



# **School District 11 Preschool Program Policies and Procedures**

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**



## **WELCOME TO D11 PRESCHOOL!**

We are excited to have your child in our program, and we look forward to collaborating with your family.

This handbook was designed especially for families of children participating in the District 11 Early Childhood Preschool Program. We ask that you read the information and keep the handbook in a place where you can refer to it throughout the year.

YOUR CHILD WILL ATTEND \_\_\_\_\_  
(school name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(school address)

THE CLASSROOM TELEPHONE NUMBER IS \_\_\_\_\_

PRESCHOOL DAYS \_\_\_\_\_ PRESCHOOL HOURS \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER IS \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER ASSISTANTS ARE \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR SCHOOL'S PRINCIPAL IS \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER IMPORTANT ADULTS ARE \_\_\_\_\_

## **OTHER IMPORTANT NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS**

Early Childhood Office...	719-520-2540
Director of Early Childhood Education (Sarah Carlson) .....	719-520-2538
Child Find Coordinator (Anna Joachim) .....	719-520-2542
Executive Director Special Education (Nancy Maresh-Melo).....	719-520-2153
Early Childhood Community Liaison (Angie Boucher).....	719-520-2543

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## **DISTRICT 11 EARLY CHILDHOOD CORE VALUES**

### **Vision Statement**

As the premier early childhood education provider in the Pikes Peak region, we are elevating each child's unique journey toward a bright and promising future. With a deep commitment to children, our programming prioritizes highly trained staff, small class sizes, low student-teacher ratios, and remains grounded in play and social-emotional competence as the foundations for inspiring life-long learners.

### **Mission Statement**

We provide each student with the highest quality preschool experience by emphasizing whole child learning, prioritizing the foundational skills that are the best predictors of future success, supporting each child as an individual worthy of thriving, and by balancing teacher-directed and child-directed learning through play.

### **Program Commitments:**

1. We value and appreciate each child as a unique person, with individual journeys of growth and development.
2. We foster supportive and trusting relationships with each child, knowing these relationships are critical to enhancing learning and achievement, and to inspiring a lifelong love of learning.
3. We carefully curate ambitious learning experiences that reflect the needs and interests of students, and that honor individual differences and cultural and linguistic diversity among children.
4. We encourage active family involvement by cultivating partnerships of cooperation, open communication, and meaningful collaboration.
5. We center students and families in our decision-making.
6. We value and appreciate each staff member as a unique person with gifts, knowledge and expertise to support the Program.

### **Program Philosophy**

Childhood is a unique and amazing time in the human experience. Rich and nurturing experiences in the first 5 years of life can have a profoundly positive impact on all the years that follow. Progressing through developmental stages is unique to each individual and should be supported by a network of invested adults. Young children learn best when they engage in intrinsically motivated activities, have access to hands-on investigation, are interacting socially, and when they are in a focused and joyful state; this is PLAY. Play is how developing brains become wired for adulthood; it's how children develop language, motor, cognitive, social-emotional, regulation, problem-solving, resilience, and independence skills. The best early childhood education is enthusiastically rooted in playful learning opportunities.

In acknowledgement of the research regarding child and human development, we must carefully attend to both the content of, and the process of, instruction in our early childhood classrooms. To truly prepare young children for kindergarten (and beyond), our instructional emphasis must rest heavily on the skills that promote ongoing access to learning: attentional and self-regulation skills, social interaction and social competence skills, and fostering a pattern of successful learning experiences to set the tone for students as engaged learners. Preschool standards must be taught in ways that prioritize high engagement, foster internal curiosity, and empower students to learn how to learn.

Every child deserves access to enriching experiences in early childhood. The opportunity to participate in high-quality early childhood programming promotes equity, improves trajectories, and can positively shape outcomes well into adulthood. Children can thrive when they have access to secure social connections with adults, environments that foster curiosity and invite exploration, and scaffolding from adults and peers that help them progress in their development. When a community collaborates to nurture a child, the potential is endless.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Colorado [Universal Preschool Program](#) (UPK), is a state-funded program that provides a minimum of ten hours of free preschool for four-year-old children or those who are attending the program 1 year prior to kindergarten. Acceptance in the program is contingent upon available space. Three-year-old children who have a minimum of 1 qualifying factor may qualify for a UPK-funded spot. Special education services, for children who qualify, are provided in the UPK classroom.

- Morning preschool: Tuesday-Friday each week for at least 2.5 hours/day.
- Afternoon preschool: Monday- Friday each week for at least 3 hours/day.
- Full day preschool: Monday-Friday each week for at least 6 hours/day.

More information about Colorado UPK at this link: <https://cdec.colorado.gov/colorado-universal-preschool>

Each class session (morning, afternoon, full day) consists of up to 16 children. D11 staffs each classroom with 3 adults: one licensed teacher and 2 highly qualified paraprofessionals. All classrooms exceed or meet [CDEC Child Care Licensing](#) and [National Association of Young Children's \(NAEYC\)](#) ratios and group sizes (for ages 3-5, ratio of 1 adult per 10 children; group size does not exceed 20 children with 2 adults).

### **PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

Children who have turned 3 or 4 years old by October 1 of the current school year (their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> birthday falls on or before October 1) are eligible for preschool. Students whose third birthday falls between the first day of school and October 1 will wait to start preschool until the day of their third birthday. Children who turn 3 years old after October 1 AND qualify for special education services are also eligible to start with an active IEP on their third birthdays.

Program eligibility for Universal Preschool, as described below, has been determined by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). These guidelines are in place for the current school year and are subject to change based on revised guidance from the forementioned departments.

General education: students are placed through the Universal Preschool portal. <https://upk.colorado.gov>

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Children who are eligible for special education services will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) written for them based on the results of a special education evaluation, either through the Child Find office or in their classroom. IEP services will be determined by the IEP team and a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) will be guaranteed for students in any of the program models offered by District 11 (listed below). Program placement is determined through a combination of the Universal Preschool matching system and the Early Childhood Child Find Office.

Special Education Services are integrated into classroom routines and activities. If you have any concerns or questions about your child's development, talking to your child's teacher is a great first step. You can also contact our Child Find Office at 719-520-2542 to learn more about the evaluation process or to request an informal screening.

The D11 ECE department will also offer **free developmental screening events** throughout the school year. During these screening events, professionals will consider your child's social/emotional, language, cognitive/play, motor, and self development, health status, vision, hearing, and oral health needs. Referrals for additional testing and resources are provided during these screening events. Please see your email regarding dates or call 719-520-2543. Screening events will occur at the D11 Tesla Professional Development Building.

## PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY BY AGE

### *Students in their YEAR BEFORE KINDERGARTEN (commonly referred to as 4-year-olds)*

These children shall have a birthday between October 2, 2020 and October 1, 2021. In alignment with Colorado Universal Preschool, all children in this age group are eligible for 15 hours per week of preschool. In District 11, students in their year before kindergarten are age-eligible for any of the programs below (on a space-available basis); full day programming requires additional eligibility criteria.

- **Part Time (10 Hours per week):** This is a morning preschool session, running 2.5 hours per day Tuesday-Friday.
- **Half Day (15 Hour Per Week):** This is an afternoon preschool session, running at least 3 hours per day Monday- Friday.
- **Full Day\* (30 Hour Per Week):** This is a full day preschool session, running at least 6 hours per day Monday- Friday.

*\*Students must be in their year before kindergarten AND qualify for Full Day. For more information about qualifying factors, please visit <https://cdec.colorado.gov/colorado-universal-preschool/qualifying-factors>.*

### *Students with TWO years before kindergarten (commonly referred to as 3-year-olds)*

These children shall have a birthday between October 2, 2021 and October 1, 2022. In alignment with Colorado Universal Preschool, District 11 children who meet qualifying factors in this age group are eligible for our 10-hour-per-week preschool program (sometimes referred to as “part day” programming). The 10-hour preschool program model is the only option available for 3-year-olds for the 2025-26 school year.

## POTTY TRAINING/DIAPERING, AND TOILETING

Children do not have to be potty trained to attend the district’s preschool programs. Children that are toilet training will be monitored and have access to a bathroom. Every child that attends the program in diapers/pull-ups will be changed every 2 hours and as needed. If your child uses them, please provide diapers/pull-ups and wipes for your child and label them with your child’s full name. When you begin to potty train at home, please notify teachers so they can support your efforts!

## TUITION AND FEES

District 11 preschool is free! There is no tuition or fee requirement for this program.

## PROGRAM TRANSITIONS

We recognize that moving from a familiar setting to a new learning environment is a meaningful milestone in a young child’s life. At D11 Preschool, we view transitions, whether into our program or on to kindergarten, as important opportunities to celebrate each child’s strengths and support their continued growth. Our staff use intentional, family-centered practices to make these transitions smooth and positive. These may include open houses, school events, and personalized meetings where families and current or future educators come together to share insights, build relationships, and plan how best to support your child’s unique needs and successes.

## LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH SUPPORT

The primary language spoken at school is English. If your family’s primary language is not English and you would like to have information translated into your home language, please let your child’s teacher know. We offer translation services so all families can access important information.

## GOING TO PRESCHOOL

### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Children MUST be dropped off and picked up on time. Children cannot be accepted until the classroom doors are opened. If a child is picked up more than 15 minutes late, the police department may be notified if parents or designated pick-up people cannot be reached.

Repeated late pick-ups can result in being disenrolled from the preschool program. Children who are picked up more than 5 minutes late, more than twice in a month, will be required to meet with the program director and/or school principal.

Parents and authorized adults are required by CDEC Child Care Licensing to sign their students in and out on a class roster. The sign-in and sign-out sheet will have the time of arrival and departure and the authorized person's full signature. Children should never be dropped off without being signed in and without an adult present for supervision. Depending on the individual school's procedure, parents are required to escort their child(ren) to the appropriate classroom or leave them with a classroom staff member in the designated area to aid the child's transition. Likewise, children are to be picked up at the preschool's designated location by an authorized person aged 16 or older.

Saying goodbye can be hard for both parent and child. It helps if you establish a routine to do every day before you say goodbye. For example, you could tell your child "OK, it is time for me to go to work/you to go to school now. Let us have a kiss and hug and then you can (what the child is expected to do in the classroom)." Children will often cry during this time, but when you continue to smile and let them know they will be ok and that you will be back, it helps them feel safe. ***Children have a harder time if parents linger, show sad or negative emotions, do not leave after saying goodbye, or stay in response to pleas from the child.*** Give them a hug, kiss, and a wave, and then leave. If your child does not recover quickly, the teacher will call you to check in.

### WHAT TO BRING AND WEAR

Children should be dressed in clothes that can be worn for active and messy play. Children play outdoors every day, weather permitting. Please think about the changing Colorado weather and dress your child to be ready for any changing weather throughout the day. Children's names must be on all outer clothing (mittens, hats, boots, coats). Please include a gallon Ziploc bag, with a change of clothes, in your child's backpack or to be left at school. Closed-toed and properly fitting shoes are the safest option. If you need assistance in ensuring that your child has adequate clothing and shoes for safety, please see the resource section of this handbook.

### ATTENDANCE

Plan to bring your child to school daily. If it is necessary for your child to miss school, please call your child's teacher, whose number you have listed inside the front cover of this handbook. Please limit absences to illness. If your child misses more than 3 days in a calendar month, your child's seat may be filled by another child who can attend on a regular basis. Consideration may be made for extended illnesses; please stay in communication with your child's teacher.

### EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

1. Ensure your child regularly attends preschool.
2. Call the teacher when your child is going to be absent.
3. Read to your preschooler daily, encourage them to be responsible for their behavior, and foster self-help skills.
4. Attend scheduled conferences and/or meetings. Call if there needs to be a change.
5. Review all newsletters, notes, email, and other communications from staff.
6. Visit and/or volunteer in the classroom!
7. Attend "special days" at school to communicate the value of a home-school partnership.



## **PRESCHOOL STUDENT SAFETY**

Teachers will always know where children are. They monitor children's whereabouts throughout the day in the classroom, on the playground, and during any other transitions. At the end of each class session, the teacher checks the sign-in sheets to ensure that all the children have been picked up. The staff will take the sign-in sheet with them in case of drills or emergency as well as their name-to-face daily form.

If a child cannot be located for any amount of time, the staff will work together to locate the child immediately and notify the front office of the school. If the child cannot be located immediately, the parent will be contacted along with applicable district personnel. After the incident it is the teachers' responsibility to immediately self-report the incident to the Child Abuse and Neglect hotline. They will also fill out an incident form for district use and inform parents of the situation.

## **SUNSCREEN APPLICATION**

To protect your child from sunburn and other hazards of sun exposure all year round, we can apply sunscreen to children before outdoor play if it was not applied before school. As a part of the parent agreement provided by your teacher, you will indicate your sunscreen preferences.

## **PARENT/ FAMILY VOLUNTEERS**

In the District 11 preschool program, we encourage parent involvement. Although volunteering is not required, you may find it rewarding to participate in your child's activities. All volunteers must register via the district volunteer process: <https://www.d11.org/Engage/Registration>

## **HOLIDAYS AND NON-STUDENT CONTACT DAYS**

Preschool programming follows the district calendar, which can be found on the district website. [WWW.D11.ORG](http://WWW.D11.ORG)

## **REST TIME FOR FULL DAY PROGRAMS**

It is a requirement of the CDHS Child Care Licensing that all children under 6 years old have a period of rest each day. Children who do not sleep after 30 minutes must be allowed to move to another area and be provided with quiet toys and materials to play with, such as puzzles and books. Children are not forced to sleep and may leave their napping area within 10 minutes of waking. The children rest on cots with soft items sent from home. Soft items will be sent home on the last day of the school week for laundering. Shoes are to be kept on during rest time so that they can evacuate the building in the event of an emergency. Per licensing guidance, we will not prevent children from falling asleep, even when requested by parents.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND MONEY**

Your child may want to bring toys or other items from home to school, we ask that you prevent this from occurring. We cannot be responsible for toys that may get lost or damaged. Additionally, some items brought from home may violate childcare licensing rules by being breakable, brittle, or a choking hazard. Additionally, children may not bring on their person or pack any substance that they put into their mouth or body such as hand cream, lip balm, or makeup. This will be further addressed under Medication. If your child would benefit from a unique item from home, please discuss this idea with your child's teacher.

Money should be given directly to the teaching staff upon arrival if needed.

## **SNACKS /MEALS**

The classroom teacher will explain how this is managed in your school.

For parents bringing food for consumption by the class, the [Colorado Department of Health and Environment](http://Colorado Department of Health and Environment) requires that the food is:

- Prepared from commercial sources (no homemade snacks)
- Prepackaged

- Received sealed at the facility
- No refrigerated dairy products (yogurt, cheese, etc.)
- Shelf stable
- Leftovers will be sent home
- No individual snacks are permitted unless prior arrangements have been made
- Do observe any classroom rules regarding allergies that exist in the classroom

School lunch will be provided in Half-Day (PM) and Full-Day sessions. If you would prefer to send a meal from home, it must meet [USDA guidelines](#). Alternative meals can be arranged based on medical needs but not dietary preferences. If your child has a medically based dietary need, please request the proper form from your child's teacher to be filled out by a doctor.

### **AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP PRESCHOOLERS FROM SCHOOL**

A parent or a legal guardian must complete the Pick-Up Authorization form upon enrollment. Each person permitted to pick up their child from school should be listed with appropriate contact information. Should an emergency arise to prevent a timely pick up, parents or guardians should call the school and give verbal permission of the person who will be picking up their child should they not be listed on the Pick-Up Authorization form. Without expressed written or verbal permission for a non-authorized person to pick up a child, the child will not be released in their care.

- Written permission from the parent is required when a child leaves the school with anyone not listed as authorized to pick up the child. The minimum age required for pick-up is 16.
- Teachers or designated staff will verify an unfamiliar person picking up a child by appropriate Identification (i.e., driver's license, other photo ID, or other form of Identification).
- Teachers or other designated staff may verify someone's identity by calling the parent or may ask parent to email the change in authorization.
- A copy of any court documents that affect or describe existing parental rights (i.e., court custody order) must be kept on file at the school. If any changes occur regarding custody, the family or guardian must inform the teacher and administration.
- Each legal guardian can create their own list of authorized pick-up adults, and teachers are required allow those authorized to drop off and pick up. Conflicts between guardians regarding pickup/drop off must be resolved privately and then parties should inform the school staff of their decision. School personnel will not participate in decision-making conflicts between parents.
  - ❖ Please note: If a legal parent can prove that they are the biological parent and no custody and/or restraining orders have been provided to the school, this parent can legally pick the child up.
- A registered sex offender who is a parent and/or relative of a child enrolled is required to notify the school's administration. The school administration will confirm with the probationary officer or other official to determine authorization on premises.
- Releasing child to authorized adult under the influence of drugs or alcohol: Legally, a teacher or designated staff member cannot restrict a parent from taking their child from the center. However, staff *may report* the incident if of grave concern to the police or social services. If the authorized adult is driving, they *must report* the incident to the police or social services by law. *12 CCR 2509-8; 7.701.53(b)*
- If an authorized adult is picking up a child, other than their own parent/guardian, who appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, the staff has the right to notify the parents of their concerns before releasing the child to the adult. The police may be called.

- When a child is left 15 minutes past the end of the preschool session, the staff will attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other persons designated on the authorized Emergency Contact Form. If the response is inadequate, the police department or social services may be notified.
- All critical incidents must be reported to CDEC Child Care Licensing within 24 hours.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM PRESCHOOL**

Preschool staff should be informed immediately if a family intends to withdraw their child from the preschool program. Advanced notice is appreciated.

## **WEATHER POLICY/PROCEDURES**

The decision to play outside is based on “Child Care Weather Watch” guidance. Preschool programs play outside every day unless the conditions present a health risk. When inclement weather prevents outdoor activities, an indoor alternative will be provided.

Parents are expected to decide whether to send students to school during inclement weather. If schools are delayed or closed for the day, District 11 will make that decision no later than 5:30 a.m. and notify radio stations, TV stations and post on the D11 website: <https://www.d11.org/administration/schools/weather> . Parents should monitor these media sources on inclement mornings.

- In the event the school starting time is **DELAYED** for safety reasons, A.M. PRESCHOOL WILL **NOT** MEET.
- In the event an **EARLY DISMISSAL** is necessary because a storm develops or the weather changes unexpectedly, P.M. PRESCHOOL WILL **NOT** MEET.

## **CURRICULUM**

District 11 preschool classrooms use evidence-based curriculum to meaningfully promote learning and development in all domains: personal-social skills, decision-making, communication, self-regulation, physical, independence, and academics.

[Opening the World of Learning curriculum \(OWL\)](#) is the District’s comprehensive preschool curriculum that prepares children for kindergarten. The program’s goal is to ensure that teachers help all children achieve standards in language, literacy, math, science, social science, creative arts, motor skills, social skills, and emotional regulation. This research supportive curriculum provides playful, purposeful, and personalized instructional guidance to teachers that supports every child’s learning. OWL works to tap the learning capacities of all children during these critical early years.

As the [science of reading has become the state of Colorado’s literacy focus](#), the OWL curriculum enables teachers to teach all the concepts and skills associated with oral language and literacy using strategies consistent with this current research. It systematically supports knowledge related to phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, and early writing. Supporting language skills throughout the day helps teachers identify and reinforce vocabulary and strengthen conversation skills and content-based knowledge.

Young children learn by doing. They use their bodies to explore and learn about the world in which they live. Play is natural to children and is how they learn. Play also allows children to build appropriate peer interaction skills and learn to make their own choices. Play is important!

Observing play is an essential way teachers learn about children and document strengths, areas of growth, and decide on what children need to learn next. Teachers also can use play to naturally teach or reinforce learning.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

During the school year a preschool class may take up to 2 off-site field trips per year. Parents will transport their preschoolers and accompany them on field trips. If a child arrives while the class is away on a field trip, the front office will be aware of the class's location and can give that information to parents if they desire to join the class. A standard D11 Field Trip Parent Permission Form will be required for every field trip. A child may not go on a field trip without permission signed for each individual trip. Staff-child ratios will be maintained as per CDEC Child Care Licensing of 1 adult per 10 children ages 3-5. Class session hours may vary during these two off-site field trip opportunities.

## **CHILD GUIDANCE AND PROSOCIAL LEARNING**

At D11 Preschool, we nurture children's social and emotional growth using evidence-based practices from the [Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning](#) (CSEFEL). Our goal is to help children build the social skills they need to form friendships, manage emotions, solve problems, and stay ready to learn.

We introduce these skills in simple, age-appropriate ways at the beginning of the school year and continue to reinforce them throughout the year. Children are supported in learning how to express themselves, cooperate with others, and handle challenges with guidance and care from their teachers.

We are committed to creating a respectful, safe, and welcoming environment for all children and families. Each child is a unique individual, and we work to provide the support they need to thrive socially and emotionally. D11 Early Childhood promotes a safe and respectful environment by teaching children problem-solving and regulation skills, fostering positive behavior through praise and encouragement, modeling appropriate behavior, and proactive support strategies. All behavior guidance is implemented with care and compassion. We recognize inappropriate behavior as a form of communication and resulting from lagging skills that must be scaffolded, explicitly taught, and positively reinforced. Consequence-based responses to behavior do not scaffold/teach/reinforce lagging skills and therefore are not recognized as effective or appropriate in our program.

This collaborative approach may involve teachers, families, the school principal, the Director of Early Childhood Education, and other specialists as appropriate. We do **not** suspend or expel preschool students. Our emphasis is always on understanding each child's needs and helping them grow through compassion, consistency, and positive support.

## **ASSESSMENT, PROGRESS, AND PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

All children have Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) that document growth and development using the [Teaching Strategies GOLD](#) (GOLD) Assessment System. GOLD is an authentic, ongoing observational system for assessing preschool children in the context of everyday experiences, which is an effective way to learn what they know and can do. This system is a way to look at a child's performance and progress through the [developmental areas of Social Emotional, Physical, Cognitive, Language, Literacy, and Math](#). To assess students we use notes, photographs, and videos to document learning in the Teaching Strategies GOLD Online Portfolio of Learning assessment system. There will be two conferences about your child's progress: one in the fall and the other in the spring. You can meet informally with your child's teacher to discuss his/her progress at any time that is convenient for you and the teacher.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Twice each year, the teachers will ask parents or guardians to participate in conferences. Conferences ensure meaningful collaboration between each student's family and the teacher in service of each child's development and wellbeing. This is another opportunity for families to stay in contact with their child's teacher, ensure open lines of communication, and discuss their child's development. During the conference, the teacher and parent/guardian will review the results of the latest developmental assessment, discuss the child's developmental successes and challenges, create new goals for the child, and explore effective instructional strategies. During conferences, teachers will seek your input regarding your family's priorities, interests, home routines, and cultural/social practices, and discuss transitions if relevant.

## **PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP**

We believe that a child's learning and development thrives when families and educators work together. As your child's first and most influential teacher, you play a vital role in their early education. Our goal is to build a strong, respectful partnership with you—one that supports your child's growth and lays the foundation for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship.

We encourage open communication and active collaboration between parents and teachers. Together, we can create meaningful experiences and provide resources that help your child achieve important developmental milestones. You are always welcome to participate in classroom events, to observe, or to volunteer. Seeing your child in the classroom setting is one of the best ways to understand and feel confident in the care and education they receive.

You can also support your child's success by ensuring they arrive at school ready to learn and by extending classroom learning at home. Reinforcing classroom activities and reading with your child every day are simple yet powerful ways to support their development. Daily reading, in particular, has been shown to significantly boost long-term educational outcomes.

A strong partnership is built on consistent, respectful communication. We encourage brief daily check-ins at drop-off and pick-up times, and we welcome scheduled conversations for more in-depth discussions. Please don't hesitate to bring questions, suggestions, or concerns to your child's teacher. Be sure to review classroom communications, notices from staff, and your child's work regularly.

Classroom updates, menus, newsletters, and weekly lesson plans are posted in each classroom and on the Parent Resource Bulletin Board. Monthly calendars provide information about upcoming events, holidays, and school closures. Email is also a great way to stay connected with your child's teacher.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING AND FEEDBACK**

We encourage families to reach out with questions, concerns, or suggestions at any time. Open communication helps us create the best possible experience for your child.

If you have a concern about your child or the program, we ask that you first speak directly with your child's teacher. Most questions can be resolved through these important conversations. If you still have questions or concerns after that conversation, please reach out to the school principal or the Director of Early Childhood Education at 719-520-2538.

Addressing concerns early helps us find solutions more effectively. We're here to support you and your child, and we value your partnership in creating a positive preschool experience.

## **FAMILY-PROGRAM COLLABORATION**

The Early Childhood office ensures family input and program guidance in two ways:

1. **Annual Surveys:** families in the preschool program are invited to participate in two annual surveys. A) an annual program survey provided by the D11 Early Childhood Education Department, as well as B) an annual survey provided by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood. These surveys help ensure that the Universal Preschool Program, and District 11 program offerings are meeting the needs and expectations of families.
2. **Preschool Advisory Committee (PAC):** hosted by the D11 Early Childhood Education Department, this committee meets at least four times per year to consider a variety of program goals, initiatives, opportunities for improvement, and strategic decisions. PAC membership includes D11 employees, preschool families, and representatives from a variety of local community organizations.

## **FAMILY RESOURCES**

The Early Childhood office is here to support the whole family in the classroom and at home. We have a wide variety of resources and supports available to you, including information on trauma, health insurance, child development, financial assistance, food and clothing assistance, and much more. Please reach out to our community liaison- Angela (Angie) Boucher- [Angela.Boucher@D11.org](mailto:Angela.Boucher@D11.org) if you have any questions or need any assistance.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Students enrolled in the D11 Preschool Program are not eligible for transportation services, except under the following circumstances:

1. The student has special education transportation to/from their neighborhood school as a related service, documented in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- OR
2. The student is eligible for special education services and preschool placement can only be offered outside of their neighborhood school designation.

*Reference: Board Policy EEAA-R <https://www.d11.org/Page/1787>*

If your child rides the bus, please follow these rules to keep the bus running on schedule. All transportation provided by D11 meets all applicable transportation standards; this includes vehicle safety seating, supervision and emergency procedures on the road.

1. Have your child ready and waiting to be picked up.
2. Please do not let your child bring food, drinks, or gum on the bus.
3. For their safety, children are to remain seated with their seatbelt fastened or in their car seat.
4. When the child is returned home, a designated adult (age 16 or older) must be present at the predetermined drop-off time. If no adult is present, the child will be returned to the Transportation Office (880 Babcock Road). After repeated attempts to reach the parent, the Department of Social Services will be contacted.
5. Please call Transportation (719-520-2940) if your child will not be riding the bus on a scheduled day.
6. If you need to make changes to your child's bus schedule, please let your child's teacher know and they will inform the Transportation office.

## **LICENSING AND REGULATIONS**

Each school's preschool program has a current and valid childcare license to care for and educate children ages 3-5 years as required by the [Colorado Department of Early Childhood Child Care Licensing \(CDEC\)](#). All early childhood programs must be compliant with all rules under 7.701 GENERAL RULES FOR CHILD CARE FACILITIES, 7.702 RULES REGULATING CHILD CARE CENTERS THAT PROVIDE LESS THAN 24-HOUR CARE, and 7.712 RULES REGULATING SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE CENTERS. Additionally, all early childhood programs must be in compliance with the [Colorado Department of Physical Health and Environment Child Care Rules and Regulations](#) (CDPHE).

### **CONFIDENTIAL STUDENT RECORDS**

Records pertaining to children's education programs are considered confidential. The confidential file contains information obtained or used in the process of referral, evaluation and placement of students, as well as all official correspondence with the child's parents, all forms signed by the parents, other agency reports, or other personal or sensitive information. Parents have the right to inspect any records related to their child.

### **STANDARD PRECAUTIONS**

The Preschool staff takes extensive precautions to maintain a healthy environment for the children. All staff are required to present evidence of a recent physical examination prior to hiring. Teachers and staff attend a Universal Precautions Class and practice frequent handwashing and required cleaning of classroom surfaces and bathrooms with sanitizing and disinfectant solutions during the school day.

### **HANDWASHING PROCEDURE**

Handwashing can prevent infection and illness from spreading. All staff are trained to wash their hands and to supervise/assist children in washing their hands numerous times throughout the day. Staff work hard to minimize the occurrence of outside germs coming into the classroom and prevent classroom germs from going home with you and your child. To do that, we require that parents, siblings, and all other visitors wash their hands when coming into the classroom for more than a moment for drop-off or pick-up.

We follow The Children's Hospital and the CDC's procedure for hand washing. For more information see [www.cdc.gov/features/hand\\_washing/](http://www.cdc.gov/features/hand_washing/).

The correct way to wash hands:

1. Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
2. Out of the water, rub hands together to form lather, and scrub all surfaces.
3. Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. The Alphabet Song lasts about that long.
4. Rinse hands well under running water.
5. Dry your hands using a paper towel and use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

### **ACCIDENTS, ILLNESS, AND INJURIES**

When children have accidents, illnesses, or injuries, the teacher assesses the need for medical attention and brings any child who needs further medical attention to the front office unless it is a critical situation. All accidents and injuries are documented and will be reported to the parents on a written form. Teachers maintain an Illness Log, as per the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE). Any accident or injury requiring medical attention from a doctor is to be reported to CDPHE.

All preschool teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid and are qualified to treat children in the case of a minor injury, illness, or accident. In the case of a serious medical emergency, the staff will call 911. The hospital designated by the parent on the Emergency Contact Form is the first choice for a provider, but medical personnel or paramedics make the final decision. Parents are notified immediately, and a school staff member will accompany the child to the hospital. If the parent cannot be reached, people on the emergency contact list will



be called. Please note that parents are required to respond to the school when contacted regarding a child's illness or injury within no more than an hour after contact or after a message was left.

## HEALTH INFORMATION AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Within thirty (30) calendar days after admission, and within thirty (30) calendar days following the expiration date of a previous health statement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each child must submit a statement of the child's current health status or written verification of a scheduled appointment with a health care provider. **The statement of the child's current health status must be signed and dated by a health care provider who has seen the child within the last twelve (12) months**, or within the last six (6) months for children less than two and one-half (2½) years of age. The statement must include when the health care provider requires the next visit. All health statements will be kept at the school. If a child does not have a signed health statement or it is out of date, the school will give the parents "direct personal notification." Parents will then have 14 days to get the physical done or show proof of a scheduled appointment as soon as possible. If a child does not receive the required health statement or parents did not follow up on the plan to get the health statement after receiving the 14-day "direct personal notification," that child will not be allowed to attend the preschool program until the health statement is turned in to the teacher.

Children should have a complete certificate of immunization in their academic file. If a child has an "incomplete" immunization record or needs to update the record, the school will give the parents "direct personal notification." Parents will then have 14 days to get the required shots for their child or to make a plan to accomplish that as soon as possible. If a child does not receive the required shot(s) or parents do not follow up on the plan to get the shot(s) after receiving the 14 day "direct personal notification," that child will not be allowed to attend the preschool program.

Please be aware that there may be some children in preschool who are not immunized for health, personal, or religious reasons. "Colorado law requires all students attending Colorado schools and licensed child cares to be [vaccinated against certain diseases](#) unless they have a **Certificate of Medical or Nonmedical Exemption on file at the school**. You are responsible for filing a Certificate of Exemption with each school or childcare you/your child attends. Learn more about [SB 20-163, School Entry Immunization](#). **Students with an immunization exemption on file may be kept out of a childcare facility or school during a disease outbreak**. The length of time will vary depending on the type of disease and the circumstances of the outbreak. For example, if someone at your child's school becomes sick with measles and your child has not received an MMR vaccine, they may need to stay home from their program for 21 days.

## ILLNESS POLICY

We immediately notify a parent if their child becomes ill. Regular school attendance is important, but a sick child needs to be kept at home to get well. Remember, a child not feeling well is not able to benefit from the experiences gained at preschool.

It is advised that children be kept at home if any of the following symptoms are present:

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| ➤ skin rash or sores    | ➤ chills                                      |
| ➤ stomachache or nausea | ➤ earache                                     |
| ➤ vomiting              | ➤ constant coughing                           |
| ➤ flushed face          | ➤ fever                                       |
| ➤ inflamed eyes         | ➤ taking an antibiotic for less than 24 hours |
| ➤ sore throat           | ➤ heavy nasal discharge                       |
| ➤ diarrhea              |   |

For more detailed information refer to the CDPHE's [How Sick is Too Sick guidance](#) or [¿Qué tan enfermo es demasiado enfermo?](#)

If a child gets sick at school, parents will be called immediately. Please be sure your telephone numbers on file



at the school are kept up to date. A child who is released from school due to fever or vomiting may not return to school the following day, as children must be symptom-free, without medication, for a full 24 hours before returning. Any communicable illness such as hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, giardia, or shigella must be [immediately reported to CDPHE](#). Children who are exposed to communicable illnesses outside the school may be excluded from the preschool program for the period prescribed by the local health department or the child's doctor.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Medication will be only administered as per the District's policy, CDEC Child Care Licensing and CDPHE. Every effort should be made to administer medication outside of school hours. If it is necessary to provide medication at school, arrangements must be made with the preschool teaching staff ahead of time. There is a person in the classroom and the front office delegated to give medication. Any routine medication, prescription or non-prescription (includes lip balm, diaper cream, and hand cream), can be administered only with a current written order by a health care provider with prescriptive authority, and with written parental consent. Home remedies, homeopathic medication, vitamins, and supplements may never be given to children in preschool.

Medications must be kept in their original container with the original label and the child's name. Medications are kept in a locked cabinet and will be administered by a preschool staff member or secretary who has had district and licensing required training. The school accepts no responsibility for reactions when medication is dispensed in accordance with the licensed prescriber's directions.

## **ALLERGIES/HEALTH HISTORY/ HEALTH PLANS**

Notify your child's teacher of any food or other allergies and any health risks (asthma, seizures, etc.). Also let the teacher know of any changes in your child's health related to allergies or health risks. When needed, a Health Care Plan will be developed with the school nurse.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Each building conducts fire, tornado, shelter-in-place, and lockdown drills to ensure that staff and children are familiar with the drill procedures in case of a real emergency. This includes plans for children with disabilities and those with access and functional limitations. All drills are documented and available for review of CDEC Licensing.

## **REUNIFICATION PROCEEDURE AFTER A DISASTER**

Reunification procedures are determined by school building. You may request this information through your child's teacher or the school principal.

## **VISITOR GUIDELINES**

All visitors will need to sign in and out and present a valid identification. If a non-family member wishes to observe the preschool program, we request that any visitors contact the Early Childhood office to arrange a visit. If a child has outside therapies and the therapists want to observe the program, the parent should contact the Early Childhood office to discuss the observation procedure.

## **SCREEN TIME LIMITS**

The CDEC Child Care Rules and Regulations provide the following:

- For children two (2) years of age and older, computer and tablet time must be limited to non-consecutive fifteen (15) minute increments not to exceed thirty (30) minutes per day. *Colo. Code Regs. 7.702.58(B)(4)*
- For children two (2) years of age and older, television, recorded media, computer, tablet, and media device time may only exceed thirty (30) minutes per week for a special occasion. There is no restriction for children using personal adaptive equipment. *Colo. Code Regs. 7.702.58(B)(6)*

District 11 preschool prioritizes hands-on learning and opportunities for social interaction. Therefore, our screen

time expectations are lower than childcare regulations. We allow the following.

- Screen time must be limited to no more than 10 minutes, 2 times per week.
- Use of the smart board must be connected to highly intentional teaching and may not be considered “screen time” in some instances. Examples of intentional teaching would include: activities as a part of teacher-led instruction (such as Mat Man, counting, vocabulary, rhyming, writing, etc.).
- Use of the smart board during center time is not permitted.

## **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

Colorado law requires that teachers and administrators report all cases of suspected child abuse to the county’s Child Protective Services unit immediately. The school staff’s job is only to report, not to investigate. Criminal penalties can and have been applied when school staff do not follow this law by reporting suspected cases of abuse. Likewise, they cannot discuss anything they have reported to anyone other than those doing the investigation by CDOEC Child Care Licensing and the county’s Child Protective Services unit.

Anyone witnessing a child in a life-threatening situation should call 911 immediately. If it is not an emergency, call 1-844-CO-4-Kids or 1-844-264-5437 to report all concerns for a child's safety and well-being. The purpose of the **Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline** is to promote greater safety for Colorado’s children. Everyone in the community plays a role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The hotline is designed to provide one statewide, easy-to-remember phone number for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect 24/7, 365 days a year. All hotline calls will be routed to the county where a child resides. [To learn more about the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline, go to www.colorado.gov/cdhs/cdhs.](http://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/cdhs)

*A witness or someone who has first-hand knowledge of possible abuse must make a complaint. An anonymous complaint can be made only if the complaint is about an unlicensed childcare provider.* All information is kept confidential about parents and children in care. The facility will never know who made the complaint.

## **CHILD CARE COMPLAINT POLICY**

The [Colorado Department of Early Childhood Child Care Licensing and Administration](http://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/cdhs) requires D11 preschool sites be licensed by the department. To file a complaint concerning suspected licensing violations, use the information below:

Call 303-866-5958 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. If calling outside of business hours, you may leave a message. Provide your name, telephone number and mailing address. This information is required for the following reasons:

- To call you back if the investigator needs more specific information about the complaint,
- To call you back if the investigator received contradictory or unclear information during the investigation, and
- To call you to let you know the results of the investigation.

➤ **Call 911 immediately if you witness a child in a life-threatening situation.**

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

School District 11 is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to race, creed, color, sex (gender), ancestry, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age and/or disability. Discrimination and /or harassment based on the aforementioned areas will not be tolerated and must be brought to the immediate attention of the school principal or D11 nondiscrimination compliance coordinator: Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Ombuds Services, 1115 N. El Paso Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903, Phone: 520-2271, EMAIL: [Natasha.Kaonohi@D11.org](mailto:Natasha.Kaonohi@D11.org).

**District 11 Early Childhood  
1115 N. El Paso St  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903**



**Preschool Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**  
***Program copy***

My/our signature(s) below indicates that I/we have received a copy of the Colorado Springs District 11 Early Childhood Program Parent Handbook that outlines the policies and procedures of the D11's preschool program and have had an opportunity to have all questions addressed. I/we acknowledge by signing this policies and procedure document, I/We agree to follow, accept the conditions of, and give authorization and approval for activities described in the policies and procedures. **7.702.31(A)**

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Student Name (please print)

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Parent Name (please print)

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Parent Name (please print)

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Parent Signature

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Parent Signature

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Date