Eureka City Schools Preschool Programs

Parent Handbook 2025/2026

Mission Statement

ECS Preschool Programs, in partnership with families and our community, will provide exceptional, inclusive, developmentally appropriate preschool programs where students grow and learn by:

- Nurturing social skills and friendships while building joyful classroom communities
- Encouraging imagination and creativity in a fun, active, play-based learning environment
- Individually challenging and guiding students to problem solve utilizing their developing critical thinking skills, resulting in students who have a strong foundation and passion for lifelong learning and are prepared to thrive as they move on to Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten in our community.

Arrival and Departure

In order to ensure children's safety, children must be accompanied by a parent to their classroom. The parent must sign the child in and make direct contact with the teacher or classroom staff members before leaving, transferring responsibility of the child to the school.

- It is essential that children be dropped off and picked up on time, as we determine staffing and meal counts based on planned student enrollment. Please notify staff of any special needs or disability a child or parent may have which affects arrival/departure.
- **Children will be released when their contracting parent/caregiver comes to pick them up and sign them out. Children will never be released without the staff obtaining proper authorization and identification of the person picking up the child.** Persons picking up the child must be 18 years of age or older. Someone other than the child's parent may pick up the child if:
    - their name is listed on the child's emergency card, or
    - the parent provides a signed note authorizing the person to pick up for a specific day, or
    - the parent makes verified verbal contact with the office or teaching staff authorizing the person to pick up the child for a specific day with valid ID shown.
- **Late drop-off:** If your child will arrive to school late, you are required to notify the school office through Brightwheel or call (707) 441-2498. **Late pick-up: Is the same as late drop off:** If you will be arriving late to pick up, you are required to notify the school through Brightwheel or contact the office. Same as late drop off.
- With prior arrangements for special circumstances, children may be picked up or dropped off later in the day; please see the classroom teacher or office if you need to make special circumstance arrangements.
- As part of their drop off routine, children will wash their hands upon arrival before play.

Attendance and Absences

The State of California requires that accurate daily attendance records are maintained.

- **Please make every effort for your child to arrive at their scheduled time. For any absence or tardiness, you are required to call the preschool office before your child's scheduled time of arrival at (707) 441-2498.** For your convenience, we have a 24-hour answering machine.
- To record attendance, children must be signed in at arrival and out at departure, with actual times verified by a full signature on an Ipad or paper sign in/out sheet that will be posted. (Please, make sure that you indicate the actual time of arrival/departure and not the scheduled time.)
- **Excused absences** include: **illness/injury** of the child or parent, **quarantine** of the child or parent due to exposure to illness, **medical/dental appointment** for the child or parent, **family emergency** (ex. sick parent/guardian, transportation issues), **death** of an immediate family member (ex. parent, grandparent, aunt, cousin), **legal appearance** regarding the child.
    - **Best Interest:** The State allows for your child to be absent from the program for **10 days** during the fiscal year if the absence is in the best interest of the child. In order to request one of these days, parents must alert the office by phone or written notice, clearly stating the date and reason for the absence. Examples of Best Interest days include: celebrating special family events/holidays, non-court ordered visitation, serious illness or death of someone other than an immediate family member.
    - **If there has been no contact with the preschool for 5 consecutive days, we will assume that you no longer require preschool services:** a Notice of Action terminating services will be delivered, as we will assume you have abandoned the space.

Wellness at School

Children Should Remain Home When Ill

Please keep your child home:

- If the child has a temperature of 100 or above. **The child may return to school when the temperature has been normal for 24 hours without medication.**
- If the child has been vomiting (more than spitting up). Please stay home for 24 hours after the last symptoms of diarrhea or vomiting.
- If the child has diarrhea (watery or greenish bowel movements that are more frequent than usual). *If ongoing loose stool is due to allergies, children may be accepted with a doctor's note.
- If the child has excessive coughing.
- The first day of a clear runny nose (this is when the child is often contagious).
- If the child is in emotional distress or is too upset to participate in regular school activities.
- If the child's nose is running too much, blowing/wiping their nose interferes with school activities.
- If the child has head lice, our preschool programs do not allow a child to return if they have any nits or lice in their hair, even after treatment.

The Director or teacher may send a child home at their discretion, if they determine the child is not well enough to participate at school as, according to licensing regulations, we are unable to care for sick children. If a child becomes ill or develops any symptoms during school, he/she is not able to stay at preschool. In the event of illness at school:

- The parent will be immediately notified to take the child home.

- Depending on the condition, while waiting for the parent to arrive, the child may be isolated to prevent contact with other children (for example, the child may be provided with a mat in the classroom or office.) The child will be supervised at all times.
- The school will notify parents when their child has been exposed to a contagious illness or condition.
- For dental emergencies, staff provides first aid when appropriate and calls the parent immediately.
- At least one member of staff holds current Pediatric First Aid and CPR Certification at all times.

Medications

Any child required to take medication prescribed by a physician (including inhalers and Epi-Pens) during their scheduled hours at one of our preschool programs, may be assisted by designated school personnel.

- A "Parental Consent for Administration of Medications and Medication Chart" form must be submitted to the office, detailing the method, amount, and time schedule by which medication is taken.
- A "Consent to Administer Medication at School" form with physician's signature is required for staff to administer either prescription or over-the-counter medications. Over-the-counter medications **will not** be administered without a completed form from the child's physician.
- All medications not requiring refrigeration are kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom. Medications requiring refrigeration are kept in a locked refrigerator on campus.
- All medication must be in the original container with the child's name on the bottle/package.
- Staff must be trained by the parent and sign a release form to administer medication.

Toileting Policy

****Unless noted in the child's IEP, students must be ***activley*** practicing the process of "potty training".****
We require that a child is able to do the following with very little to no assistance:

- Recognize when they need to use the restroom (both urination and bowel movement) any time during daily activities both inside and outside.
- Communicate the need to an adult who is able to help them to the restroom before an accident occurs, as adult supervision is required.
- Perform necessary toileting procedures including:
    - Pull down pants/appropriately remove clothing
    - Stand or sit at or on toilet appropriately
    - Wipe sufficiently (when necessary)
    - Place paper in toilet (when necessary)
    - Pull up pants/appropriately re-dress
    - Flush toilet

Nutrition and Meal Plan

Our ECS preschool programs are committed to the health of your child. We serve healthy meals and snacks, and staff model healthy eating behaviors throughout the day. Meals are provided by Eureka City Schools with participation in the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) and are monitored for quality.

- Breakfast, lunch, and snack are provided for students attending during those meal times at no additional cost.
- Monthly menus are available in the office, lobby, or classroom.
- Meals are planned by the District Nutritionist to provide children with well-balanced meals that provide the nutrients they need for healthy growth.

- **Special Diets and Food Allergies:** Additional paperwork is required for specialized diets. Communicate your child's special dietary needs with their teacher or the school office.
- If you choose to opt out of the school meal program and provide all meals for your child, the office will provide you with the necessary paperwork to complete.
- Please review the non-discrimination statement:

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**

   U.S. Department of Agriculture

   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

   1400 Independence Avenue, SW

   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**

   (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**

   Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Children should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for active play and easy to manage for toileting.

- We request that all families bring a jacket daily for their child, as well as an extra change of clothing to be stored in each child's cubby. Please check your child's cubby daily for dirty/soiled clothing.
    - Please label your child's jackets and extra clothing with their name.
- **Closed-toed shoes are required (open-toed shoes and flip-flops are not appropriate for school).** High-heeled shoes are appropriate only on special school event days.
- If possible please provide your child with **rain boots and rain jacket** on rainy days.
- We do not assume responsibility for items children bring to school.
- Personal items or toys from home should be left at home.

- At times, a child with special needs may require the use of a sensory object from home. In this case, please see your child's teacher ahead of time to inquire about an exception to the school policy.
- Please do not bring any animals into the classroom unless the animal is a certified service dog/animal with documentation submitted to the office.

Positive Interventions and Supports

Our program uses positive behavioral interventions. No form of physical punishment or verbal/psychological abuse are ever used when disciplining children.

- Parents will be notified if more than minor issues regarding their child's behavior arise and/or continue.
- Staff will document on-going behaviors. If ongoing negative behaviors occur, parents will be contacted.
- Kicking, hitting, pushing, biting, or verbal abuse are not considered acceptable behaviors in our social environment; these and other behaviors that jeopardize a child's personal safety or the safety of another child or staff member are not considered acceptable.
- Parents are integral members of a child's behavior success team and are expected to partner with staff to modify their child's behaviors. We are diligent in looking for possible solutions.
    - If ongoing behavior supports are needed, the teacher or Director may suggest a modification to the child's schedule, counseling services, or a Needs and Services plan, or other referral.

Inclusion Program

Our program provides special education services to students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Teachers intentionally design their classrooms and curriculum to meet the needs of diverse student learners. Our special education teacher's support students with their individualized education plans and goals. The program receives support from our ECS team of Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA's), school psychologists, and social workers. Students who receive speech and language services receive speech therapy from the district-employed speech language pathologist and the Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA). We are proud of our team approach to support all students. If you have questions or concerns about the inclusion program please contact your classroom teacher or the Director.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Fostering a positive working relationship and strong communication between school and home is a priority of all Eureka City Schools programs.

- **Please notify preschool teaching staff when:**
    - your child has been ill or is receiving medication
    - your child had a difficult time sleeping last night
    - there is a stressful situation at home that may affect your child's behavior
- **If you ever have a question or concern about any aspect of our program, we ask that you follow these steps:**

    1st - Speak with your child's classroom teacher
    2nd - Speak with the Director
    3rd - Speak with the appropriate Eureka City Schools Official (the office can provide you with contact information for the correct official for your concern.)
    4th - Speak with our licensing agent or state consultant (the Director can provide you with contact information for the correct official for your concern.)

Note: Questions about enrollment and attendance may be addressed to the secretary.

Brightwheel

Winzler uses the app, Brightwheel. After enrollment you will receive an e-mail to sign up and receive a code which you will use to sign in and out in the classroom kiosks. Please sign out using your full signature. Brightwheel may be used as a form of communication to your child's teacher/the office. Pictures, announcements and newsletters are shared on brightwheel. Please contact your child's teacher/the office with questions or concerns about the app.

Family Conferences

Family conferences are scheduled and held two times during the school year. Teachers share the results of in-class observations and assessments, as well as family input recorded on the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). Families and the teacher work together to set upcoming educational goals for the child. Parents, as leaders in ensuring their child's education, are encouraged to bring questions. If a child's assessment indicates a potential developmental delay, the teacher and parent may discuss the process for assessing additional supports for the child.

Family Participation and Involvement

Families are encouraged to have an active role in their child's preschool program and education. Please reach out to the teacher and/or Director if you are interested in volunteering or sharing a special skill or activity in the classroom (proof and vaccinations and fingerprints are required for ongoing volunteering). Family gatherings and educational workshops will be offered throughout the school year to build a sense of community and belonging to your child's classroom and school community. We encourage you to have a voice in the program and participate in ways in which you feel comfortable.

Special Day Class (SDC) Room 4:

Parents: Please be advised that it is **VERY IMPORTANT,** due to the nature of our SDC Program hours, that arrival and pick up times are strictly adhered to.