, our membership will be updated each year after children have transitioned to kindergarten. As such, your membership could be revoked at that time.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LEHECC/>

The Little Egg Harbor School District also has a Facebook page. Information about the district and all three schools is shared on this page.

TRANSPORTATION

Students enrolled in preschool are provided with busing to and from school. Mr. Michael Cofer will handle all transportation questions and concerns for the school. Mr. Cofer can be reached at mcofer@lehsd.org to answer any questions about your child's bus route, driver, or aide. Students will be assigned one bus stop (AM and PM). Students will not be permitted to ride an alternate bus route unless an address change or babysitter form has been submitted.

Bus aides ride the bus and ensure that each student is seated in their assigned seats and provide assistance with their seat belts. Students will NOT be released from the bus unless a parent (or an adult) is present at the bus stop to receive them. Parents are not permitted to board the school bus at any time.

TRANSPORTATION - STUDENT TAGS/LANYARDS

Student bus tags/lanyards will be provided to each student. These tags support a students' smooth transition from the bus to his/her classroom. Please be sure that your child's lanyard is secured to their backpack. These tags are color-coded to coordinate with the student's classroom hallway (green or purple).

TRANSPORTATION - PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES



1. Help the driver stay on schedule by making sure that your child gets to his/her bus stop on time.
2. Do not ask the driver to stop at places other than the regular bus stop. Drivers are not permitted to do this.
3. Teach your children to be courteous and respectful to the bus driver, aide, and other students.
4. Parents driving students to school should be mindful of the limited space for traffic and parking. Drive/park in designated roadways/lots and follow the traffic flow plan to help avoid delays and allow for safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians.

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

It is in the best interest of our students to be prepared for the transition to kindergarten. Activities and lessons will be scheduled by classroom teachers and program staff to support the transition; such as, a visit to a kindergarten class, a tour of the school, a snack and tour in the GJM multipurpose room/cafeteria. In addition, a Basic Skills screening will be administered to all preschool students that will be going to kindergarten.

The district **does not support** skipping grades from P3 to Kindergarten or P4 to First Grade. Our program addresses the needs of the whole child including cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development. Our teachers empower students on all levels by scaffolding instruction so they can be successful.

Note: Parents do not need to enroll or register their child in kindergarten.

VISITORS

All visitors to the building or grounds are to report to the main office to sign in, receive permission to be in the building, and obtain a visitor's pass. There are NO exceptions to this rule. This includes visits to any and all preschool classrooms whether located in the ECC building or 600 wing. We need to know who is in the building at all times to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Please adhere to the speed limit in our parking lot and be aware of children and parents crossing the main thoroughfare. All visitors must be prepared to present a photo ID.



VISITORS (CONT'D)

Please adhere to the speed limit in our parking lot and be aware of children and parents crossing the main thoroughfare. It is expected that visitors will not idle (NJ Admin Code Section 7:27-15.8) their engines while in the parking lot.

VOLUNTEERS

We love to have volunteers in our classrooms and at school events! If you are interested in volunteering please contact your child's teacher or Donna Cavicchio our Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) at 609-296-7131 ext 4218.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

1 OR 2 DAYS A WEEK DOESN'T SEEM LIKE MUCH BUT...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

HOW ABOUT 10 MINUTES LATE A DAY?

SURELY THAT WON'T AFFECT MY CHILD, RIGHT?

He/She is only missing just...	That equals....	Which is....	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 mins per day	50 min per week	Nearly 1½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 mins per day	1 hr. 40 min per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 mins per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

Acknowledgement



I HAVE READ THE ENTIRE PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK. I AM AWARE OF ITS CONTENTS AND UNDERSTAND THE DIRECTIVES THEREIN.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Child's Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

*Please return this form to your
child's teacher or the Preschool
Secretary, ECC Main Office.*

Thank you!





Little Egg Harbor School District Office
(609) 296-1719

Robert C. Wood Early Childhood Center
(609) 296-7131 ext. 4213

Please feel free to call with any questions.

www.lehsd.org

Our ECC Facebook page is used to connect our preschool families with activities, events, and information about the preschool program. We respect the privacy of our students. This is a closed group. Parents/Guardians of currently enrolled students will be approved for membership.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LEHECC/>