

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Welcome!



Corcoran Joint Unified School District
Bret Harte Preschool

welcomes your family to our
State Preschool Program

Updated May 2025

1300 Letts Ave.
Corcoran, CA 93212
Phone: (559) 992-8881
bretharte.corcoranunified.com/preschool



Welcome to our State Preschool program!

This **handbook** was designed to assist families with understanding the requirements to participate in our State Preschool part-day program operated by Corcoran Joint Unified School District.

We provide part-day preschool opportunities at Bret Harte Elementary School. Our preschool program is funded through a grant from the California Department of Education.

We look forward to serving you!



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Mission:

We are relentless in creating an environment for all to improve mind, character and body.

Vision:

A destination district where people are drawn to Corcoran due to the quality, reputation, and impact of accomplishments of our students and schools in the community.

Preschool Contact Information:

Bret Harte Preschool

1300 Letts Ave.

Corcoran, CA 93212

Phone: (559) 992-8881

bretharte.corcoranunified.com/preschool

Days and Hours of Operation:

Bret Harte Office Hours: 7:45am – 4:15pm

Preschool Hours:

Campus Gate Opens: 8:00am

Morning Session: 8:15am – 11:15am

Afternoon Session: 12:15pm – 3:15pm

Days of Operation: Our preschool program serves children a minimum of 180 days each year.

A school calendar will be provided to each family at the time of registration. Instructional days are Monday – Friday.



Open Door Policy:

You may visit your child's classroom unannounced to observe your child at any time during operational hours (except during a lockdown procedure). Our program is based upon a partnership with parents of the children enrolled. Parents are highly encouraged to participate in their child's program.



Group Size:

Adult to child ratios are planned for in advance and followed for each age group based on the Title 5 Regulations for State Preschool.

Preschool Ratios

1 adult for every 8 children
1 teacher for every 24 children

Ages Served:

For a State Preschool program, age is based on the statutory age of a child. Statutory age eligible children may participate in the State Preschool program as defined below:

4-year-old	3-year-old
Child whose 4 th birthday is on or before December 1 of the school year	Child whose 3 rd birthday is on or before December 1 of the school year
Child whose 5 th birthday occurs after September 1 st of the school year	Child whose 3 rd birthday is on or after December 2 of the school year, may be enrolled on or after their 3 rd birthday

Refrain from Religious Instruction:

Bret Harte State Preschool refrains from religious instruction & worship.

Equal Access/Non-Discrimination:

No person will be subjected to discrimination, or any other form of illegal bias, including harassment. Bret Harte State Preschool gives equal access to services without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.

Confidentiality:

The use of disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and his/her family shall be restricted to purposes directly connected with the administration of the program and district. All records are subject to on-site review by officials representing Community Care Licensing, the California State Department of Education, the Health Department, U.S.D.A., or local police authorities in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect.

The program will permit the review of the family data file by the child's parent(s) or parent's authorization representative, upon request, and at reasonable times and places.

Philosophy:

We believe the following aspects of education are non-negotiable:

- Respect for everyone at all times.
- Every Corcoran student can and should learn.
- To see students as they can be—not as they are.
- Leadership is about influence, not titles.
- Student achievement is more than our occupation; it is a moral obligation.
- Principle and policy over patronizing and privilege.
- Students should never be left out of the equation.
- Every student deserves an advocate.
- People are supportive and appreciative when they are part of the process.


Environment:

Our goal is for each of our classrooms to provide a safe, healthy and welcoming environment that supports the broad development needs of children.

We use the California Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). CLASS is an observational instrument that captures the quality of the teachers-child interactions in a classroom.

In addition, we also use the CLASS Environment tool, which focuses on whether specific items in the learning setting are present. It looks at the classroom arrangements, displays and materials.

Based on the assessment outcomes, action steps are taken for continuous quality improvement.



Our goals and objectives are reflected within each of the quality program components

Community Involvement:

Our goal is to encourage coordination between the community and our preschool program through:

- Soliciting support from the community including the solicitation of donated goods and services.
- Providing information to the community regarding our services available.
- Facilitating relationships and collaborations with other community agencies.
- The program also invites guests from the community to present to our parents, learners, and staff.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Parent Involvement & Education:

Our goal is to provide a welcoming environment for families and invite them to participate as equal partners in the education of their children. No one is more needed in a child's life than the person he/she loves most. You have the greatest influence over your child's growth.

Parent information and materials are posted on a bulletin board in each classroom, which includes a menu, daily schedule, emergency disaster plan, parents' rights, district and community events/resources, and a variety of other important information. The program provides parents with information regarding things that they can do to help their child learn and develop.

Opportunities to participate include, but are not limited to:

- **Parent/Teacher conferences** are held twice per school year. Conferences provide an opportunity for parents to collaborate with the teacher to develop goals for their child. Parent/teacher conferences assist staff in providing ideas, suggestions, and strategies that will benefit their child and the program.
- **Informal conferences** will occur naturally on a regular basis. If you would like to discuss your child, or any aspect of the program, please call the supervisor or director at the school. They will be happy to meet with you.
- **Parent meetings** provide an opportunity to learn about child development, share topics identified in the parent survey, parenting strategies. A great time to network with program staff and other parents.
- **Parent Advisory Committee** meetings provide an opportunity for parents to provide input on the nature and operation of the program. The parent advisory committee is a group of parents who are committed to working with the program staff to assure optimal functioning of the preschool program. Membership includes interested parents and staff members. The committee will meet to represent the parents and help set the program's policy.
- **Assist with** the annual program self-evaluation process.
- **Help in** the classroom. You may choose to sit inside the classroom and observe, or you may want to participate in the learning environment activities.
- **Help in** planning field trips, and accompany the class on field trips.
- **Take homework** to assist the teacher in the classroom.
- **Bring artifacts or cultural information** to share in the classroom.
- **Other ideas are always welcome** - please discuss with your teacher.



Note: Unfortunately, our insurance carrier will not cover any children not enrolled in the program. Siblings or other children in your care may not stay in the classroom.


Visitor | Volunteer Policy:

As a parent, you are your child's most important teacher. We need parent volunteers in the classroom to help us with other activities. Students' health and safety are our main priority.

Parent visitors/volunteers are required to provide:

- Picture Identification
- Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance
- Proof of fingerprinting
- Proof of vaccinations (measles, pertussis and influenza)
- Complete a mandated reporter training (Available through the district office)

This policy is for the protection of all of our students. Our office staff can provide information about these requirements. Visitors will also be required to wear a visitor name-tag.



This policy is for the protection of all of our students.

Expectation of Visitor | Volunteers:

Dress Code: Appropriate clothing, footwear, and jewelry for indoor and outdoor preschool activities.

Health and Safety: Our schools operate a no smoking policy inside and around the preschool buildings. Alcohol is not permitted on the preschool premises.

Level of Performance: Every volunteer should maintain a high level of awareness and treat every child and adult with respect. They should contribute to maintaining the safety and well-being of the children at all times, as well as create a happy and secure environment for children and work as a team. To ensure you maintain our confidentiality policy you must not disclose information about children, families, staff or the preschool outside of this environment.

Responsibilities: The volunteer's most important responsibility relates to his/her duty of care to children. Learners are a vulnerable group generally, due to their age and lack of experience.

Respecting the rights of children means:

VOLUNTEERS MUST NOT

- Work unsupervised with learners
- Be involved in toileting or assisting with changing children
- Have unsupervised contact with children
- Have intentional physical contact with learners (the supervising staff will provide comfort/first aid to a distressed learner)
- Display harassing, bullying or intimidating behaviors toward children or staff
- Swear
- Use mobile phones in the preschool learning environment; yet they are welcome to step outside to do so, if appropriate
- Bring younger siblings or friends to the learning environment when volunteering

VOLUNTEERS MUST

- Refer all children concerns or behavior issues to the preschool staff
- Refer all parent requests, questions, etc. to the preschool staff
- Sign the volunteer sheet on arrival and departure
- Discuss any concerns in relation to preschool matters with the appropriate staff member or the director
- Keep all preschool related matters confidential, and under no circumstances approach parents or community members in relation to issues arising at the preschool
- Be polite and well-mannered and have regard to all those who access the program. Treat preschool staff and learners with respect.
- Make an appointment when he/she wishes to speak with a staff member privately in order for us to ensure that staff ratio is met within the preschool setting and that the staff member is present.
- Provide a positive model for learners
- Know and respect the teacher's boundaries and her expertise
- Treat all learners equally - not playing favorites with your child or other learners
- Encourage learners to try tasks and only assist when needed
- Abide by the terms and conditions detailed in the volunteer policy and any other rules and guidelines as deemed necessary by the Director

Staff Qualifications & Development:

Our goal is to implement a staff development program that adequately equips each staff member with the information necessary to carry out their assigned duties.

Our program makes professional development of individuals working with children and families a priority. We hire qualified staff who hold appropriate credentials/permits required by the State of California. We support continuous staff growth by assessing the needs of staff, and providing professional learning and development activities to enhance their growth. Staff are evaluated annually.

Health & Social Services:

Our goal is for families to know where to access community health and social services to meet their unique family needs.

A Family Health & Social Service Need Request & Referral form is completed at the time of enrollment and annually thereafter. This form helps to identify the needs of both the child & family, so that the child may be successful in preschool.

Based on the results, staff provide parents with referrals to other agencies in the community. In addition, staff follow-up with parents to ensure their needs have been met.



Education Program:

Our goal is to ensure all children are making progress in the domains of physical, cognitive, language, and social - emotional development.

Our goal is to provide a program approach that addresses equity, diversity and is developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate. A program that is inclusive of children with special needs.

We use a tool called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP); a tool developed by the California Department of Education to assess the development of children.

- Assessed within 60 days from the first day of attendance and every 6 months
- Parent's input is a necessary component of this assessment
- Assessment outcomes are used to plan and conduct age and developmentally appropriate activities for children



Our program focuses on the California Preschool Learning Foundations, which are designed to help your child grow in their social-emotional development, language and literacy development, English language development, and mathematics. These foundations describe the knowledge and skills that children typically exhibit between 36 - 60 months of age. The program also focuses on visual and performing arts, physical development, health, history/social science, and science.

These Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) allow the following:

- Ensure that all students are viewed as active learners and adults are viewed as facilitators of learning.
- Provide quality teachers and staff for each class.
- Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to be actively involved in our preschool.
- Provide a smooth transition into transitional kindergarten or kindergarten.
- Maximize positive learning experiences by maintaining facilities, equipment and materials.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Nutrition Services:

Our goal is to ensure children have a nutritious meal during their time in the program. A nutritious breakfast (AM Session) or lunch (PM Session) is served every day. Meals that are culturally and developmentally appropriate and meet the Federal Child Care Food Program nutritional requirements.

Meals are provided at no cost to families. They are served family style with all children and learning facilitators together. Children are offered all items on the menu, and encouraged to try everything. Menus are posted in the classroom and are sent home with the students monthly. We ask that your child not bring food from home unless special arrangements are made in advance with the teacher.

All food allergies must be documented with a note from the physician. Because either a breakfast or lunch is served in each classroom, allergy considerations will be based on the needs of each individual child. Our Food Service Department will work with each child's needs to accommodate allergies as best they can. On the rare occasion where it is determined that food should be brought from home, staff will work with the family.

Allergies need to be documented and posted, with an action plan, in a visible place on site so that staff can take appropriate action. Teachers cannot administer medication. Office staff may administer medication such as an inhaler or EpiPen, only with written authorization from the parent and consent from the district nurse. The medication must be in the original container with the physician's instructions on the label.



If your child has any dietary restrictions such as food allergies, or can not eat certain foods for religious or personal reasons, please notify the teacher immediately.

Continuous Improvement:

Our goal is to implement an effective annual program self-evaluation process to support continuous improvement. The program includes an annual self-study plan that determines if the program goals and objectives are met. The process includes:

- Assessment of the program by parents using the Desired Results Parent Survey
- Assessment of the program by staff and board members using the Program Monitoring Instrument, Desired Results Developmental Profile, CLASS tools, and California's Quality and Improvement System

The program submits a Program Self Evaluation Report to the California Department of Education by June 1st of each year. The program modifies its goals and objectives to address any areas identified during the self-study as needing improvement.

GENERAL POLICIES

Parent | Adult Conduct:

It is important that the program provides an environment where children and families feel safe and secure.

The program prohibits any parent/adult from possessing weapons, imitation firearms, or other dangerous instruments, as defined in law and administrative regulations, in school buildings, on school grounds or buses, at school-related or school-sponsored activities away from school, or while going to or coming from school.

The program believes that the maintenance of a drug- and alcohol-free environment is essential to staff, parent and student safety. Parents/adults are prohibited from being under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol while in school buildings, on school grounds or buses, at school-related or school-sponsored activities away from school, or while dropping off or picking up a student from school.

Adults coming to the program shall treat others with respect and consideration. Adults shall speak in a friendly calm voice, use positive language, supervise the safety of all children, and refrain from negative behaviors such as yelling, swearing, smoking, etc.

Notification of Parents Rights | Personal Rights:

Each family will be given a Notification of Parents' Rights and Personal Rights. The parents will be required to sign a receipt of the forms and the forms will be placed in the child's file. Each of the forms will be posted on the Parent's Bulletin Board in each classroom.

The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parent/guardian that chooses to exercise their right to inspect the facility or to file a complaint against the facility.

The adult responsible for the sign in/out procedures of an enrolled child who brings other children with them "because they would otherwise be left unsupervised" assumes total responsibility for their supervision. Always close and secure the gates when you enter or leave. Positive parent and staff interaction is also essential to the success of the program. If a parent, guardian, or emergency contact person physically, sexually, and/or verbally harasses staff, other parents, and/or students or doesn't follow the CJUSD Preschool code of conduct, another authorized adult will need to drop off and pick up the child.



The law authorizes the person in charge to deny access to parent/guardian if:

- The parent/guardian is behaving in a way that poses a risk to children in the facility.
- The adult is a non-custodial parent, and the custodial parent has requested the facility in writing not to permit access to the non-custodial parent.

GENERAL POLICIES

Child Supervision:

Staff actively ensure that our environments are safe and no child will be left alone or unsupervised at any time.

Supervision is everyone's responsibility, so in addition to our staff, parents must also use active supervision techniques to ensure our environments are safe.

Parents must:

- Ensure gate and door is closed and secured.
- Ensure child is signed in and out every day with your full legal signature and exact time.
- Hold child's hand in the road and parking lot.
- Encourage children to follow safety rules.
- Report safety and supervision concerns to staff immediately.

Suspected Child Abuse:

As per State Law, all learning facilitators and staff are "mandated reporters" of suspected abuse. The safety and well being of your child always comes first. State law requires that staff report known or suspected instances of a child abuse to Child Protective Services or to local police officials. This abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect.

Field Trips:

We offer field trips free of charge. Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum and enhance the classroom curriculum. Parents will be notified of field trips in advance. Parents are required to sign a permission slip for field trips. Transportation will be provided by the Corcoran Joint Unified School District Transportation Department unless notified otherwise. The program also takes adult supervised walks in the immediate neighborhood of the learning environments.

Daily Schedule:

Classroom daily schedules may vary from classroom to classroom. The daily schedule is posted on the parent bulletin board in each classroom.

Photographs & Video Taping:

The Preschool program takes pictures and videotapes special events as well as the child's developmental progress for the Desired Results Developmental Profile. If for any reason you have a concern regarding your child's picture being taken, videotaped, etc., please advise the Director promptly.

Transportation:

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide safe transportation to and from school to ensure the child attends on a regular basis.



Discipline & Guidance:

Based on the philosophy of the preschool program, the positive guidance policy embodies mutual respect for the personal rights of the child and adult. Within that framework, children develop self-discipline within a safe environment free from punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature. Goals have been developed for the children and guidelines for teachers, parents and learners as well as procedures for dealing with unacceptable behavior.

Goals for Children

- To develop a strong sense of self-esteem.
- To develop a sense of responsibility for self and others.
- To develop internal controls.
- To learn to recognize and express feelings.
- To become aware of behavior and consequences.
- To maintain respect for self and others.
- To learn the art of self-protection.
- To become a problem-solver.

Teacher/Parent/Learner Guidelines for Working with Children

- Model the expected behavior for children.
- Reinforce acceptable behavior with words or actions.
- Set limits and clear expectations. Reinforce the need for consistency among adults in the area.
- Verbalize what is happening. Describe the situation and explore feelings.
- Acknowledge the child's feelings.
- Help children understand behavioral choices and natural consequences.
- When possible, ignore inappropriate behavior that can be tolerated.
- Use humor to relieve the tension.

Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Behavior

1. Stop unacceptable behavior.
2. Briefly explain what and why the behavior is unacceptable.
3. Explain acceptable alternatives as well as consequences.
4. If a child's behavior does not change, follow through with consequences.
5. When a child intrudes on the "safe space" of another person, whether child or adult, he/she may be required to sit quietly in an adult supervised area for a brief time (suggested time of 1 minute per child's year of age.)
6. In order to regain self-esteem, the child should be given the opportunity to make behavioral adjustments.
7. If a child exhibits consistently abusive behavior, the site supervisor or preschool director (principal) will determine further actions as necessary: parent conferences, consultation, referrals, or possibly removal from the program. Physically or emotional hurtful actions will NOT be used.



Unacceptable Behavior in Children Include:

- Physical abuse of self or others; hitting, biting, spitting, pushing, kicking, pinching, scratching, slapping or pulling hair.
- Emotional abuse of self or others; name-calling, teasing, and use of foul or vulgar language, intimidating or threatening words.
- Misuse or destruction of materials or environment; throwing objects, neglect of materials, not returning items to their proper places, mistreating animals and other live creatures, jumping or climbing on furniture, interfering in the work or play of others.

Suspension or Expulsion:

Our program prohibits or severely limits the use of suspension and expulsion because of a child's behaviors. In addition, the program can not persuade or encourage a child's parents or legal guardians to voluntarily unenroll from the program due to a child's behavior.

Prior to expelling or disenrolling a child because of a child's persistent and serious challenging behavior, the law requires that the contractor must, within 180 days, pursue and document that they have taken at least the following reasonable steps:

- Consult with the child's parents/guardians and teacher to maintain the child's safe participation in the program and provide available resources to support regarding challenging behaviors.
- Inform the parents/guardians of a child exhibiting persistent and serious challenging behaviors of the process that the program will use to assist the child in order to safely continue in the program.
- If the child has an IEP or IFSP, and with the parent or guardian's written consent, consult with the local regional center on how to serve the child.
- If the child does not have an IEP or IFSP, the program will (a) complete a universal screening including social and emotional development, (b) refer the parent/guardian to local community resources, and/or (c) implement behavior supports, before referring the child to request an assessment to determine the child's eligibility for special education support and services, including a behavior intervention plan.
- If, after following and documenting the reasonable steps referred to above to foster the child's safe participation, and concerns about safe participation remain, the program will consult with the child's parents/guardians, the child's teacher, and if applicable, the Special Education Team providing special education services to the child.
- If the program determines that the child's continued enrollment would present a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children, the contractor shall refer the parents or legal guardians to other potentially appropriate placements such as resource and referral agencies and program, or other local referral services available in the community.
- Once the reasonable steps outlined above have been completed, the program may then dis-enroll the child. **In the event a child is suspended or expelled due to persistent and serious behaviors**, the program will issue a Notice of Action that is effective 24 hours after the notice is issued.

NOTE: If a child is suspended or expelled, the parent has the right to file an appeal directly to the State Department no later than 14 calendar days after receipt of the Notice of Action. (For more information, see Grievance/ Complaint Procedures/Program Decision Complaints)

Daily Health Screening & Exclusion:

Sick children will not be accepted for care by the center staff. Children too sick to go outside and play, or who are infectious to other children should not be at school.

Staff will conduct a daily health check in order to determine if children are well enough to attend school by observing and evaluating physical health and behavior. The person bringing the child to the center must remain until the health check has been completed and the child is accepted. If a child becomes sick while at school, parents will be called and are expected to come for the child at once.

Children should not be brought to preschool if child:

- Has a fever or had one during the previous 24 hours
- Has signs of a cold-cough, sore throat, watery eyes, heavy nasal discharge or colored mucus
- Has a persistent cough
- Has skin rashes, spots, eruptions, etc.
- Has hair lice/nits, infected areas on scalp
- Has eye infection (eye discharge and/or redness)
- Is vomiting, has diarrhea or abdominal pain
- Has any symptoms of possible communicable disease. Please notify the school immediately if the child has a communicable disease. If your child has a communicable disease, he/she must have clearance from a doctor stating the child is no longer contagious and may return to school or clearance from the school nurse.

Children who have been ill may not return to school until they are free of symptoms for a 24-hour period. Readmission is at the discretion of the learning facilitator or designated staff.

Lice Note: Lice outbreaks are common among school children. ALL children can become infested, even the cleanest child. If a child is found with active, adult head lice, the parent/guardian shall be given information about the treatment of head lice and encouraged to begin treatment of the child immediately and to check all members of the family. Upon the child's return to school, the child shall be checked for active head lice. If it is determined that the child remains infected with head lice, parents shall be contacted to discuss treatment. As needed, the school may provide additional resources and/or referral to the local health department, health care providers, or other agencies.

Medical Emergency:

In case of serious illness or injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact you. If we cannot reach you, we will call your child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. The parent/guardian is expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense. Please be sure to have current information needed to contact you in an emergency. Corcoran Joint Unified School District will provide incidental medical services on an as needed basis.



GENERAL POLICIES

Clothing | Jewelry | Toys from Home:

Sometimes children accidentally get paint, clay or mud on their clothes. Please send your children in comfortable play clothes that can be washed easily.

Sometimes children also get wet from accidents or activities. **PLEASE SEND your child with an extra change of clothes in case needed.** Please label jackets, sweaters, and extra clothes.

Thongs and sandals with loose straps or shoes with slippery soles are unsafe on the equipment. Tennis shoes and rubber soled shoes are best for running and playing and will help avoid injury during play.

We also ask that your child not bring money or food unless special arrangements are made in advance with the teachers.

Medication:

Authorized preschool staff may administer medication only with written authorization from the parent and consent by the district nurse. Medication to be given out at the school site must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form completed and signed by the parent or guardian.

The medication must be in the original prescription container with physician's instructions. The prescription bottle should have the child's name, medication name, specific dosage, directions, and expiration date. We cannot share medications amongst siblings.

It is the parents' responsibility to provide learner medication and replace the medication when it becomes expired. In rare cases, if the safety of the child is in jeopardy, a child may need to be excluded from the program until the parent replaces the expired medication.

Child Find:

Child Find is a component of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in which school districts identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth to 21, who are in need of early intervention or special education services. Child Find provides free developmental screening and evaluation services. Children identified with physical or developmental challenges receive intervention services through the school district preschool/ programs and/or specialized groups/services.

For additional information or to arrange an appointment contact the CJUSD Special Education Department at (559) 992-8888.

Please DO NOT send your child with jewelry or accessories to the preschool because items may accidentally get lost or broken. If you choose to send your child with such items, the program will not be responsible for the items.

Since we have many interesting toys at the preschool for the children to play with, we would appreciate it if **children DO NOT bring any of their own toys from home** unless special arrangements are made in advance with the teacher. Other children sometimes break the items and this causes many unhappy situations. Also, it is difficult for the teachers to get the right toy with the right child at dismissal time.



GENERAL POLICIES

Toileting:

If your child is not independently toileting, when developmentally appropriate, our staff will work with you to set bathroom goals, expectations and routines. In partnership with you we work toward getting your child to be independent in the bathroom. If an accident occurs, we will support them to change into clean clothing. **Please make sure that you bring a fresh change of clothing** the day after an accident occurs in class.

Lead Poisoning Prevention:

Currently, there is no known safe level of lead in the body. It is important for parents to become aware and knowledgeable about lead poisoning and preventative measures.

Lead poisoning can potentially become a serious illness that can cause various health concerns in children such as:

- Anemia
- Decreases in intelligence quotient (IQ)
- Behavioral problems
- Decreased auditory function
- Slowed growth

It is important for parents to understand preventative measures by:

Knowing the sources of lead exposure such as:

- Interior/exterior paint
- Soil
- Drinking water (e.g. private well)
- Folk remedies
- Parental occupations (e.g., construction, plumbing, battery manufacturing)

Proper nutrition such as:

- Calcium rich foods (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese, leafy green vegetables)
- Vitamin C foods (e.g., fruits and vegetables)
- Iron rich foods (e.g., red meats, beans, iron fortified)

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT), states that children should undergo clinical diagnosis and assessments that would account for a blood lead level (BLL) count during 12 and 24 months of age in order to measure lead toxicity. Assessments should be given to children at six and nine months of age and thereon after up to the age of six years old.

If a BLL count is $\geq 5 \mu\text{g/dL}$, treatment should be followed upon physician's instructions in order to eliminate lead toxicity. Local public health officials may also assist in finding any lead exposure in surrounding areas of the child's residence for any hazards.



Children under the age of six years old are more vulnerable to being exposed to lead.

Waiting List:

We limit enrollment in the preschool program to 24 students per classroom to allow for an enriching experience for each and every child. When all classes are filled, we will create a waiting list from which we will invite children into the program as vacancies occur. Children with disabilities are welcome and encouraged to apply.

Ways to Apply **Call:** (559) 992-2223
In-person: 1300 Letts Ave. | Corcoran

Child Enrollment Priorities:

5% of preschool enrollment is set-aside for children with disabilities.

NOTES: Only the child in the family who has a disability may be enrolled within this enrollment category.

Please provide a copy of the child's IFSP or IEP document upon enrollment.



For **95% of preschool enrollment** when an opening is available, we contact families based on the following program enrollment priorities:

First: Child is recipient of Child Protective Services or At-Risk of being neglected, abused or exploited.

Second: Once the set-aside is filled, children with disabilities from income eligible family. Prioritize based on income ranking order.

Third: Eligible children not enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten. Prioritize children with the lowest income ranking first.

If 2 or more children are within the same ranking prioritize dual language learners, then based on the child who has been on the waiting list for the longest time.

Fourth: Family income is not more than 15% above income threshold (limited to 10% of funded enrollment excluding children with disabilities).

Prioritize as follows:

- 1) Child with disabilities in income ranking order
- 2) Children in income ranking order

Note: If 2 or more children are within the same ranking, admit the child who has been on the waiting list for the longest time

Fifth: Family resides in approved Neighborhood School Boundary. Prioritize based on income ranking order.

Sixth: Children enrolling in CSPP to provide extended learning & care to Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten pupils (must meet an eligibility criteria)

After all applicable families have been prioritized, a non-prioritized family may be enrolled that includes children with disabilities from families with income above 15% of the income threshold who were not enrolled within the set-aside.

Certification of Eligibility:

Enrollment into the State Preschool program is determined by specific family eligibility criteria. In addition, a child's parent must live in California.

A family completes the certification process at initial enrollment and remain eligible to receive services for the remainder of the program year and for the following program year, as long as the child is age-eligible. In the event that the child is age-eligible for a 3rd program year, the family must recertify their eligibility within 120 calendar days prior to the first day of the new preschool year.

Family Data File:

A family data file is maintained for each family receiving services. When a child's residence alternates between the homes of separated or divorced parent's eligibility must be determined separately for each household in which the child is residing during the time services are needed.

Proof of Residency

Determination of eligibility shall be **without regard** to the immigration status of the child or the child's parent(s), unless under a final order of deportation from the United States Department of Homeland Security.

- Must live in California
- Families experiencing homelessness shall submit declaration that they reside in California
- Any evidence of a street address or post office address in California, including the 4-digit zip code extension

Family Language Survey

Identification of your child as a dual language learner in preschool means that your child will benefit from additional support from the program in order to develop their home language and English language skills. This identification will serve them only in preschool and is different from any identification process or program supports a received in Elementary School.

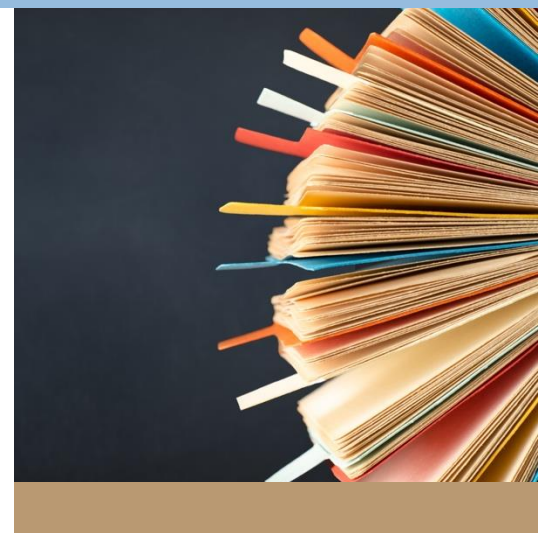
Child with Disability

If your child has a disability, the file must contain the following documentation in order for us to best serve your child:

- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Court Order | Custody Arrangements

If there is a court order that impacts child care services, include in the family data file. If custody problems exist, please provide any legal documents, which outline custody relations.



CHANGES:

It is urgent that you keep the preschool informed of any changes in address, phone number, change of guardianship, and persons authorized to sign in/out children from the facility. It is the family's responsibility to immediately notify the preschool of any changes.

PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS & CONDITIONS

Eligibility Criteria:

Participants must provide documentation of eligibility in **1** or more of these eligibility categories:



Child is Recipient of Child Protective Services or Child Identified as At-Risk

- Self-Certification of Income **AND**
- Referral Letter (dated within 6 months)

Family Experiencing Homelessness

- Self-Certification of Income **AND**
- Referral Letter **OR**
- Parental Declaration of Homelessness

Child with Disability

- Self-Certification of Income **AND**
- Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) **OR**
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Approved Neighborhood School Boundary

- Self-Certification of Income **AND**
- Verification of Home Address (Example: Utility bill | Property tax bill | Voter registration | Rental/lease agreement | Government agency letter | Pay stub)

Receiving Benefits from Certain Governmental Program

CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, CalFresh, California Food Assistance, California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation, Head Start or Early Head Start.

- Enrollment Documentation, such as Notice of Action | Receipt of Aid | Verification of Benefits **AND**
- Copy of Governmental Program Application **OR**
- If not available, Self-Declaration of Income as declared on the program application

Income Eligibility

Regular & Steady Income: Total countable income from either month of the 2-month window immediately preceding certification

Fluctuating or Inconsistent Income: Total countable income from 12 months immediately preceding certification

Guardian or Foster Parent(s):

- Documentation of Monthly Income (For child and their related siblings)

Biological or Adopted Parent(s):

- Authorization to Release Employment Information (if applicable) **AND**
- Documentation of Income (ALL sources for ALL parents in family)

Self-Employed Parent(s):

- Combination of documentation to establish income, including Business Revenue **AND** Expenses

NOTE: Bret Harte Preschool Program reserves the right to ask for additional documentation to verify total countable income to the extent that the information provided by the parent or the employer is insufficient to make a reasonable assessment of income eligibility.

Proof of Family Size & Child Age Eligibility:

Biological/Adoptive Parent: “Family” shall be considered the parents and children for whom the parents are responsible, who comprise the household in which the child receiving services is living.

Guardian/Foster Parent: “Family” shall be considered the child and related siblings.

Participants must provide the names of the adults and the names, gender and birthdates of the children under 18 years of age identified in the family.

At least one document for **ALL** children under 18 years of age counted in the family size must be on file and indicate the relationship of the child to the parent.

- Birth Certificate or other live birth records
- Child Custody Court order
- Adoption documents
- Foster Care placement records
- School or Medical records
- County welfare department records
- Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent

Health & Emergency Information:

California’s Child Care Licensing Program provides oversight and enforcement for licensed Child Care Centers. **As part of the enrollment process**, Parents must submit the following licensing documentation/forms:

- Physician’s Report (LIC 701) (Medical examination within the last 12 months)
- Proof of Tuberculosis Clearance (Results, date given, and date read)
- Up-to-date Immunization Record (See note below)
- Identification and Emergency Information
- Notification of Parents’ Rights form (LIC 995)
- Personal Rights Form (LIC 613A)
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment form (LIC 627)
- Child’s Preadmission Health History-Parent’s Report (LIC 702)
- Caregiver Background Check Process (LIC 995E)

IMMUNIZATION NOTE: Children will only be admitted into the program if they have met all immunizations, or have no doses currently due.

Preschool staff will follow up with learners that need to update any doses that might be due with a written notice of immunization needed. If any immunizations were not given due to homelessness or medical reasons, there must be a signed affidavit in the child’s file and approved by the district nurse. It is parents’ responsibility to provide the school with any new immunizations given to the child, so the school can update any new information.



ATTENDANCE

Attendance Expectations/Policy:

Children are **expected to attend preschool everyday**. Regular and consistence attendance is important. It allows the family to maximize the benefits of the child's early learning and care experience.

Arriving AND Leaving Procedures:

Arrival: State Law requires that the parent, guardian, or authorized adult complete a health check, sign the child in, and remain with the child until the staff has completed a visual health check.

Leaving: Children must be picked up by the listed dismissal time. The parent, guardian, or authorized adult must sign the child out with the correct time of departure, a full signature, and check with the staff before taking your child.

- Only the lead teacher will dismiss children.
- Identification of the adult picking up the child will be checked to the information in our dismissal binder, regardless of our familiarity with the adult.
- The dismissal table will be positioned at the door to more closely monitor the dismissal process.
- Children will be asked by the lead teacher "Who is picking you up today?"

A parent may authorize another person 18 years of age or older to pick up their child by:

- Leaving the authorized person on the child's emergency card, or
- Giving written and dated notice to the child's learning facilitator authorizing your child's release to someone else.
- A telephone call may be accepted if you speak to the supervisor or the child's learning facilitators.
- Any person being asked to pick up the child must be added to the emergency card and the child's file.

If a child is not picked up from the program:

1. Attempts will be made to contact the parent(s) by phone.
2. Attempts will be made to contact the persons listed on the child's emergency card.
3. If no one on the emergency card can be reached, Child Protective Services and the police department will be contacted and an "Abandonment Child Report" will be made.

By making your child's attendance a priority, you will be taking an important step in supporting your child's school success, and setting a good example.



A child will NOT be released to:

- Anyone who is not listed on the emergency list.
- Anyone without proper identification.
- Anyone under 18 years of age.
- Anyone suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or behaving in a way that poses a risk to children in the facility.
- Anyone that is legally restrained from contact with your child.

NOTE: In the event that a parent is a health or safety concern to our staff, learners, or other parents the program can require another authorized person to drop off and pick up a child.

Sign your **child in and out every day**, using your full legal signature. Also, record **arrival and departure times**.

ATTENDANCE

Reporting Absences & Late Arrivals:

It is the expectation that your child participates in our program; however, we understand that life situations occur (illness, family emergencies, etc.) and request that you notify us within 24 - 48 hours if such a situation occurs.

If the parent does not call to notify staff of the absence, the parent must then fill out the reason for absence as soon as the child returns to school. The reason for absence is required for our records.

If the child has an extended absence for any reason, it is important that the parent keep the preschool notified of the child's progress by calling every two or three days.

Absence Policy:

Excused Absence:

- Illness of child or parent/guardian, ailment, communicable disease, injury, hospitalization or quarantine
- Court ordered visitation (Court order on file)
- Family emergency for unplanned situations of a temporary nature including natural disaster (Example: Earthquake, tornado, or hazardous weather conditions, personal environmental disaster (Example: Fire), catastrophic event (Example: Burglary, auto accident/trouble), parent inability to bring the child for the child to attend, illness of sibling, hospitalization, death, or funeral of a family member, court appearance, fleeing domestic violence, fear of deportation, or due to sheltering in-place.

Best Interest Days:

(maximum of 10 days per school year)

Parent determines that another activity is better for the child to attend, such as:

- Vacation time with family
- Special time spent with a relative or close friend
- Child attending a special event
- Cultural or religious celebrations
- Other reason that is in the best interest of the child and has been approved by the Director of the Preschool

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the school immediately.



Abandonment of Care Policy:

A family may be disenrolled from the program for abandonment of care. If your child is absent for more than 7 consecutive days without contacting the program, program staff will reach out to you in many ways via the contact information we have on file. Please make sure we have the most current information on file. If we are unsuccessful and after a total of 30 consecutive calendar days without attendance or contact with us, a Notice of Action will be issued to dis-enroll your child from the program based upon abandonment of care.

DIENROLLMENT

Family Request to Disenroll:

When a family chooses to disenroll from the program, they are required to notify the program in writing at least 2 weeks in advance of the last day of attendance.

Preschool Program Disenrollment Policy:

Families will be issued a notice at least 19 days if mailed, 15 days if sent via overnight delivery, or 14 days if emailed or hand delivered prior to disenrollment from the program. **The program may deny services or disenroll** a family for any of the following reasons, which include, but are not limited to:

- Concealed facts or fraudulent and/or misleading information supplied to the program.
- Knowingly misrepresenting eligibility, using incorrect or inaccurate information to obtain a benefit that the parent would otherwise not be entitled to receive.
- Failure to provide current and correct information at the time of certification or recertification.
- Non-compliance of agency policies.
- Parent changes residency outside of California as reported by the parent.
- Abandoned child care for 30 consecutive calendar days without notice.
- Failure to complete or falsification of sign-in/out sheets accurately and on a daily basis.
- Parent or guardian who physically, sexually, and/or verbally harasses staff, other parents, students, and/or children (unless parent authorizes another adult to drop off and pick up their child.)
- Unavailability of program funds. If it is necessary to displace families due to funding, families will be displaced in reverse order of Enrollment priority.
- Failure to provide Physician's Report (LIC 701) within 30 days of admission

NOTE: Parents can appeal the action proposed on the Notice of Action concerning approval, changes, or termination of services. A written request must be made within 14 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Action. Appeal instructions may be found on the Notice of Action and within this handbook (See Notice of Action Appeal Process)



Complaints Regarding Program Staff:

Program staff work to ensure that you and your family have a positive experience in the program. If you would like to make a complaint, please follow the escalation process, so that concerns can be addressed and resolved in the correct manner.

Community Care Licensing:

For complaints regarding a licensed center, parents have the right to contact the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing at 1310 E. Shaw Ave., Suite 300, Fresno, CA, 93710 or call (844) 538-8766.

Level 1:	Complaint is brought to the attention of the staff member
Level 2:	If complaint is not resolved by the staff member, it is brought to the attention of the Preschool Director
Level 3:	If complaint is not resolved by Preschool Director, it is brought to the attention of the Superintendent

Uniform Complaint Procedure:

Complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying are investigated through the Uniform Complaint Process. Such complaints must be filed no later than six months after knowledge of the alleged discrimination was first obtained. The following employees can be reached for questions or to file complaints regarding the following programs:

Uniform Complaints

Title VI Coordinator
Elizabeth Mendoza
(559) 992-8888 ext1246

Section 504

Title IX Coordinator
Helen Copeland
(559) 992-8888 ext1248

Superintendent

Andre Pecina
(559) 992-8888 ext1224

Notice of Action Appeal Process:

Parents enrolled in state subsidized programs have the right to a fair and unbiased hearing if they disagree with a proposed action. Upon receipt of an on-time request for an appeal hearing, the intended action will be suspended and child care services will continue until the appeal process has been completed, with the exception of children who have been suspended or expelled. In the event a child is suspended or expelled due to persistent and serious behaviors that impact the safety of children, the child may NOT attend the program during the appeal process. The review process is complete when the appeal process has been exhausted or when the parent abandons the appeal process. The Appeal Hearing process is as follows:

Step 1: Request for Appeal Hearing

Request for an appeal hearing must be filed within 14 calendar days after the participant receives the Notice of Action (NOA). A request must include the effective date of the NOA, parent name, phone number, full address, explanation why parent disagrees with the agency's action and date the request is signed. Request for hearing may be submitted by mail, in person, phone or e-mail to:

Brette Harte Preschool Program

Attention: Hearing Officer

Mail: 1300 Letts Ave.
Corcoran, CA 93212

Telephone: (559) 992-8881

Email: lindareis@corcoranunified.com

In the event that the action taken is due to **child suspension or expulsion**, a request for an appeal hearing is sent directly to the State Department (Skip to Step 5)

Step 2: Schedule Hearing

Within 10 days of receiving a parent's hearing request, the parent will be notified of the time and place of the hearing. To the extent possible, the hearing date and time will be convenient for the parent(s). The hearing shall not be scheduled more than 14 calendar days from the date the hearing officer contacts the parent to schedule the hearing. In the event that a parent or parent's Authorized Representative cannot keep the scheduled hearing date/time, the parent must notify the Hearing Officer in advance of the hearing date/time. A parent may request to re-schedule the hearing date 1 time.

Step 3: Conduct Hearing

The hearing will be conducted by an administrative staff person who shall be referred to as "the hearing officer." In the event that a parent is unable to attend the hearing at the designated location accommodations will be arranged and agreed upon between the parent and hearing officer. For any hearing not conducted in person, verification of parent identity will be required, along with prior submission of documentation.

The hearing will be recorded. During the hearing, the parent or Authorized Representative will have an opportunity to provide support documentation and explain the reasons that they disagree with the proposed action indicated by the referenced NOA should not be carried out.

This will be a formal hearing, and the parent must comply with the directions of the hearing officer during the course of the hearing. Failure to comply with directions will result in the hearing being ended and the contested action being taken. A parent designating an Authorized Representative to be present must inform the agency in writing prior to the hearing. Please do not bring people to the hearing unless they are a designated Authorized Representative. No children are allowed to be present during the hearing. For failure to appear, it will be deemed that parent has abandoned the appeal and care ends immediately.

Step 4: Agency Hearing Decision

Hearing officer will send notification in writing, of decision within 10 calendar days after hearing.

Step 5: Request for Appeal Hearing with California Department of Education

If parent disagrees with the agency's hearing decision OR if the action taken is due to child suspension or expulsion, the parent has 14 days from date of the written decision/action to file an appeal with the California Department of Education. The appeal(s) must include a written statement specifying the reasons parent disagrees with the agency's action, a copy of the decision letter and a copy of both sides of the NOA.

Request for State department hearing must be submitted to:

California Department of Education (CDE)

Early Education Division (EED)

Attention: Appeals Coordinator

Mail: 1430 N Street, Suite 3410

Sacramento | CA | 95814

Email: ELCDAppeals@cde.ca.gov

Telephone: 916-322-1273

Fax: 916-323-6853

Step 6: EED Hearing Decision

Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the appeal, the EED will issue a written decision to the parent and the agency.

Once the EED has rendered a decision, the decision is final.