



# Early Childhood

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Dear Families,

The Council Bluffs Community School District welcomes you and your child to an exciting year of learning in our Early Childhood programs. We have compiled this handbook to provide you with useful information about the Early Childhood programs in our district.

The goal of our programs is to provide a high quality early childhood experience meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The classroom environment provides rich learning opportunities that encourage natural curiosity. Children are in a setting that is safe and respectful. Our programs also serve children on individualized education plans (IEP) who are transitioning from Early Access Services into the public school system.

In addition to this handbook, please take time to become familiar with the District-Wide Student Handbook, and other information that you receive at registration and from your teacher.

As parents/guardians, you are the most important teacher in your children's lives. Your active involvement is an essential part of the children's experiences. This is the start of an exciting time!

# District Information

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## Early Childhood Program Purpose & Objective

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The Council Bluffs Community School District aspires to provide all of our youngest students with high quality early childhood experiences. Our programs focus on the social, emotional, cognitive, language, physical and academic skills of the whole child, through positive, authentic and intentional instruction that encourages natural curiosity and drive.

Our curriculum is aligned with the Iowa Early Learning Standards, and is provided through research-based instructional practices to meet each child's individual needs. Our classrooms are safe, nurturing environments that meet the needs of *all* students, and are committed to provide opportunities for our youngest students to observe, interact, and reflect on their learning across all developmental domains.

To accomplish this, our Early Childhood programs provide hands-on, interactive learning opportunities for young bodies and minds to *explore, discover, invent* and *engage* in their environments, both indoors and outdoors. We produce students who become critical thinkers, effective communicators, flexible problem solvers, interactive collaborators, inspired creators, and self-motivated learners.

## District Early Childhood Personnel

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**Program Administrator:** The Principal is endorsed as a PK principal, and is designated as the program administrator supervising Early Childhood programs.

**Preschool Teachers:** Licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an Early Childhood endorsement are assigned to the preschool classrooms.

**Infant/Toddler Teachers:** Have obtained an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education or related field and have training related to Infant/Toddler students.

**Early Childhood Special Education Teacher/LRE Monitor:** Licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holds an Early Childhood Special Education endorsement.

**Teacher Assistants:** Assistants in the classroom carry out activities under the supervision of the teacher. All teacher assistants have specialized training in early childhood education, including a Child Development Associate credential, two years of college, or a professional development plan specific to the age of students they are supporting.

**School Nurse:** All classrooms will have the assistance of the school nurse. The school nurse maintains student health records by updating them and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school.

Curriculum Specialist: Licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners  
 Support Staff: Green Hills Area Education Agency support staff provide resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech/language pathologist, special education building representative or consultant, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.

## Early Childhood Program Locations

School	Address	Phone #
Bloomer	210 S. 7 <sup>th</sup> Street	712-328-6519
Carter Lake	1000 Willow Drive	712-347-5876
College View	1225 College Road	712-328-6452
Edison	2218 3rd Avenue	712-328-6516
Franklin	3130 Avenue C	712-328-6469
Hoover	1205 N. Broadway	712-328-6537
Lewis & Clark	1603 Grand Avenue	712-328-6471
Longfellow	2011 S. 10th Street	712-328-6522
Roosevelt	517 N. 17 <sup>th</sup> Street	712-328-6528
Rue	3326 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	712-328-6540
Early Learning Center	620 N. 8th Street	712-227-0098

## Enrollment

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Children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age can be screened to determine eligibility for the district early childhood programs. The results of the screening will be used as a piece of evidence to determine whether or not the child is eligible for district early childhood programming.

Required documentation for placement includes:

- Enrollment Application
- Completed ASQ-SE
- Completed ASQ-3
- Income Verification (IA-1040 other items accepted on an individual basis)
- Proof of Residence (utility bill, lease agreement, etc.)
- Immunization Records
- Birth Certificate

The building where your child will attend will have additional registration paperwork to be completed.

All paperwork must be completed before a student can begin programming.

Once notification is received and the placement offer is accepted, the family must pick up their enrollment packet at the appropriate building the child will be attending.

Preschool services for four-year-olds are partially funded by the state of Iowa. Knowing the importance of Early Childhood Education, the Council Bluffs Community School District provides voluntary preschool programs through a combination of state funding and various additional funding streams. Our programs are developed to serve age-eligible students who reside within the Council Bluffs Community School District. Students who reside outside of the district, or those who do not meet eligibility requirements for our grant-funded programming, may be eligible for a tuition-based preschool program.

### Un-Enrollment In Tuition-Based Programs

In the event that you wish to un-enroll your child from a program, a two-week notice is REQUIRED. Un-enrolling without proper notice will result in a two-week tuition charge.

## Fees and Financial Agreements

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Families will be billed for enrollment based upon a contracted fee which is determined by the child's age and eligibility criteria. Parents sign a contract prior to the beginning of the academic year which states the fees for services. Billing statements will be issued based on the information on the contract. Fees for the center are announced at the time of enrollment for each school year. Fees are subject to change upon notice. IRS statements will be made available for tax purposes through the district finance office.

Billing statements for each month will be sent by the 15th of the preceding month. Payments for the month are due by the 1st of the month for that month's enrollment. Payment can be made in person at the center. We accept cash (in person only), check, money order, Visa/MasterCard, or, for employees a payroll deduction can be selected.

Accounts which have outstanding balances are subject to being sent to collection at the discretion of the Council Bluffs School District office. The district reserves the right to disenroll a child when a payment for services is not made in a timely manner. Fees for services will be announced prior to the beginning of each academic year and presented to each family in writing. Fees may increase at any time with notice.

Infants and Toddlers at the Early Learning Center may apply for Child Care Assistance. The state of Iowa offers financial assistance to families who qualify to pay for childcare and/or preschool. Families will need to apply for this assistance through the state of Iowa and if approved, provide a letter of authorization to be kept in your child's file. Families will be responsible for paying for any lapses in authorization and co-pays.

## Program Hours

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### Early Learning Center

<p><u>Infant/Toddler Programs</u> Monday - Friday 7:00am - 5:30pm</p>	<p><u>Preschool Programs</u> Monday - 8:20 am - 1:55 Tuesday - Friday - 8: 20 - 3:20  Half Day Program: Monday - Friday 8:20 - 11:30</p>
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### Preschool Programs in Elementary Schools

<p><u>Full Day Programs</u> Monday - Early Release 8:55 – 2:05 Tuesday – Friday 8:55 – 3:45</p>	<p><u>Half Day Programs</u> Morning Session: Monday– Friday 8:55 – 12:05</p>
<p><u>3/4 Day Programs</u> Monday 8:55 - 2:05 Tuesday - Friday 8:55 - 2:30</p>	

## Child Attendance

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Regular attendance of your child is important. Your child's teachers have carefully planned lessons and activities in a sequence designed to help your child learn. If your child misses days or comes in late, he or she will be missing parts of the routine and will not have the full benefit of the entire series of lessons.

Children enrolled in the infant/toddler programs are required to attend for 5+ hours per day. Children enrolled in our preschool programs are required to attend for the duration of the school day (see program hours above).

All preschool students enrolled are required by the Board of Directors to attend school each day that school is in session. Any child who fails to attend school without reasonable excuse for the absence shall be defined as truant. The building principal or designee may report each child of compulsory attendance age who is truant to the County Attorney. It is the responsibility of the County Attorney to take appropriate action.

Excused absences may include:

- Illness
- Funeral
- Medical appointment (Parents/guardians are encouraged to set appointments outside of the school day.)
- Required court appearance
- Absences to attend a religious service or to receive religious instruction
- Other absences excused by the administration

You will be contacted by school personnel within an hour of the start of the day, if there is no communication from the parent/guardian regarding the child's absence.

A school administrator may require verification in order to classify any absence as excused. Verification may be requested in the form of a doctor's note, written statement by a clerk of the court, written excuse by a minister or other means an administrator may deem sufficient to determine whether or not an absence shall be classified as excused. The principal may also refer a student with excessive excused absences to the County Attorney. The definition of "excessive" shall be at the discretion of the building principal, but shall be generally defined as interfering with the child's educational progress. Students with unexcused, excessive absences may be subject to disenrollment from the program.

Sign in/Out Process: Children must be brought inside the classroom by a parent or other parent-approved adult each day, and be signed in on the “sign-in sheet” in the classroom indicating the time in and out for the day. Children are also signed out at the end of the day by a parent or other adult on the same classroom sign out sheet. The sign in/out sheet documents contains information on what time children were dropped off and picked up, and who dropped off and picked up. If someone other than a parent is to pick up a child, this person MUST be identified on the Enrollment Form or have written permission from a parent, or the child will not be allowed to leave school with this person. This documentation is kept in the teachers file to be referenced by administration, as needed.

If the child arrives after class begins, the child and parent must enter the building through the main entrance and sign in at the office indicating the time they are entering the building and which classroom they attend. If a parent or guest is visiting the building, they must check in at the front office by signing in, indicating the time of their visit, the classroom they are visiting/reason for the visit, contact information and return to the office before leaving to sign out.

If a child needs to be absent, please inform the school by calling the office or notifying your child’s teachers. Attendance is taken within 30 minutes of the start of the class. If a child is absent without reason, the parent or guardian will be contacted by the building secretary within 1 hour to document the appropriate reason for the child’s absence. If we are unable to reach the family, emergency personnel will be contacted at the discretion of the building principal.

## Discharge Policies

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Children may be disenrolled from the program if it is found that the child presents a danger to others, if the family fails to pay for services in accordance with enrollment contract, or if the family presents a danger to staff and/or children in the program.

Parents may voluntarily withdraw their child from the program at any time by providing a 2-week written notice to the program administrator. Parents will be responsible for all fees occurring through the last day of attendance.

Children may be disenrolled from the program if any of the following situations exist:

- If it is found that the child or family presents a danger to staff and/or other children in the program.

- If the family fails to pay for services in accordance with the enrollment contract.
- If it is determined that the program cannot adequately meet the needs of the child.
- If there is a lack of regular attendance in the program by the child without notification to the staff.

Parents will be charged in accordance with the enrollment contract unless written withdrawal information has been received by the program administrator. Every effort will be made to allow for an easy transition to and from programs.

## Non-Center Activities

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Students in our preschool 4's classroom will have the option to utilize Kids and Company for wrap around care. Kids & Company is a DHS licensed child care program that offers convenient and affordable programming before and after school, during no school days, and during the summer.

Families interested in Kids and Company can visit <https://www.cbsf.org/kids-and-company> for more information and to apply.

## Health, Safety and Supervision

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CBCSD early childhood programs are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the Department of Health and Human Services, Iowa Quality Preschool Program and Head Start Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

## Safety Procedures

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Maintaining a safe and secure environment for the children is always a priority. Each building utilizes a locked door system at the main entrance that requires you to ring the doorbell and wait for staff to allow entry.

Each day children will be signed in and out in their classroom, indicating who the adult is and what time the drop off/pick up occurred. If the child is dropped off after the tardy bell or before dismissal, the adult must enter through the main office and follow the same sign out procedure.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up a child, this person MUST be identified on the Enrollment Form or have written permission from a parent, or the child will not be allowed to leave the program with this person.

Any adult visiting the building must be granted entry through the front office. A sign in/sign out sheet must be completed indicating the visitors name, contact information and reason for the visit.

If a child does not show up to school and the school has not been notified of the reason for the absence, a phone call will be made to the parent within one hour of school starting. If no contact is made, emergency contacts or law enforcement may be contacted at the schools discretion.

Standard Response Protocol is implemented in the Council Bluffs Schools. This protocol provides training and resources for staff and students to respond appropriately to emergency situations. These responses include a lockout for potentially disruptive situations outside of the school, lockdown for potentially disruptive situations inside the school, evacuation for potentially dangerous situations inside the school, shelter for moving to a safer location within the building, and hold for being able to navigate the school without disruption. Each building conducts emergency drills. At the beginning of each school year, teachers notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms. All students are required to participate in these drills for everyone's safety, and are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Employees are expected to participate in drills and assist others appropriately during events. For additional details, refer to policy 522.1.

Each year, all school district employees are required to complete mandatory training courses on a variety of important topics. These topics include but are not limited to:

- Staff Orientation (New staff)
- Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training
- Chapter 103 - AEA Training
- Safe Schools
- Universal Precautions
- Infant, Child and Adult CPR
- Infant, Child and Adult First Aid
- Crisis Prevention Intervention

Staff will complete all required training by November 1st.

## Ethics and Confidentiality

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Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information regarding any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

## Child Records

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Child records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the board secretary in the district administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

## Health and Immunization Records

Before a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents/legal guardians provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunizations for which parents are using religious exemptions.

## Health and Safety Records

- For each child five years of age and younger, the child care center shall require an admission physical examination report with following information;
  - submitted within 30 days from the date of admission
  - signed by a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, physician assistant or advanced registered nurse practitioner.
  - the date of the physical examination shall be no more than 12 months prior to the first day of attendance at the center.
  - past health history, status of present health including allergies, medications, and acute or chronic conditions, and recommendations for continued care when necessary
  
- Current information about any dental and health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
- Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up-to-date by a specified method during the year;
- Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
- Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g. asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
- Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support; and
- Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's religious beliefs. Staff will implement a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

Note: Child health records must be kept up-to-date annually.

## Adult to Child Ratio

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All of our programs have a child-to-staff ratio that falls within the guidelines of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHS), Iowa Quality Preschool Programs (IQPPS) and Head Start Preschool Program Standards (HSPPS). Staff will maintain the required ratio at all times, including transportation and field trips. Class size may be reduced based on the number of students needing specialized instruction.

Age of Children	Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children
Six (6) weeks to (2) years	One (1) to every four (4) children - 1:4
Two (2) years	One (1) to every six (7) children - 1:7
Three (3) years	One (1) to every eight (8) children - 1:8
Four (4) years	One (1) to every twelve (12) children - 1:12

## Supervision

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No child will be left unsupervised while attending school. During active play, staff will use active supervision by engaging with children. During group times (meals, instruction, rest time, etc.), staff will use zoning techniques to maintain supervision of all children. There may be short intervals where supervision by sound is permissible as long as teachers remain in close proximity with children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently).

When leaving the program (field trips, neighborhood walks, etc.) staff will maintain supervision of all children by spacing out adults among children and completing frequent name-to-face checks. We will also increase supervision while on field trips. Children will not be attending field trips near large bodies of water.

Children will have opportunities to engage in water play. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the community water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to buckets or containers. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervise all children by sight, sound and touch in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

Indoor and outdoor spaces will be zoned by teaching staff with special attention given to areas where injury could occur. All staff members are trained in EC-PBIS practices which includes active supervision and zoning. Following these practices ensures all children are supervised at all times.

### General Health, Safety and Supervision Guidelines

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions.
- Under the supervision of the preschool teachers, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.
- All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid and CPR training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children.
- The Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table is posted and followed in each classroom.
- Use of personal cell phones is permitted while students are in session.

### Missing Child

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Teachers and staff use their knowledge of each child's development and provide necessary supervision. Teachers use preventative strategies such as, when transitioning throughout the day, teachers and staff do frequent child check ins (ex. transitioning from the classroom to the playground) and maintaining the required ratio to support the classroom.

If a student is missing in the facility, all staff will be notified that the building is on a "hold" and to close their classroom doors, take face-to-name attendance and identity if any extra students are in their classroom. The program administrator and other lead team members will search all non-instructional areas until the student has been found.

Before attending field trips, staff takes measures to ensure all children remain with the group. This may be through physical items such as matching t-shirts, name tags, etc. Staff also takes time to talk with age appropriate students about what to do if they were to be separated from the group. (Identify a safe person - a person with a badge, working the concession stand, etc., let them know you have been separated from your group and tell them your teacher's name, and stay with the adult until you are reunited with the group.)

Our program will use the following written guidelines in the event of a missing child;

- Notify the administrator, parent/guardian, local authorities and DHS child abuse hotline, including location of where the child was last seen.
- The teacher will complete the incident report with local authorities and follow their guidance for next steps.

## Strangulation Prevention

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Classroom, playground and other common areas are monitored by our safety walkthroughs which are implemented throughout the year. A component of the walkthrough focuses on noticing any cords or materials that may pose a strangulation risk for our children. Any items that pose this risk are removed immediately.

For classrooms with children under three years of age, staff will closely monitor the use of scarves, ties, necklaces, dramatic play items with handles or straps will be removed or shortened and any other item that can encircle a child's neck. If pacifiers are needed, they will not be attached to a ribbon or string. In the case that a child is wearing a shirt with a neck string, the parent will be asked to remove the strings.

Our programs utilize cordless window coverings and breakaway lanyards.

## Playground Equipment Stability and Fall Surfacing & Inspection

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Playground structures and materials that require assembly and are used by children meet age level regulations and were installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. Fall surfaces will maintain required depth and be checked frequently. Upon hire, staff are trained on looking for hazards or potential risks on the playground. Staff safety checks will look for the following hazards:

- Missing or broken parts/equipment
- Protrusion of nuts and bolts
- Rust and chipping or peeling paint
- Sharp edges, splinters and rough surfaces
- Stability of handholds
- Visible cracks

- Stability of non-anchored large play equipment
- Wear and deterioration
- Safety hazards such as broken bottles or toys, discarded cigarettes, stinging insects nests, and packed surfacing under frequently used equipment like swings and slides.
- Fall surfacing is at the required depth of 4 inches in all use zones.

Program administrator ensures all staff are trained on playground safety through safe schools district training and will follow a reporting system to notify the building administrator and maintenance department should they observe any hazards. In addition to daily safety checks, the preschool lead team completes a formal safety walkthrough three times per year and submits a written report to the building administrator. Staff will use the *Caring for Our Children*, Appendix Z for guidance and checks on fall surfacing depth will take place monthly.

The program will ensure fall surfacing depths meet the National Health and Safety Performance Standards as listed below.

Inches	of (Loose-Fill Material)	Protects to Fall Height (feet)	Buildings Main Surface
6*	Shredded/Recycled Rubber	10	ELC, College View, Bloomer, Carter Lake, Longfellow, Roosevelt
9	Sand	4	
9	Pea Gravel	5	College View
9	Wood Mulch (non-CCA)	7	
9	Wood Chips	10	Edison, Franklin, Hoover, Lewis & Clark, Rue
*Shredded/recycled rubber loose-fill surfacing does not compress in the same manner as other loose-fill materials. However, care should be taken to maintain a constant depth as displacement may still occur.			

## Bullying and Harassment Prevention

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Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2022)

Harassment prohibited by the District includes, but is not limited to, discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status.

Bullying and harassment are not tolerated in Council Bluffs schools. All acts of bullying or harassment should be reported to a classroom teacher. Specific written complaints may also be made to a building principal. If the building principal is the object of the complaint, the Chief of Student & Family Services should be contacted at 712-328-6423. A written response will be provided to all persons filing a written complaint.

Teachers who are notified of a bullying situation will consult with their building administrator immediately for next steps to follow. The building administrator will follow the District Bullying Investigation Protocol.

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures which may include suspension or expulsion. If, after an investigation, a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures which may include termination.

## Weapons

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Knives, weapons, dangerous items or look-alikes are not permitted at school. If weapons or dangerous items are found in the possession of students, items shall be reported to law enforcement officials and the student will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion (School Board Policy 502.3). Students are also forbidden to have lighters or matches.

## Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting

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All licensed school employees, certified teacher assistants and holders of a coaching authorization are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse. As mandatory reporters these staff members are required to report any suspected cases of child abuse to the Pottawattamie County Department of Human Services office or through the Iowa Child and Adult Abuse Hotline pursuant to Iowa Code law.

## Tobacco and Nicotine Free Environment

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All Council Bluffs schools are a tobacco-free/nicotine-free environment. The Board of Directors recognizes its responsibility to provide a healthy, safe and productive environment in which to work and learn. In meeting this responsibility, the Board directs that a tobacco-free environment be established and maintained.

At all times tobacco, nicotine, electronic cigarettes, and vaping are prohibited inside of the program, on the grounds, including vehicles while on the premises. Staff members are prohibited from wearing clothing that smells of smoke when working and smoking in district vehicles is prohibited. Only district vehicles are allowed to transport children.

## Emergency Procedures

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Emergency procedure plans are available upon request from the school office. Emergency procedures are also posted in each classroom.

## Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children

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For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your child has any of the following symptoms during the night, he or she will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- fever greater than 100 degrees F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eyes with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge
- cold sores or lesions

The school's established policy for an ill child's return:

- Fever free for 24 hours

- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Cold sores or lesions shows signs of healing (scabbed over)
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Note: Additional policies related to COVID-19 and related symptoms can be found in the school district's Return to Operations Manual.

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably: if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day, parents, legal guardians, or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest under the supervision of someone familiar with the child until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then, until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

In the case of a medical or dental emergency or more critical accident, the child will receive basic emergency care according to the abilities of the staff. An attempt will be made to notify the parents/guardians immediately.

In the event that the parents/guardian cannot be reached the emergency contact will be notified and the child's personal physician or dentist will be notified and his/her instructions will be followed. If the physician is not available, 911 will be called and the child will be taken by ambulance to a local hospital should this be necessary. The parents/ guardian will be responsible for all payments of medical fees for the care of their child. School district staff cannot transport children to the hospital, only ambulance service can. If a child were to be transported, a staff member with whom the child is comfortable would accompany him/her if parents aren't available.

## Reporting Communicable Diseases

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Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

## Medication Policies and Procedures

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*Policy:* The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication at school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

*Procedure:* The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name; the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage

supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

## Cleaning and Sanitation

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The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately with detergent and water.

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using the district-approved disinfectant. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.

Surfaces that may come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of a material that can be sanitized, or they will not be used.

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves for minimizing contact of body fluids, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, procedures for reducing the spread of infectious diseases, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table as prescribed by our state requirements. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table. All non-porous surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized. Rugs and carpeting will be cleaned by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam-cleaning. Staff will dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie that is then placed in a closed container.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure to the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Non-toxic substances will be used whenever possible. Staff are trained yearly prior to the start of the school year.

## Universal Precautions & Handwashing Procedures

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All staff members complete the Universal Precautions training annually. To view the district policy and procedures for maintaining universal precautions, please view code: 408.1 on the district website.

### Hand Washing

Proper hand washing is crucial to preventing the spread of infection. Textured jewelry on the hands or wrists should be removed prior to washing and kept off until completion of the procedure and the hands are rewashed. Use of running water, lathering with soap and using friction to clean all hand surfaces is key. Rinse well with running water and dry hands with paper towels.

- Hands should be washed before physical contact with individuals and after contact is completed.
- Hands should be washed after contact with any used equipment.
- If hands (or other skin) come into contact with blood or body fluids, hands should be washed immediately before touching anything else.
- Hands should be washed whether gloves are worn or not and, if gloves are worn, after the gloves are removed.

### Barriers

Barriers anticipated to be used at school include disposable gloves, absorbent materials and resuscitation devices. Their use is intended to reduce the risk of contact with blood and body fluids as well as to control the spread of infectious agents from individual to individual. Gloves should be worn when in contact with blood, other possible infectious materials or other bodily fluids and waste. Gloves should be removed without touching the outside and disposed of after each use.

### Disposal of Waste

Blood, OPIM, OBFW, used gloves, barriers and absorbent materials should be placed in a plastic bag and disposed of in the usual procedure. When the blood or OPIM is liquid, semi-liquid or caked dried blood, it is not absorbed in materials, and is capable of releasing the substance if compressed, special disposal as regulated waste is required. A band-aid, towel, sanitary napkin or other absorbed waste that does not have the potential of releasing the waste if compressed would not be considered regulated waste. It is anticipated schools would only have regulated waste in the case of a severe incident. Needles, syringes and other sharp disposable objects should be placed in special puncture-proof containers and disposed of as regulated waste. Bodily wastes such as urine, vomitus or feces should be disposed of in the sanitary sewer system.

### Clean up

Spills of blood and OPIM should be cleaned up immediately. The employee should:

- Wear gloves.
- Clean up the spill with paper towels or other absorbent material.
- Use a solution of one part household bleach to one hundred parts of water (1:100) or other EPA-approved disinfectant and use it to wash the area well.
- Dispose of gloves, soiled towels and other waste in a plastic bag.
- Clean and disinfect reusable supplies and equipment.

### Exposure

An exposure to blood or OPIM through contact with broken skin, mucous membrane or by needle or sharp stick requires immediate washing, reporting and follow-up.

- Always wash the exposed area immediately with soap and water.
- If a mucous membrane splash (eye or mouth) or exposure of broken skin occurs, irrigate or wash the area thoroughly.
- If a cut or needle stick injury occurs, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water. The exposure should be reported immediately, the parent/guardian is notified, and the person exposed contacts a physician for further health care.

### Routine Hand Washing Procedures

Frequent hand washing is key to preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children where hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day;

- after diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- after handling body fluids (e.g. blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
- before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, and before and after handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g. meat, eggs, poultry);
- after playing in water that is shared by two or more people;
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

Adults also wash their hands:

- before and after feeding a child;
- before and after administering medication;
- after assisting a child with toileting;
- after handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include

- using liquid soap and running water;
- rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g. by using a paper towel to turn off water).

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for handwashing in any situation listed above.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff does not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material.

In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff cleans and sanitizes the sinks before using them to prepare food.

## Oral Health

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Documentation of an Oral health exam is kept in the child's file located in the nurse's office.

Oral health specialists visit yearly and perform oral screening (with parental permission), oral health education and information for families related to resources for dental health. Dental forms are also part of the registration process encouraging families to visit the dentist yearly and collect information documenting each child's dentist. Any family in need of dental services can find resources here -

<https://www.familyia.org/services/dental-healthi-smile-program/>.

Children aged 6 months and up begin engaging in oral health educational activities. In our programs, at least once daily, where children receive two or more meals, teaching staff provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum cleaning to remove food and plaque. Toothbrushes will be rinsed thoroughly after each use and air dried in individual, labeled containers. Toothbrushes will be replaced every four months or as needed.

The district will promote oral health processes by using sippy cups or bottles only during meal times, promoting healthy foods through the National School Lunch Program and implementing oral health educational activities for all children including the importance of teeth brushing.

In case of a dental emergency/injury, the child will be taken to the nurses office and the parent will be notified by the school's health associate or nurse immediately.

## Child Guidance and Discipline

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, and planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules and involve children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use positive guidance strategies that are consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking. If more action is needed, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Staff will encourage family communication and cooperation in helping a child learn positive behavior expectations.

The discipline and positive behavior guidance policy is reviewed with staff annually. Staff engage in professional development monthly around behavioral strategies to meet the needs of children.

Information regarding positive guidance strategies will be shared with families through newsletters, notes home, and on classroom social media sites. Staff will be provided training on positive behavior guidance (EC-PBIS) at the time of hire, practices are reviewed every 4 to 6 weeks to support individual student needs, and the implementation cycle is used to target any areas of need in the building.

The program does not use any form of physical or corporal punishment.

In order to communicate all behavior policies, parents can access this handbook at any time on the school district website - [www.ch-schools.org](http://www.ch-schools.org).

## Challenging Behavior

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Our teaching staff are highly trained using Pyramid Model practices and to be responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors.
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials and engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills using Early Childhood Pyramid Model Practices. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

In the case of unsafe behavior, parents will be contacted by the end of the school day to review the behavior and discuss a plan for support.

## Biting

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We understand that biting is behavior that is exhibited during certain stages of development. It is important to look out for the safety of all children enrolled in our programs. If a child bites another child, the children will be separated and the child who was bit will be evaluated by our health associate. The area will be washed with soap and water. If the bite broke the skin, the child who did the bite will be examined for bodily fluid exposure. Both parents will be contacted and notified of the incident and an incident report will be completed. In the case of bodily fluid exposure, both children may be referred to a doctor for further testing.

## Permissible Methods of Discipline

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For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

## Prohibited Practices

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The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

- harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children, threats or derogatory remarks.
- physical punishment: including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
- any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
- withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

## Suspension and Expulsion

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We understand that our children are still learning how to self-regulate and build their social emotional skills. We want children to work through problems with teaching staff therefore the use of suspension or expulsion is kept to a minimum and only used in situations when a child may be a harm to themselves or others.

All behavioral needs will be shared with the family. A review of behavior incidents and parent reports will be discussed in the instance that a support plan is needed for a child. When behavior is interfering with learning, a team of individuals consisting of the parents, teacher, program coach and administrator will meet to discuss the child's needs and develop a plan for support. The team and developed plan will follow the district MTSS process. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance. This team engages in problem identification, plans interventions, provides support, and makes outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The AEA and CCR&R team is available and functional for all children and teachers in the building.

- A request made to Green Hills Area Education Agency for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing can be made.

In this process, if a team agrees the student requires a shortened day or change in classroom, a transition plan will be developed by the school team with families and followed.

## Program Information

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### Water Play

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Children will have opportunities to engage in water play. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the community water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to buckets or containers. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

### Food and Nutrition

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Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

- A snack and/or meal (breakfast, lunch) is available daily.
- Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines.
- We serve a wide variety of nutritional snacks and encourage children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.
- Meals and snacks are at regularly scheduled times.
- Clean, sanitary drinking water (city water source) is available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates.
- Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach.
- Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.
- All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

- The school district will not withhold or threaten to withhold food or beverages as a form of discipline.

*Staff take steps to ensure the safety of food brought from home:*

- they work with families to ensure that foods brought from home meet the food requirements of USDA's CACFP guidelines;
- staff make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served;
- food is provided to supplement food brought from home, if necessary to meet USDA's CACFP guidelines;
- food that comes from home for sharing among the children are either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.
- food that comes from home is labeled with the child's name and date.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and the specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than three years, these include hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Menus may be found on the district website, displayed on the family board and/or printed by the teacher upon request.

## Rest Time & Safe Sleep

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Rest is as important to growth, development, and health as nutrition and physical activity. Getting enough rest is essential to many bodily functions, such as growth, healing and healthy immune system function. Rest is crucial to brain function as well, affecting alertness, learning ability, memory, mood and behavior.

A quiet rest time for children during the day has proven to actually increase their ability to go to sleep at bedtime.

Because of this, a quiet and restful time for children is important to the full day programs. This does not mean children have to sleep. Rest time is a time for children to quiet their busy minds and bodies. Children will have soft mats and blankets. Staff

will turn down the lights, play soft music, and rub backs to assist children with this calming period. If after 10-15 minutes of this quiet time a child is not yet asleep, they will be allowed to have books or other quiet activities.

### Safe Sleep Guidance for Infants

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers follow the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and to prevent accidental sleep related infant deaths. SIDS is the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation. SUID includes all unexpected deaths; those from known and unknown causes. An example of SUID is infant suffocation during sleep.

We keep sanitary and safe cribs by changing crib bedding weekly (and as needed), cribs are labeled with the child's name and their ability.

CBCSD Early Learning Center will use the following to help keep your baby safe during sleep:

- Infants under 12 months of age will always be placed flat on their backs for routine sleep - naps and nighttime.
- Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib with no bed-sharing. Siblings, including twins and triplets, will be placed in separate cribs.
- Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a tight fitted sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements CFR 1219 for full-size cribs and CFR 1220 for non-full size cribs.
- Infants will NOT sleep on couches, adult beds, recliners or other soft surfaces. No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, boppy pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins or loose bedding will be in the sleep environment including nothing draped over or attached to the crib.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe and their use may increase the risk of suffocation.
- The use of home monitors or commercial devices marketed to reduce the risk of SIDS/SUID will not be used and are not recommended by the AAP.
- To avoid overheating, the temperature of the room where infants sleep will be monitored and kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Infants will be monitored for overheating. Signs of overheating include sweating or feeling warm to the touch.
- Swaddling is not allowed in our center.
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep with parent permission. Nothing should be attached to the pacifier including a string, cord, or stuffed toy. Pacifiers may not be attached to the infant's clothing.
- Staff will remove hazards the child may be wearing (i.e. bibs, hoodies, etc.)
- If the infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crib (i.e.: bouncy chair, car seat, swing, highchair, or when being held) the infant will be immediately moved to a crib and placed flat on their back.

- Our child care program is smoke free and smoking/vaping is not allowed in Iowa child care businesses.
- Sleeping infants will be actively observed by sight and sound through use of adult zoning in the classroom. All children will remain in sight of the classroom staff, at all times.
- When infants are able to roll back and forth from front to back, the infant will be placed on their back for sleep and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position.
- Staff will immediately move a sleeping infant that arrives at the program asleep or falls asleep outside of the sleep environment.
- Several times a day, awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" to assist in the development of strong back and neck muscles and to prevent the development of flat areas on the back of the head.
- Keep all manufacturer instructions and owner's manuals for infant sleep environments in the Nurse's office.
- Infants cannot sleep in any other position without a completed waiver from a primary care physician (must be on letterhead with a date, signature and expiration date). Sleeping requirements will be posted on each individual infant crib to ensure all staff know the individual sleeping positions.

All policies and procedures are shared with families and staff at the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment and can be found online at [cb-schools.org](http://cb-schools.org).

## Outdoor Play & Learning

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We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. We use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the wind chill factor or heat index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside, it is important to dress him according to the weather. When it is cold outside he needs a warm coat, snow pants, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with your child's name). If the ground is wet/snowy, they also need boots. If garments are not labeled before coming to school, they will be labeled by the staff. For the warmer days, dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days, dressing your child in layers is a practical idea. It is expected that all children will go outside unless there is a doctor's note indicating the reason why the child cannot go outside.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another

protection from the sun. Sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied to your child's exposed skin (only with your written parental permission to do so). We will also use an insect repellent containing DEET (only with your written permission) no more than once a day to protect your child from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

**FOOTWEAR:** For your child's safety, we do not allow flip flops. Children are more likely to slip outside while running or climbing or while riding the tricycles when wearing flip flops. To best experience the great outdoors in a safe manner, we recommend that children wear tennis shoes. Thank you in advance for supporting this request.

## Field Trips

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Field trips allow children to explore the world around them. When funds are available, field trips may be taken during the year. In order for children to attend, parents are required to sign permission slips. A general permission slip is needed for short walks in the neighborhood.

A specific parent permission slip must be signed before any field trip requiring transportation. Permission slips must be returned to the teacher before the trip or the child will not be allowed to accompany the class on the field trip.

If a child is unable to attend a field trip, an alternate plan will be developed. This may include the child attending an alternate classroom for the duration of the field trip.

At times, parents may be asked to help chaperone on field trips. The Council Bluffs Community School District requires that any person chaperoning field trips or volunteering in the school must pass the District's background check. Forms for background checks are available in each school office.

An increased adult-student ratio will be implemented on field trips to ensure child supervision.

Emergency telephone numbers for each child will be taken by staff when transporting children to and from school and on field trips and non-center-sponsored activities away from the premises.

## Transportation

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In most cases, parents must provide transportation. Special circumstances may be arranged for preschool students based on an individual basis. For field trips when transportation is needed, it will be provided by the District contracted carrier.

In the event of an emergency or evacuation, the staff will follow the emergency evacuation plan and contact families.

## Technology

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When appropriately used and with set limitations that are both age and developmentally appropriate, screen time and digital media can be great learning tools. In our programs, children may have access to digital media to support learning. Children may have access to Chromebooks with various learning programs that they may engage with during free play time but will not exceed 20 minutes. Students also have opportunities to engage with interactive screens to enhance learning during large group instruction.

All content used in our classrooms is controlled and approved by our district technology department.

Technology will be used to communicate with families through approved social media platforms and parent communication apps. Information on various modes of communication will be shared prior to the start of the school year.

Children who attend Council Bluffs Community Schools will have access to a Chromebook for at home use and will be able to use any approved applications and programs on the home screen.

## Toileting

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Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. It is important for families and staff to work together in order for the child to gain success. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in our state and national standards.
  - Staff members in charge of food preparation do not change diapers until their food prep duties are completed for the day.
  - Staff use only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use (the health provider documents the medical reason);
  - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit.
  - Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.

- Staff include toilet learning into their daily routine, including before recess and after students wake from rest time.
- Staff change children’s diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility. This diaper changing area is separated by a partial wall or is at least 3 feet from other areas that children use and is used exclusively for one designated group or classroom of children.
- At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- In the changing area, staff post and follow changing procedures. These procedures are used to evaluate teaching staff who change diapers.
- Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.

## Classroom Animals and Pets in Preschool

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If you, as a parent or legal guardian, want to bring your family pet to share with your child’s classroom, you are welcome. The preschool teacher must ensure that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal must appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teacher would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and handwashing during and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella. The classroom teacher is responsible for checking that requirements have been met.

## Birthdays

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Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. The teacher will provide families a list of foods meeting the USDA’s Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school.

## Other Information

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Our early childhood programs provide ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you not bring toys from home. If your child brings an “attachment” item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can’t guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. Families will be asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child’s name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

## Family Communication and Guidance

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Parent involvement is so important in the lives of young children, we encourage you to:

- Support your child’s daily transition to school by sharing information about your child’s interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child’s needs.
- Attend family meetings.
- Return all forms, questionnaires, etc. promptly.
- Attend Parent/Teacher conferences when requested.
- Check your child’s backpack each day.
- Participate in field trip activities.
- Share some of your talents in your child’s class through activities such as reading or storytelling, cooking, art, preparing visuals, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
- Share your family’s cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
- Read all the material sent home with your child.
- Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, running errands, photography, setting up before the event, or cleaning up afterwards.
- Filling out Volunteer paperwork, including a background check, is mandatory if you want to be part of children’s activities.

The teachers will keep you informed of classroom activities. Please make sure that you check your child's backpack every day for notes and communication.

## Parental Access

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Council Bluffs Early Childhood programs maintain an open door policy for families. You are welcome to visit the classroom at any time. We ask that you consider your child's temperament and stage of development before visiting him/her. Sometimes children may struggle to separate from a parent and interrupt child learning.

Parents are also encouraged to collaborate with their child's teacher, as necessary. These meetings can take place before or after student hours. Should a meeting need to occur during child care hours, scheduling a week in advance is necessary for appropriate arrangements to be made for classroom coverage.

Note: If a court order is in place, staff are legally obligated to follow the order.

## Home Visits

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Home visits are completed prior to your child beginning in our program and are a required component. This is an opportunity for the teachers to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. It also allows your child to become familiar and comfortable with his/her teachers and have any questions you may have answered. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teachers, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. Parents are encouraged to share their child's strengths and interests, so that teachers can incorporate these into the classroom. Staff will want to know each family's wishes, goals, concerns, and questions at any time.

## Conferences

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Conferences are held for all children. Conferences are face-to-face two times a year and a written report at the end of the year. Families may request the third report be a face-to-face conference. This is an opportunity for parents to ask about their children's progress as well as share information about their children that may be helpful to the staff. At conferences, teachers will share progress from our district checklists and the GOLD assessment report cards.

Teachers will share ongoing information about your child's development at least once monthly. In addition, you are encouraged to share observations regarding your child's development with staff. Staff have forms to assist you with this and will make them

available to you 3 times per year at minimum, but daily informal conversations with staff are important as well.

## Transitions

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Home-school connections are crucial to the transition between classrooms, kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures and program options. In addition, Kindergarten Round-Up is held annually in the spring. Preschool staff and families attend this event to support children as they prepare to transition to Kindergarten.

## How To Help Your Child at Home

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Create a consistent and pleasant bedtime ritual. Your teacher will have ideas to help you with this. Preschool age children need 10-12 hours of sleep each night.

Have a schedule for getting ready for school that gives your child plenty of time for a good breakfast, bathing, toileting, and dressing in clean clothes.

Develop these habits of cleanliness for your child:

- Take a bath and wear clean clothes every day.
- Take proper care of toilet needs.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after toileting.
- Brush teeth after eating.

Help your child learn to dress himself or herself. It is helpful to plan and lay out clothes the night before, as well as preparing your child's backpack and lunch the night before.

Pull your child close to you and enjoy reading at least 1 book at night to him/her. The closeness will help them feel secure, and hearing language in a book creates an interest in learning to read.

Have a conversation with your child about school. Some questions that will foster conversation are:

- What was your favorite thing that happened at school today?
- What did you work with at centers?
- Who is someone you talked to/played with today?
- What made you smile today?

# Early Childhood Curriculum

Learning is a continuous process involving the whole child cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially. In developmentally appropriate practice, children construct their own knowledge. Teachers utilize children's experiences, interests, and needs to plan future learning. All children's attempts at learning are accepted, while at the same time guiding children to the next level of understanding.

In a developmentally appropriate classroom, children are given many opportunities to make choices that support and encourage risk-taking as they acquire new learning. Children learn through play. Long blocks of time are provided for uninterrupted exploration of materials and activities that actively engage children. A developmentally appropriate classroom contains a balance of quiet and active times, and individual, small, and large group activities. Children are encouraged to socialize and solve problems independently and with others. This is accomplished by engaging children in cooperative classroom projects and providing many activities that actively involve children in their own learning.

Positive interactions between children and adults are essential to facilitate learning. Student learning and self-esteem are enhanced when an adequate adult-to-child ratio is met. Open-ended activities and materials are utilized to accommodate children at all levels of development and guide learning to broaden each child's knowledge base. By providing a combination of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities, children develop a sense of ownership and community within their classrooms. The acceptance and welcoming of diversity are important as well as respecting and valuing the home life and cultural backgrounds of children.

Parent involvement and input are invaluable. Families are partners with the school in educating children. Informing and involving families helps create a positive, welcoming environment that extends learning beyond the walls of the classroom.

A critical component of developmentally appropriate practice is a classroom environment designed to support children's learning styles, interests, and developmental needs. The daily schedule is planned to include language-rich experiences, technology, and multi-sensory exploration of the environment for children to construct knowledge. Children work independently and together to gain new information. The environment and furnishings are appropriate to the size and needs of the children using the space. The atmosphere promotes joy in learning and celebration of accomplishments.

Assessment is ongoing through observations and interactions with children. Observation provides the information teachers need to make decisions about appropriate instruction for children. Instruction includes real-life experiences both within and outside the classroom. The work of all children is recognized and valued.

Children are provided many opportunities to be successful and to feel proud of their accomplishments.

Administrators provide essential support in a developmentally appropriate program. Teachers and administrators have an understanding of child development in order to support the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social needs of children.

Administrators encourage action research in the classroom to support reflective teaching practices.

## Highscope Framework

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HighScope's Early Childhood educational approach is an open framework that organizes the children's and teacher's environment, daily routine, and interactions. The framework gives the teaching team a systematic method for planning, organizing, and carrying out their responsibilities. For the children, the framework provides a consistent and secure daily experience that promises interesting things to do, attention by their teachers to their interests and needs, and a sense of control over themselves and their environment.

The framework is open because the experiences teachers plan for children foster independent thinking, initiative, and creativity. Children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical capacities develop quickly when they can manipulate materials and use their imaginations freely in an environment that promotes investigation, decision-making, cooperation, persistence, and problem-solving. The capacities that children develop in the open framework are broad abilities that children can and do use daily in the classroom as well as at home.

## Inclusive Practices

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The Council Bluffs Early Childhood programs include all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Appropriate modifications are made in order to include children with special needs. The Early Childhood facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom. For students who are exceeding age level expectations, staff will use student data to meet the child's needs and continue growth through enrichment activities.

We recognize that the family is the expert on their child. Because of this, we are dedicated to helping families become advocates for their child by:

- Encouraging families to raise concerns and work collaboratively with the school to find mutually satisfying solutions that staff then incorporate into classroom practice.
- Encouraging and supporting families to make the primary decisions about the services that their children need and encourage families to advocate to obtain needed services.

Staff receive specific training related to students needs through Green Hills AEA, district behavior consultants and other district coaches knowledgeable in the specific area of need.

The program provides families with information about programs and services from other organizations, such as Green Hills AEA, DHS, Child Care Resource and Referral, and medical professionals, etc.

Children in our program may have an IEP, IFSP, Health care plan, etc. These important documents will be kept in the student's cumulative file, located in the school office and are only available to staff who have a direct connection with the child.

## Early Childhood Benchmarks

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### Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

- Healthy and Safe Living: Children understand healthy and safe living practices.
- Large Motor Development: Children develop large motor skills.
- Small Motor Development: Children develop small motor skills.

### Approaches to Learning

- Curiosity and Initiative: Children express curiosity, interest, and initiative in exploring the environment, engaging in experiences, and learning new skills.
- Engagement and Persistence: Children purposefully choose and persist in experiences and play.
- Reasoning and Problem Solving: Children demonstrate strategies for reasoning and problem solving.
- Play and Senses: Children engage in play to learn.

### Social and Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation: Children show increasing ability to regulate their behavior and express their emotions in appropriate ways.
- Relationships with Adults: Children relate positively with significant adults.
- Relationships with Children: Children respond to and initiate appropriate interactions with other children, and form positive peer relationships.

### Communication, Language, and Literacy

- Language Understanding and Use: Children understand and use communication and language for a variety of purposes.
- Early Literacy: Children engage in early reading experiences.
- Early Writing: Children engage in early writing experiences.

## Mathematics and Science

- Comparison and Number: Children understand counting, ways of representing numbers, and relationships between quantities and numerals.
- Patterns: Children understand patterns.
- Shapes and Spatial Reasoning: Children understand shapes and spatial relationships.
- Scientific Reasoning: Children observe, describe, and predict the world around them.
- Scientific Investigations and Problem Solving: Children plan and carry out investigations to answer questions and test solutions to problems.
- Measurement: Children understand comparisons and measurement.

## Creative Arts

- Art: Children participate in a variety of art and sensory-related experiences.
- Music, Rhythm, and Movement: Children participate in a variety of music and movement experiences.
- Dramatic Play: Children engage in dramatic play experiences.

## Social Studies

- Awareness of Family and Community: Children demonstrate an increasing awareness of belonging to a family and community.
- Awareness of Culture: Children demonstrate an increasing awareness of culture and diversity.
- Awareness of the Relationship between People and the Environment in which They Live: Children demonstrate an increasing awareness of the environment in which they live, especially how people (including themselves) relate to that environment.
- Awareness of Past: Children demonstrate an increasing awareness of past events and how those events relate to one's self, family, and community.

## Developmental Assessment & Monitoring Tools

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Specific assessment plans are available upon request from the child's teacher.

Guiding principles: It is the school district's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. Therefore, when assessing children, we ensure that the assessment conditions are individual, with familiar materials, within the early childhood classroom in authentic situations. When screening children for appropriate placement, parents will always be included, and every effort will be made to make the child comfortable.

The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and

development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child’s file, and stored in a secure area.

All assessment tools are used with children 6 weeks to 5 years of age.

Assessment	Purpose	Procedures	Uses	Parent Involvement
GOLD	Developmental formative assessment	Daily and Ongoing  Anecdotal notes Observations Family Input  Finalized and reported 3x per year.	Identifies children’s interests, strengths, and needs to plan individualized instruction. Describes developmental progress. Communication with families.	Parents are asked for input on student progress both formally and informally (questionnaire, home visits, conferences).  Information shared at conferences and reporting periods.
ASQ-3	Developmental screening tool	Completed by the teacher in collaboration with parents at the initial screening.(before placement in the program or within 60 days of placement)  Repeated annually and Re-administered, as needed.	Inform additional assessments as needed; describes developmental strengths and areas to work on.	Parent interviews
ASQ - SE	Developmental Screening Tool	Completed by the parent at a screening before placement occurs or within 60 days of placement.  Repeated annually and Re-administered, as needed.	Inform additional assessments as needed; describes developmental strengths and areas to work on	Parent completion

During a home visit at the beginning of the school year, families are asked to contribute information about their child’s development, interests, and needs. We also encourage families to share this information throughout the school year, through other opportunities: Interview forms, parent-teacher conferences, family connection forms, and in-person conversations at arrival and dismissal times.

If, through observation or information on the assessments given, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he

will communicate this to the family during a conference, and share documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance. This team engages in problem identification, plans interventions, provides support, and makes outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The AEA team is available and functional for all children and teachers in the building.
- A request made to Green Hills Area Education Agency or Child Care Resource and Referral for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing can be made.

## Staff Training and Professional Development

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**Early Childhood New Staff Training** - It is important for new staff to understand policies and procedures outlined in the early childhood handbook as well as curriculum and assessment resources. During this training, staff will gain a stronger understanding of the big ideas of early childhood to hit the ground running on day one. Council Bluffs is committed to supporting staff in their continual growth and learning.

Here are 3 specific ways in which we do this:

**Professional development for all staff** - 5-6 times per year staff come together for shared learning on a topic of study. Topics are based on a balance of teacher choice, staff needs, and state/national requirements. Our topic of study each year will be shared with families through parent newsletters, family boards and social media sites.

**Job-Alike study for teachers** - Teachers have a job-alike study at least once a month. During these times of study, we cover a variety of topics and activities for growth and improvement. They include:

- time to bring classroom data to analyze and create goals
- time for lesson plan review and improvement
- time to share new and review existing state and district expectations

**In-Service Training/Training programs/Conference:** At various times throughout the year, Council Bluffs teachers can submit to teach and/or attend workshops specific to their grade level. Teachers are paid an hourly rate to teach and attend. Teachers teaching teachers is a powerful tool and this is how we support it. Teachers can also apply for Teacher Quality money. This money can be used to attend a conference of their choice or it can be used for a group book study.

## Program Assessment

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CBCSD Early Childhood Programs are accredited by Head Start, Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS), of DHS. Administrators, families, staff, and other

routinely participating adults will be involved in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The evaluation process involves gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction.

A report of the evaluation findings is available to families, staff, and appropriate advisory and governance boards. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

We strive to achieve the highest quality of education and care for your child. We are confident that with families and schools working together, your child will have a successful early childhood learning experience!

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All decisions made by the Director or other District Administrators are final. The contents of the handbook are governed by DHS, CBCSD and subject to change at any time.