

SCPPS Head Start *parent handbook*



2025-2026

WELCOME TO

St. Charles Parish Public Schools



Dear Parents:

During the course of any school day, events may occur which threaten the safety and well being of both students and school personnel. These disruptions may be weather related, man-made disasters or situations within the confines of a building site. Whatever the situation, it is imperative that appropriate and organized action be taken.

A Crisis Management and Emergency Response Plan addresses multiple emergency/crisis situations and ways of responding to them. All members of the school community have been assigned specific roles in the process and have been in-serviced as to its implementation.

Occasionally emergency situations may warrant the closure of schools. Because this causes the interruption of family routines, this procedure will be followed only if it is the most prudent one available. If within our control, the decision to close any or all schools will be made as soon as possible so impacted parents can make appropriate arrangements. Stakeholders will be notified of school closures and other information relative to the event through the district's messaging system (Blackboard Connect) and Cox Cable Channels. Additional information will also be provided through WWL870 AM and New Orleans television stations.

Generally speaking, we prefer not to send students home during school hours. In fact, we will house them late into the day or even overnight if the situation makes it unsafe to send them home. Please note that if a school is ordered to provide shelter-in-place or to evacuate to protect the safety of the children, students will not be released from the custodial care of the school until the danger has passed. Therefore, parents are requested not to come to the school to pick up their children in such an emergency situation. Relying on school buses to transport students home on normal bus routes when it is safe to do so will help avoid traffic congestion in and around schools and help keep parish roads clear for essential emergency vehicles. Necessary information will be provided through the channels previously mentioned.

If it becomes necessary to close schools early, middle and high school students will be dismissed first, followed by grades K-5. Parents should develop a plan to deal with the early arrival of their children from school. Bus drivers will monitor the safe arrivals of K-5 students at their homes. If students cannot be safely let off the bus, they will be returned to their schools or to a predetermined site. It is our goal to provide a safe haven for our students through the cooperative efforts of schools, parents, and students. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,


Dr. Ken Oertling

Superintendent
St. Charles Parish Public Schools

WELCOME TO SCPPS Head Start



On behalf of the staff at St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start, I am happy to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year. We believe our program will offer your child a quality, comprehensive preschool experience in a loving, caring, and safe environment. We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential. We recognize that in order to be successful in school, children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education.

The St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start Program is a federally funded child development program designed to meet the educational, social, emotional, health, and physical needs of three and four-year-old children. Services are provided to assist the family in setting goals and accessing community agencies. The program will provide a full day of activities for your child five days a week, including a developmentally appropriate education curriculum, complete medical, dental, and mental health services, a nutrition program, and disability services, if needed by your child, social services for your child and your family, and many opportunities for parent involvement.

We invite you to become an active participant in our school community through joining our Policy Council and attending Parents of Pandas (POP) meetings this year. We truly believe that communication is the key to a successful educational experience. Together, we will continue to improve the quality of our school community and provide the best for the children at SCPPS Head Start.

The information presented in this handbook is vital in establishing an atmosphere of true understanding between the school, parents, and students. Important information about school policies and procedures for the 2025-2026 session are included in this booklet. Please know that at any time during this year if a need arises, procedures may be changed to uphold a safe and supportive learning environment. If questions arise, feel free to call the school for clarification.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me at Carver Early Learning Center (985) 783-6617 or East Bank Head Start (985) 764-7585. Thank you for your continued Panda Partnership.

Sincerely,

Administrator of Head Start

SCHOOL information



SCPPS Head Start Sites	
<u>East Bank Head Start</u>	<u>G.W. Carver Early Learning Center</u>
13292 River Road Destrehan, LA 70047	337 Gum Street Hahnville, LA 70057
(985) 764-7535 Fax: (985) 725-0911	(985) 783-6617 Fax: (985) 783-6626
Web Site: https://headstart.wearescpps.org/	
Social Media: SCPPS HeadStart Facebook and Instagram	

School Office Hours

8:00 – 3:45

Regular School Time Schedule

Students Arrive	8:40 – 8:50
School Begins/Late Bell	8:50
Students Dismissed	3:40 – 3:50
Car Riders begin at 3:35.	

Early Dismissal Days Schedule

Students Arrive	8:40 – 8:50
School Begins/Late Bell	8:50
Students Dismissed	12:45 – 12:55
Car Riders begin at 12:40.	

On Early Release Days and **Parent-Teacher Conference** days, the students will be fed breakfast, instructed, and fed lunch prior to dismissal.

SCHOOL information



MISSION

Our mission is to create an educational community where all children and families feel supported, loved, and respected within a collaborative learning environment that impacts student growth.

VISION

We are the exemplary early childhood provider that ensures the best educational foundation for all students and families. We empower all students and families to embrace learning, achieve their personal best, and build their social, emotional, and physical well-being to become lifelong learners ready to meet the challenges of the future.

VALUES/BELIEFS

At SCPPS Head Start we believe:

- the family is the child's "first teacher".
- strong parent-child relationships are essential.
- strong family-school relationships are essential.
- in a holistic approach to family and community engagement.
- in a safe, loving, and nurturing environment.
- children learn through play.
- each child is a unique individual and has diverse needs and learning styles.
- every child deserves a solid foundation for school success.
- staff will grow professionally to equitably support all students and families.
- success begins with working as one team to make a difference.
- our interactions impact student learning.

DISTRICT CREDO

Our Core Business...Teaching and Learning
Our Focus....Continuous Improvement
Our Commitment...Learning for Life

SCHOOL MOTTO

"Where a Child's Story Begins!"

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS

Pandas are smart.
Pandas are brave.
Pandas are kind.
I am a Panda!

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CALENDAR of events



2025-2026 At A Glance Calendar SCPPS Head Start

August

1 First Day for Teachers
1-14 Professional Learning /Teacher Prep Days
6 Meet and Greet - Party with the Pandas EBHS
7 Meet and Greet - Party with the Pandas CELC
12 Orientation CELC 9:15 - 10:30;
EBHS 5:15 - 6:30
15 First Day for Pre-K Students (A-K)
18 First Day for Pre-K Students (L-Z)

September

1 Labor Day Holiday
2 Playgroup, Volunteer Day - EBHS
3 Playgroup, Volunteer Day - CELC
8 Quarter 1 Progress reports go home
17 Student Holiday - Professional Learning

October

9 End of Quarter 1
13-14 Fall Break
21 Playgroup - EBHS
21 Quarter 1 Report cards go home
22 Playgroup - CELC
23 Early Dismissal/Conferences
24 Early Dismissal/Conferences
31 "Breakfast with My Boo"

November

10 Quarter 2 Progress reports go home
12 Student Holiday - Professional Learning
14 Parents of Pandas (POP) meeting
18 Playgroup, Volunteer Day - CELC
19 Playgroup, Volunteer Day - EBHS
21 Panda Fall Fest
24-28 Thanksgiving Holiday

December

9 Playgroup - EBHS
10 Playgroup - CELC
19 Pandas in Pajamas event
19 End of Quarter 2
19 Early Dismissal
22 - 31 Christmas Holiday

January

1 - 4 Christmas Holiday
5 Student Holiday - Professional Learning
13 Playgroup - EBHS
14 Playgroup - CELC
13 Quarter 2 Report cards go home
19 MLK Holiday
23 Parents of Pandas (POP) meeting

February

2 Quarter 3 Progress reports go home
5 Early Dismissal/Conferences
6 Early Dismissal/Conferences
10 Playgroup, Volunteer Day - EBHS
11 Playgroup, Volunteer Day - CELC
13 Panda Parade
16 - 20 Mardi Gras Holiday

March

9 PreK Artsperience "Don't Let the Pigeon..."
11 Student Holiday - Professional Learning
13 End of Quarter 3
17 Playgroup - EBHS
18 Playgroup - CELC
24 Quarter 3 Report cards go home

April

3 - 8 Easter Holiday
14 Playgroup - EBHS
15 Playgroup - CELC
20 Quarter 4 Progress reports go home
24 Parents of Pandas meeting

May

4 - 8 Educator Appreciation Week
7 Lagniappe on the River
11-15 Student Appreciation Week
11 Water Day
12 Grad Walks
14 Panda Prom
15 EOY Program at LPAC
18 PK Last Day; Quarter 4 Report cards go home
22 Educator Last Day

** Please note, all dates are subject to change.



ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE

policies & procedures



Attendance

It is necessary that your child attends school each day for the entire time in order to benefit from all the activities planned for the growth and development of young children. When a parent/guardian accepts a preschool placement, he/she must abide by the attendance rules and regulations set forth by the Louisiana State Department of Education. **Unexcused or excused absenteeism, excessive tardiness, and/or excessive early checkouts shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.**

It is important for your child to attend school every day that she/he is not ill.

Please notify your child's teacher **by calling the center** when your child will be absent. When a child is reported absent without notification from the parent, a designated staff member will contact the parent to determine the reason for the absence.

Absences that are considered Excused (verification will be required):

- Student or parent illness
- Family emergency death in immediate family
- Court hearing or court-ordered visitation
- Medical/dental appointments for child public assistance appointments (e.g. WIC)
- Extended absences due to medical emergencies for child or parent (must be requested in writing, in advance with proper documentation and approved by program administration)

Providing breakfast for tardy students

- Parent/guardian/designee signs the child into school at the Front Office.
- Parents are required to sit with a student to eat breakfast when **arriving at school after 9:00 a.m.**

If a student is checked out of school before their scheduled lunch period or snack time, they will not receive lunch or a snack since food cannot be taken off campus.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE

policies & procedures



Checking Your Child In/Out

Please remember that all four-year-old students who are enrolled in a Four-Year-Old Class are expected to ride a bus to school. In the event, however, that you must bring your child to school, it is recommended that the child arrive at school between **8:35 - 8:50 a.m.** Students are considered tardy after 8:50 a.m., and they must be signed into the front office by an adult.

Anyone picking up your child must present identification/valid photo ID and must be listed on the emergency release form as it appears on the ID; otherwise, your child will not be released.

This policy is in place for the safety and protection of your child

A parent or other designated adult must be 18 years of age to receive a child from the center and off the school bus. The adult must be **outside and visible with their identification in order for the bus to stop**. Bus Operators are NOT allowed to blow the horn or wait for the adult.

Emergency cards are used in the event of any emergency to contact you. Emergency cards MUST be updated with correct contact names, working phone numbers, working email addresses, and more than one emergency contact. If you wish to make changes to your child's emergency card, including the address or person who is able to pick your child up, it must be made at the center site with a School Office Specialist in person.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE

policies & procedures



The front office staff must be notified of any transportation changes. Changes will not be accepted after **3:00 p.m.** for the safety of the students and staff.

In the event that a child is not picked up within **30 minutes** of the designated pick-up time and all attempts to contact the parent/guardian or other emergency card designee have been unsuccessful, this will constitute an "emergency situation". The Center Director or staff member on duty will take steps to ensure the safety of the child which may include contact with Child Protective Services and/or the local police.

If a student is not picked up from the center on time the following will occur:

- 1st offense: Letter from Administration**
- 2nd offense: Parent Meeting with Family Service Worker**
- 3rd offense: Student will be assigned an early pickup time from campus**
- 4th offense: Student will have 1-day exclusion from campus**
- 5th offense: May result in exclusion from the program**

TRANSPORTATION

policies & procedures



Transportation by age group

Four-Year-Old Students

All four-year-old children are encouraged to use bus transportation in order to be on time each day.

In the extraordinary event that a child does not ride the bus to school, that child must be delivered in person by a responsible adult to the center and signed in by the person bringing the child. It is recommended that the child arrive no later than 8:50 a.m. Students arriving after **8:50 a.m.** are considered tardy.

An adult (**must be 18 years or older**) must be at the bus stop in the morning and the afternoon. An adult-to-adult child release is required. Children will not be allowed to enter or leave the bus if an adult is not at the bus stop. In the afternoon, the adult (must be 18 years or older) receiving the child must be on the student's emergency form, must present a valid photo ID, and must sign the daily bus log. If for any reason no one is at the bus stop to receive a child, he/she will be brought back to the center where the parent will need to come to get the child. If the problem is not resolved and continues, it may become the **responsibility of the parent to provide transportation for the child.** If however, the parent does not comply, further action may be necessary up to dismissal from the program.

If a student is returned to the center due on the bus the following will occur:

- 1st offense: Letter from administration**
- 2nd offense: Parent Meeting with Family Service Worker**
- 3rd offense: Student will have 1-day exclusion from riding the bus**
- 4th offense: Student will have 2-day exclusion from riding the bus**
- 5th offense: May result in loss of bus privileges**

TRANSPORTATION

policies & procedures



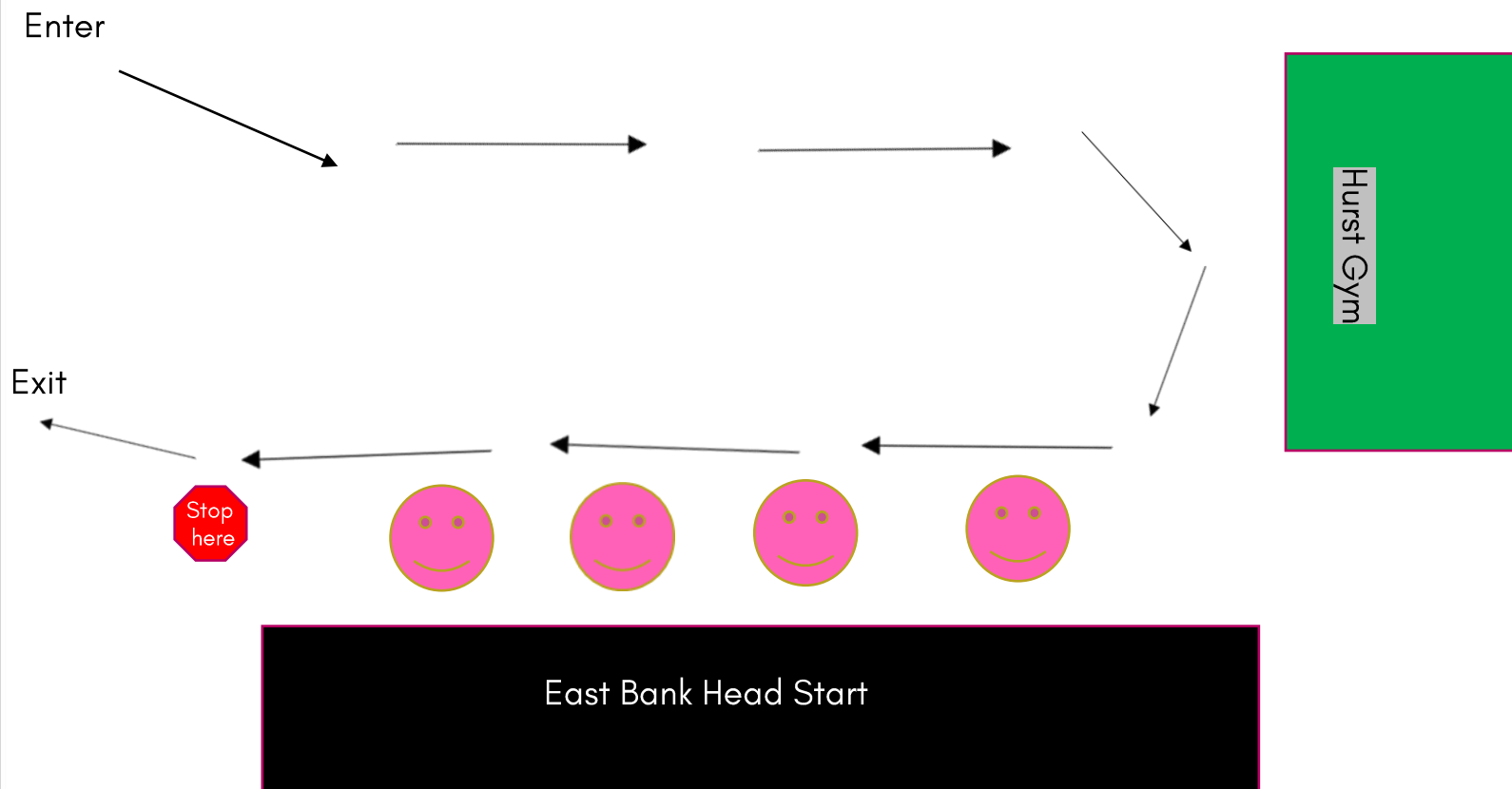
Three-Year-Old Students

Parents must provide transportation for students enrolled in the three-year-old classes to and from school. **Your child will be labeled as a CAR RIDER for the entire school year.**

Children must be delivered by a responsible adult (must be 18 years or older) to the front entrance of the center.

Students must be signed out by the parents/guardians or a person authorized on the emergency release form at the beginning of the school year. The person signing the child out will be **required to show identification.**

East Bank Head Start parents will proceed to the rear of the school near Hurst gym where they will form a car line. Students must be placed in the back seat on the driver's side. An adult will open the door, remove the student and walk them into school. Students should be ready to exit with shoes on and backpack ready.



TRANSPORTATION

policies & procedures



Three-Year-Old Students (continued)

Carver Head Start parents will arrive by turning right off Hahn Street onto Gum Street. After parking in an available parking spot, turn off the vehicle and walk your child into the school. Students **must** be accompanied by an adult while walking in the parking lot.

To exit, all parents will continue to head right on Gum Street (allowing one-way traffic into the school parking lot) to Pine Street or Julia Street.

Families are requested to refrain from the following hazardous conditions while on campus:

- Parking in the "No Parking Zones"
- Leaving children in vehicles while unattended
- Leaving the vehicle's motor on upon entering the building.
- All children must be placed in the rear of the vehicle and placed in age and weight-appropriate car seats and restraints.
- Refrain from using obscene language while on school grounds.

Louisiana law prohibits the use of handheld devices while operating a vehicle in school zones.

TRANSPORTATION

policies & procedures



The front office staff must be notified of any transportation changes. Changes will not be accepted after **3:00 p.m.** for the safety of the students and staff.

In the event that a child is not picked up within **30 minutes** of the designated pick-up time and all attempts to contact the parent/guardian or other emergency card designee have been unsuccessful, this will constitute an "emergency situation". The Center Director or staff member on duty will take steps to ensure the safety of the child which may include contact with Child Protective Services and/or the local police.

If a student is not picked up from the center on time the following will occur:

- 1st offense:** Letter from Administration
- 2nd offense:** Parent Meeting with Family Service Worker
- 3rd offense:** Student will be assigned an early pickup time from campus
- 4th offense:** Student will have 1-day exclusion from campus
- 5th offense:** May result in exclusion from the program

Before and After School Child Care Program

2025-2026 Registration Information

The Before and After School Child Care Program will serve families with students in grades Pre K 4 – 6th during the 2025-2026 school year in accordance with school calendar days.

All families wanting to use the program will need to submit an application, regardless of if their child/children have been previously enrolled. All parts of the application must be completed to be considered for enrollment.

The application can be found on the St. Charles Parish Public School's website and will be open in late summer 2025. For additional information, please contact the Child Welfare and Attendance Department at 985-785-6289.

STUDENT HEALTH

policies & procedures



Health Services

Early childhood development and health services are a major component of the program. Our program is committed to promoting the overall health and well-being of children and their families. This is accomplished through health, dental examinations, and follow-up treatment, if needed, that identifies potential concerns. Assisting families in finding an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care meeting the basic health and dental needs of children and their families is our goal.

Illness

Your child's interest in learning and participating largely depends upon his/her health. Knowing that you are eager to protect the health of your child, we ask that if your child appears to be ill before leaving for school in the morning, please keep him/her home. Your child needs rest to help him/her recover when he/she is sick. The best and most comfortable place for your child to rest is in his/her own home.

The child should remain home until he/she is completely well (**fever and symptom-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours**). If, after coming to school, your child becomes ill you will be contacted to pick him/her up from school within an hour. If a sick student is not picked up within one hour of parent notification DCFS will be contacted to report child neglect.

Students must have a medical release to return to school if the following occurs:

- overnight stay in the hospital
- broken or sprained body parts (arm, elbow, ankle, etc.)
- diagnosed with the flu or COVID

Listed below are a few reasons for your child to be kept at home are:

- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Sore throat or swollen, painful neck glands
- Uncontrolled coughing, wheezing, or any difficulty breathing
- Being too weak or tired to participate in usual daily activities
- Two or more episodes of vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Unknown rash

STUDENT HEALTH

policies & procedures



- Untreated conjunctivitis (pink-eye) with white or yellow drainage from the eyes
- Untreated infestations such as scabies or head lice
- Uncontrolled diarrhea or 2 or more episodes within a 24-hour period

If your child is sent home from school due to vomiting, diarrhea, or fever, they must remain home for a full 24 hours without any medication or symptoms before returning.

You must notify the school nurse or front office secretary if your child is taking a new medication, or if your child has been given treatments (breathing treatments) at home before their arrival at school so that the student can be closely monitored.

Accidents and Injuries

The staff makes every effort to ensure the safety of each child. Emergency contact information is kept on file for each student. The parent or emergency contact person will be notified according to this information in the event of an emergency. **It is extremely important that phone numbers, addresses, and contact persons be updated as soon as there are any changes to ensure that parents can be reached quickly.**

Nutrition

St. Charles Parish Public School Child Nutrition Program provides the children with daily nutritious meals, which include breakfast, lunch, and a snack. Each child's nutritional needs and requirements are met by serving a variety of healthy foods, which consider cultural and ethnic preferences, including children with special dietary needs and children with disabilities. The amount and types of foods served meet the state and federal requirements for 3-5-year-old children. All children will eat from the prepared menu.

Children requiring special diets for medical reasons must have a written statement signed by a physician on file in order to provide supplements to their diet. Please contact the Head Start Health Coordinator if you have any questions. Children can not bring any food to school **unless** the Health Coordinator has been contacted to discuss special diets and proper paperwork has been completed.

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Head Lice Policy

Any child exhibiting evidence of head lice will be promptly excluded from school. The program follows St. Charles Parish Public Schools Communicable Disease Policy for treatment and readmission of students with head lice. Because of the highly communicable nature of head lice, random checks of classrooms and of individuals where lice are suspected are conducted by school personnel.

Immunizations Policy

Louisiana Law 17:170 and School Board policy requires that all children entering school for the first time must present satisfactory evidence of having been immunized according to the state-recommended immunization schedule. Parents will be notified of required immunizations as they are due. Failure to comply will result in the student being excluded until appropriate documentation that immunizations have been given is received at school.

Medication Policy

It is seldom necessary for any school personnel to give medication to a child during the school day. Children who are acutely ill will be sent home. Children who are recovering from an acute illness should remain home until the medication is no longer needed.

Special situations do exist for a health program that will involve long-term medication. If such a situation should arise, the Health Coordinator must be contacted as to the procedures to follow. Any medication brought to the school without first contacting the Health Coordinator will not be administered. **Medications cannot be sent to school on the bus.** See the St. Charles Parish Public Schools Policy and Procedure Administration of medication at school.

Screenings

The Health Coordinator conducts height, weight, vision, and hearing screenings on every child. Please contact the Head Start Health Coordinator for any assistance needed if a referral for further service is recommended.

STUDENT HEALTH

policies & procedures



Follow-Up Health Care

There are times when the physician, dentist, Health Coordinator, and/or mental health consultant recommend that additional treatment or testing is necessary for the overall health of your child and the enhancement of his learning experience. If this is necessary, please know that the Health Coordinator and staff are available to assist you.

Mental Health

All students will receive a mental health screening and observation. If a student is referred for further assessment, the parent/guardian will be notified. If you have any particular concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher, our school counselor, and/or the Family Service Worker to make arrangements with the mental health services provider to discuss your concerns.

Communicable Disease Control and Prevention

St. Charles Parish School Board follows current public health practices, rules, and regulations governing the control and prevention of communicable diseases that are established by the State Department of Health. Any child exhibiting evidence of any communicable disease or infection will be promptly excluded from school for the health and well-being of others and the ill child.

The child who has a communicable disease or any other transmissible affliction will be readmitted to school only after giving evidence of having received treatment from a physician (i.e.: doctor's note) and/or being checked by the Health Coordinator. Examples (including but not limited to): Chicken Pox, Ringworm, Lice, Pink Eyes, Scabies, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, etc.

COMMUNICATION

policies & procedures



Child's Communication Folder

A colored folder will be provided by the program. All important information for the parents will be placed inside a folder and sent home in the book bag. Please check your child's folder **daily** for important information. Please send any parent notes, forms, and documents back to school in the child's folder.

Monthly Newsletter

You will be receiving monthly newsletters with information from teachers and other staff members about what is happening at school and upcoming events. The newsletter will provide important information about opportunities for you and ways that you can help your child.

Black Board Connect

This is a communication system that uses the telephone and internet to deliver a message from the program to families. You will receive a Connect Ed message, in the form of a phone call or email, prior to scheduled events, early dismissal or no school days, holidays and school breaks, etc. The school district also uses this as a form of communication, therefore it is important that you have an updated phone number and/or email address on file.

School Status

This tool will enhance communication efforts between school staff members and parents. *SchoolStatus* gives teachers and administrators an opportunity to remotely text and call parents from a phone number that is YOUR direct line to the educator contacting you.

Each time you receive a phone call from a St. Charles Parish Public Schools teacher or staff member through *SchoolStatus*, you will hear "Powered by *SchoolStatus*, calls are recorded" at the start of the call. *SchoolStatus* is an official, approved communication platform of the district.

Social Media

These platforms are used to highlight important events and showcase activities that happen during the day. We can also communicate important messages or reminders using our Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Follow us

@SCPPSHeadStart.

PARENT involvement



How to get involved

Parents of the Pandas

Join our Parents of Pandas Committee (POP). This group of parents and community members will review the policies of the centers, discuss the curriculum, plan events, and be active participants in meetings.

Parent Conferences

In addition to the home visits, at least **two** parent conferences will be scheduled with you and your child's teacher during the program year. Other staff members may want to meet with you from time to time to talk about the special needs of your child or family.

Home Visits

In order to better serve your child, our staff will be making visits to your home during the year. The purpose of these visits is to get to know your child, the family, and any special needs or concerns that would keep your child from obtaining the best possible start toward his/her education and life. We will be coming to share information with you about our program, your child, and how we can better serve you. At the conclusion of each home visit, you will be asked to sign a home visit report.

Playgroup

A playgroup is an organized group providing care and socialization for children under five. Playgroup offers an opportunity for parents and children to engage in activities designed to support quality "parent-child" interaction and enhance learning. Playgroup opportunities will be offered several times throughout the year, and we encourage all families to participate. We will offer Community Playgroups throughout the year for you to attend with children who are not currently enrolled in a school setting.

PARENT involvement



Family Partnership Agreement

Building effective partnerships with families is an essential aspect of supporting school readiness for children enrolled in our program. The Family Partnership Agreement will help identify family strengths and needs related to family engagement outcomes. A Family Service Worker will reach out to you during the school year to help with this agreement. These needs will be discussed throughout the year for planning and follow-ups.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of your child's educational experience; therefore we encourage 100% student participation. Our program will include planned, regular trips away from the school for students enrolled so that they may gain new experiences. Sometimes it may be a local trip, such as a bus ride to an out-of-town location. You will be notified of field trips in advance and parent permission is necessary for your child to participate. The teacher will send home a permission form for each field trip. It is important for you to promptly return the signed permission slip each time your child is scheduled for a field trip.

If you attend the field trip, you will be responsible for the well-being and safety of your child. Occasionally, a parent will be requested to accompany his/her child on a field trip as a result of unusual behavioral concerns.

Siblings and children not registered with the program are not allowed on field trips.

******Parents/Chaperones MUST review, sign, and agree to our Chaperone Expectations Agreement Form prior to attending any field trips.******

Chaperones will need to check in with the front office to be scanned into our Raptor System and also must be on the student's emergency form.

PARENT involvement



Parents as Observers

You are encouraged to visit your child's classroom to observe your child in any of his/her activities. Throughout the year parents will be invited to participate in a variety of workshops or gatherings. You will need to check in at the office prior to observing or volunteering at school. A request form will be completed with the administrator or center director. The observation will be conducted for no longer than 20 minutes with the administrator and/or center director. Parents are not to interact with the teacher during the observation (such as asking questions, interrupting the lesson, or taking pictures).

Parent Curriculum

A program must offer opportunities for parents to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum that builds on parents' knowledge and offers parents the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development. We have implemented the Positive Solutions for Families Curriculum. All families are encouraged to participate.

Celebrations

Our centers will provide healthy snacks to celebrate students throughout the year. Candy and other non-nutritional foods cannot be brought into the centers and will not be served. Acceptable treats include, but are not limited to: colors, bubbles, pencils, and trinkets that do not contain choking hazards.

Celebrating your child's birthday

Each classroom teacher/instructor will decide how they will celebrate and honor each child's birthday in the classroom setting. Each morning children with a birthday will be announced over the intercom system during morning announcements. See above for acceptable treats.

THE SCHOOL day



Appropriate Dress

Children should be dressed in comfortable, school-appropriate clothes when they come to school. They should not be in dress-up clothes. Your child's clothes should be such that they can easily handle them when going to the restroom. Please do not send your child in clothes with too many buckles, buttons, snaps, or ties that he/she cannot handle alone. Dress your child appropriately for the weather. No rompers, spaghetti straps, tank tops, and/or tube tops. Shorts and dresses should be at least knee length. Label all jackets, sweaters, coats, etc. with your child's first and last name.

Children must wear closed-toe shoes to school each day. To prevent injury, it is important for your child to wear comfortable shoes that cover the entire foot. **Sandals, open-toe shoes, and/or Crocs are not allowed.**

Sneakers (tennis shoes) and socks are appropriate footwear.

Students cannot wear **small beads** in their hair while attending school. These are considered choking hazards. The parent will be contacted to remove the hair beads or the student will be excluded from school until the hazard is removed.

Change of Clothing

Young children sometimes have accidents. Therefore, parents are required to send a change of clothes to school. Label your child's clothing with his/her name on each garment. Please choose clothing that will be suitable for all seasons. If you need assistance with extra clothing, please notify your Family Service Worker.

Bringing Things to School

Children should not bring money, toys, electronic devices, snacks or any other items to school unless requested to do so by the teacher. If such items are brought to school without permission, the teacher will keep the article and then send it home with the child at the end of the day. Parents will be required to pick up cell phones and any other items of value.

School Bags and School Supplies

The program will provide school bags and all needed school supplies. Only the school bags provided will be permitted. The teacher will provide a special bag for library books. Please check your child's book bag daily for important information.

OTHER information



Safety and Supervision

Child-to-staff ratios for type III centers are as follows.

Children shall be supervised at all times in the center, on the playground, on field trips, on non-vehicular excursions, and during all water activities and water play activities.

Children shall not be left alone in any room (with the exception of bathroom use) outdoors, or in vehicles, even momentarily, without staff present.

Minimum Child-to-Staff Ratios—Types III Centers	
Ages of Children	Ratio
3 years	13:1
4 years	15:1

Name Tags

Each child will be given a name tag at the beginning of the year. The student **must** wear a name tag to school every day -- all year long. This tag will be used to track your student's bus using the district's "Where's the Bus?" app. These tags will be utilized by the buses to indicate when students are picked up and dropped off. This is necessary to ensure the safety of your child along with his/her safe transport from home to school and home again.

Reasons for student removal from the program

The following problems/situations may result in a child being dismissed from the Head Start Program. These may include but are not limited to:

1. Recurring lice infestations
2. Non-compliance with state immunization laws
3. Ongoing and consistent absence/tardiness
4. Disruptive behaviors

Adult Conduct

In circumstances where adults (parents, family members, volunteers) do not adhere to St. Charles Parish School System's Policies and Procedures, it may be necessary to request that the adult vacate the premises. Additionally, parent conduct is crucial to the smooth operation of the centers.

OTHER information



Fully Informed Consent to Release or Receive Information

In order to release/receive your child's records, fully informed, written parental consent shall be obtained. This requires that the parent has been fully informed regarding:

- 1.The specific information/record to be requested.
- 2.The person/agency to receive the information.
- 3.The purpose/use to be made of the information.
- 4.The reasonable consequences of the refusal of consent to the release of information.
- 5.Consent is voluntary and may be revoked in writing.

Only information/records initiated by St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start Program shall be released to other agencies/providers with informed parental consent.

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The Head Start Centers are licensed as a Type III Early Learning Center by the State of Louisiana, Department of Education – Licensing Division. The licensing authority of the Department of Education – Licensing Division is established by Louisiana Law R.S. 46:1401-142 (Act 286 of 1985), making mandatory the licensing of all childcare facilities in the state of Louisiana with an annual renewal process.

In addition, Head Start provides services to eligible children without regard to race, sex, creed, color, national origin, disability, ancestry, or whether a child is being breastfed.

If you, as a parent or guardian, have any significant, unresolved complaints about the following licensing standards, we would hope that you would discuss your concerns first with the Head Start Director in order that they might be resolved at the local level. If your concern or complaint has not been sufficiently addressed, you may feel free to contact the appropriate state officials at:

Louisiana Dept. of Education
Division of Licensing
P.O. Box 4249
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821
Phone: (225) 342-9905
Fax: (225) 342-2498

Visit the LDOE website to observe deficiencies and/or get licensing information at louisianabelieves.com.

Reference: Bulletin 137

Louisiana School Finder

To find out information about schools and early childhood centers in your area, visit: www.louisianaschools.com, and type in a school or center's name, or your zip code.

The following policies are directly taken from Bulletin 137 and are mandatory to inform families.

All policies can be located at: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood/child-care-and-development-fund-licensing>

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Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

As staff, we are mandatory reporters of any child neglect or abuse. Staff is trained on the procedures to follow when suspecting any incidents that will put a child in danger.

It is the policy of the St. Charles Parish Public Schools and is mandated by the state of Louisiana in the Children's Code Article 603 that any suspected child abuse or neglect is reported by a teacher, aide, nurse, or any member of the Head Start staff to the Department of Children & Family Services. Failure of a mandatory reporter to report suspected child abuse is punishable by law.

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC) Policy

*Part CLXL. Bulletin 137-Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations
Chapter 18 Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC)*

No person who has been found by the department to be ineligible for child care purposes shall own, operate or participate in the governance of an early learning center, or shall be employed by an early learning center as a volunteer, staff member, employee or independent contractor of any kind, or shall be employed by an entity identified in §1809 as an employee or contract employee that provides services in early learning centers when children are present.

G.W. Carver Early Learning Center and the East Bank Head Start Center are licensed facilities. Per the Louisiana Department of Education, Licensing Division, the physical presence of a sex offender in, on, or within 1,000 feet of a child day care facility is prohibited. Providers and child care staff shall not permit an individual convicted of a sex offense, as defined in R.S. 15:541, physical access to a child day care facility, as defined in R.S. 46:1403.

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Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy

Personal electronic devices are not to be used on the school campus including all buildings, classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, gymnasiums, restrooms, reception area, front entrance, Field Trips, and playground. Cell phones should be on silent or vibrate, or preferably turned off, whenever you are visiting our center.

For the purposes of this policy, a personal electronic device is any device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays any message or video image, or is otherwise capable of sending, receiving, emitting, photographing, recording, storing, or displaying any type of audio or visual communication, files, or data. This includes but is not limited to, cellular phones, smartphones, smartwatches, earphones, headphones, camera phones, camera devices, video and audio recording devices, digital recording devices, scanning devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), MP3 players, iPods, iPads, tablets, computers, radios, pagers, any device that allows the possessor to access the Internet, or any similar device or any accessories to such devices such as earphones and Bluetooth devices.

Live Streaming or social media posting is not allowed and automatically violates the cell phone/electronic device policy.

Cyberbullying of staff or volunteers whether by parent/legal guardians, or those linked to parent/legal guardians, e.g. other family members are unacceptable and prohibited. Our center follows the guidelines as set out in the St. Charles Parish Policies and Procedures District Handbook. The center also makes it clear that it is not acceptable for parent/legal guardians, or those linked to parent/legal guardians or colleagues to disparage and bully staff or volunteers via social media in the same way that it is unacceptable to do so face-to-face. The center encourages all staff, volunteers, parent/legal guardians, and those linked to parent/legal guardians to use social media responsibly.

Additional Electronic Devices Policies set forth by St. Charles Parish Public Schools:

Electronic devices used by the children at the center are the following: television, computers, hand-held electronic devices, Nuline Boards, and Chromebooks. Time allowed for electronic device activities shall not exceed two hours per day.

Computers have filtering software (BARK) that limits access by children to inappropriate websites, email, and instant messaging.

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Parent Involvement Policy

Our program promotes active parental involvement. The importance of building a trusting, collaborative partnership is emphasized throughout the Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR 1304.40. Through partnership activities such as training sessions, workshops, and volunteer/committee service opportunities, support is provided to help parents identify their own strengths, needs, interests, and solutions as well as increase their understanding of their child's developmental and learning patterns. Therefore, all parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the various Head Start partnership activities/opportunities sponsored throughout the year. Working together we can give our children the support they need to succeed.

Parent Access to Child Records Policy

Parents have full review and access rights to information specifically regarding their own children, which is collected and maintained by the program.

The parental right to inspect and review their child's records includes the right to a response from the St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start Program to specific requests for explanations and interpretations of data, test results, etc. Parents may review their child's records, and in the event that they disagree with the information maintained therein, they may request, in writing, to have the record corrected/amended. If the parent and the Administrator/Director are unable to agree to the requests or amendments, the parent's request and all explanations shall be maintained and become a part of the record.

A parent maintains full access rights to review information relating to her/his child, except when St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start Program has been notified **IN WRITING FROM THE COURT** that the parent's authority has been removed by applicable state laws regarding guardianship, separation, or divorce.

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Behavior Management Policy

Our program is dedicated to assisting your child to recognize, understand, and follow rules. Behavior Management in our program shall always be carried out in an atmosphere of love, caring, and gentleness. Children will be given a clear understanding of what behavior is acceptable and what is unacceptable behavior. Head Start staff is trained in how to set limits for children and what steps to take when behavior is unacceptable. Our program follows a conscious discipline model which is explicitly taught through our curriculum. The policy shall be reviewed and implemented by all staff members.

We believe that children should be given structure and guidance, but within that structure, they should have opportunities to make choices.

One of the primary ways that adults teach is by modeling or setting an example for children to imitate. Children practice what they learn from watching adults. Children repeat what they hear adults say. This is why it is so important for adults to set good examples for children. With regard to Behavior Management, this means that adults should model nonviolent methods of problem-solving for our children. Demonstrating appropriate social skills, even when you are angry can help a child learn how to handle his/her own difficult situations. This is only one of the reasons why physical and verbal punishments are never used with children at Head Start. Physical contact is only used when necessary to restrain a child whose behavior is dangerous to himself/herself or others.

If a child creates an unusual behavioral concern at school or on the bus, the parents may be required to keep the child at home for at **least one day**. This allows time for the parent to talk to the child about his/her unacceptable behavior. Additionally, Head Start staff need the time to gather information and resources to support the child and family upon his/her return to school.

Per state licensing regulations, the following policies are in place regarding acceptable forms of Behavior Management for children in the Head Start Program:

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The behavior management policy shall prohibit children from being subject to any of the following:

- Physical or corporal punishment which includes but is not limited to yelling, slapping, spanking, yanking, shaking, pinching, exposure to extreme temperatures or other measures producing physical pain, putting anything in the mouth of a child, requiring a child to exercise, or placing a child in an uncomfortable position.
- Verbal abuse, which includes but is not limited to using offensive or profane language, telling a child to “shut up”, or making derogatory remarks about children or family members of children in the presence of children;
- Use any form of emotional abuse, including public or private humiliation, rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, or corrupting a child;
- The threat of a prohibited action even if there is no intent to follow through with the threat;
- Being disciplined by another child;
- Being bullied by another child;
- Being deprived of food or beverages;
- Bind or tie a child to restrict movement or tape a child’s mouth;
- Being restrained by devices such as high chairs or feeding tables for disciplinary purposes;
- Use toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child;
- Having active playtime withheld for disciplinary purposes, except timeout may be used during active playtime for an infraction incurred during the playtime;
- Use physical activity or outdoor time as a punishment or reward

Use of Time Out

- A time-out shall take place within sight of staff.
- The length of each time out shall be based on the age of the child and shall not exceed 1 minute per year of age.
- For children over age six, a time out may be extended beyond 1 minute per year of age, if a signed and dated statement, including a maximum time limit, from the parent granting such permission, is on file at the center.

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Biting Policy

The Head Start Program attempts to promote harmony between all children in the program; however, some incidences are unavoidable. The program attempts to minimize repeated biting episodes by separating the children involved and evaluating each incident immediately.

Staff will complete an incident form and document the bite in the Head Start "bite book".

The parents will be notified of all bite incidents.

The records of the child doing the actual biting will be reviewed to ensure that the child has no documented communicable illnesses.

Documentation will be kept on each occurrence, including attempted bites, and the number of actual bites.

The wound will be cleaned. If the skin is broken, parents will be encouraged to seek further medical attention.

The name of the child doing the biting will be kept confidential other than in communication with that particular child's parent.

The program will monitor those who have a tendency to bite very closely and a behavior intervention plan will be implemented with the teacher, parent, and support staff as needed.

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Tobacco, Alcohol, Illegal Substance and Fire Arm Policy

It is the policy of the St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start Program that the indoor and outdoor environments and vehicles used by the program are designated as non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco in any form, alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited on the facility premises. Signs to this effect will be kept posted around the facility.

Possessing any lighted tobacco product is prohibited on all school system property and on all school system-owned buses and vehicles. This applies even when students are not on campus and include parking lots and any other outside portions of school property in addition to all buildings.

Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited on St. Charles Parish Public School property. The center shall prohibit the use of alcohol and tobacco and the use of possession of illegal substances, and unauthorized potentially toxic substances.

All childcare providers and staff will maintain sobriety while providing child care. Caregivers, staff, or other adults who are inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances will be required to leave the premises immediately.

No guns, fireworks, firearms, pellet or BB guns on the center premises, or other lethal weapons will be allowed at any Head Start Center, and notice to this effect shall be posted.

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The Head Start Program Performance Standards, and the Federal Register, Volume 40, No. 126 state that the Board of Directors has the responsibility for “establishing criteria for selection of children within applicable laws and HHS guidelines.” In carrying out this responsibility, St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start has set as its primary objective, recruitment efforts for a maximum number of eligible children who may have limited resources. St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start is only serving a percentage of the eligible children in its target area, priorities for recruitment must be established and followed. In addition, recruitment must be carried out in such a way as to minimize personal bias, prejudice, or political agenda.

Nondiscrimination Policy:

St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start and Early Childhood Programs shall provide enrollment opportunities to eligible families regardless of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, disability, religion or gender.

Recruitment Policy:

These policies and procedures apply to both of the centers operated by St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start:

Recruitment With Regard to Income -- A minimum of ninety percent (90%) of the total enrollment opportunities shall be provided to children from eligible, low-income families. The term eligible in these policies means a family whose total income before taxes is equal to, or less than, the official poverty line specified by the Office of Management and Budget for the current program year. For the purpose of eligibility, a child from a family receiving public assistance or a child in foster care is eligible even if the family income exceeds the income guidelines (45 CFR Part 1302.12(c) (ii) (iii)).

Recruitment With Regard to Age - To be eligible for Head Start services, a child must be at least three or four years old on or before September 30th, which is the date used to determine eligibility for kindergarten in all Louisiana public schools. Every effort shall be made to recruit children who are three or four years of age so that services may be provided to them in the year immediately preceding the year in which the child will be eligible for kindergarten. The Head Start Administrator must assure that eighteen (18) children shall be enrolled in each Pre-K-4 classroom with two staff members; no more than fifteen (15) three year old children shall be enrolled in any one Pre-K-3 classroom with two staff members.

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Recruitment with Regard to Ethnicity— Every effort shall be made to recruit children who reflect the ethnic composition of disadvantaged families in the target area being served. In order to achieve ethnic balance, each Head Start Center must recruit economically disadvantaged families from every ethnic group in the communities served. Every attempt must be made to enroll children from these groups.

Recruitment with Regard to Disabilities— At least ten percent of the total enrollment opportunities in each program shall be made available to children with disabilities. “Children with disabilities means children with intellectual disability, deaf and/or hard of hearing, blindness, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, developmental delay, speech or language impairments, or specific learning disabilities, and who, by reason thereof need special education and related services.” Programs shall actively recruit children with disabilities. Programs must contact agencies that serve children with disabilities for referrals to Head Start. The Administrator shall maintain working relationships with their local LEA (school board) special education staff and other early intervention programs in order to determine which children with diagnosed disabilities may be best served by Head Start. A statement that programs serve children with disabilities shall be included in all advertising, fliers, and news releases.

All staff engaged in recruitment and enrollment must be trained in the provisions of 45 CFR Part 84: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance and with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101). The Disabilities Specialist and director shall be responsible for providing this training.

Recruitment Area— St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start determined the entire St. Charles Parish as the proposed service area. St. Charles Parish Public Schools Head Start shall recruit and serve children who reside within the parish target area that it is funded to serve.

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Recruitment Procedures:

Recruitment Process— The Head Start office will provide information to all eligible families within the recruitment area of the availability of services and encourage them to apply for admission to the program. Applications to determine eligibility and to place a child on the waiting list shall be taken at any time during the year. Recruitment shall be an ongoing activity. Major emphasis shall be placed on recruitment between the periods of February and August of each program year. Recruitment efforts shall ensure that we provide services to three and four-year-old students in our community.

Recruitment Techniques— The program shall maintain a file to document all recruitment efforts including the following:

- Training staff in recruitment techniques
- Canvassing all of the local communities in the service area
- Use of news releases and advertising such as church bulletins, newspapers, social media
- Use of family referrals
- Collaboration with public health and social service agencies, housing developments and parish government offices.
- Development of fliers and posters for display distribution
- Door-to-door recruitment efforts if other efforts are not successful

Applications to Determine Eligibility

During the recruitment process, the Head Start program must solicit applications from as many eligible families within the recruitment area as possible. All families wishing to apply for the Head Start program must submit an application. Family means all persons living in the same household who are supported by the income of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child enrolling or participating in the program and related to the parent(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage, or adoption (45CFR 1305.2). Income means total gross wages and salaries from all sources before deductions, net income from self-employment, regular payments from social security or other retirement pay, unemployment compensation, strike benefits, worker's compensation, public assistance benefits, training stipends, alimony, child support, military income (allotments), veterans benefits, college or university scholarships, grants, fellowships and assistantships, dividends, interest, net rental income, net rental income, net royalties, and net gambling or lottery winnings (ACYF-HS-IM-99-03).

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Period of time to be considered for eligibility is either:

- the twelve months immediately preceding the month in which the application for enrollment of a child in Head Start is made or
- the calendar year immediately preceding the year in which the application is made, whichever more accurately reflects the family's current needs.

Before the application process begins one of the following types of documentation of income must be made available: 1) current food stamp household record, or 2) current income tax Form 1040, 3) current W-2 forms for all working family members, 4) current pay stubs – three for each working family member, 5) written verification from current employer(s), 6) unemployment documentation/benefits, 7) verification of worker's compensation or 8) documentation of amount received from public assistance.

Application Status Change – If it becomes apparent that there are changes in the information provided in the initial application interview to determine eligibility, and if these changes might benefit the child/family, then revisions to the computerized information/application shall be completed with the corrected documentation attached. If it is determined that any information related to eligibility given during the application interview is false, the application will be immediately voided, the child's status will be changed to Withdrawn from the Waiting List (or Withdrawn from the Program if already enrolled), and the parent/guardian shall be notified immediately.

Selection Procedures:

Initial Selection – A waiting list of children is generated prioritized by age, family size, income, and needs. No referral or disability information shall be entered into the FileMaker Pro program unless and until documentation (ie. IEP, medical documentation, etc.) has been provided. All information shall then be entered into the computerized program which will automatically sort applications on the basis of age, income, family size, and needs as weighted by the intake weighted criteria factors. Initial selection for enrollment of income-eligible four-year-olds may be made as soon as the child is on the waiting list and all information needed for enrollment is provided by the parent/guardian.

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Completion of Selection – All funded enrollment slots should be filled through the selection process from the prioritized waiting list. This completion of selection should take into account any applications or referrals from children/families with special needs and/or disabilities that were received during the summer. All children with identified disabilities should be enrolled before the last 10% of the enrollment slots are filled.

Waiting List – All applications of children not selected, and any additional applications taken shall be maintained on the FileMaker Pro generated waiting list. A current FileMaker Pro waiting list shall be printed before selecting any additional children to fill vacancies. Each program must have an effective, ongoing recruitment effort to maintain a waiting list to assure that eligible children enter the program as vacancies occur.

Waiting List Confidentiality – Waiting lists must be stored in a locked, confidential file, and passwords shall be issued to assure that computerized access to the waiting list is confidential.

Approved by Policy Council March, 2006

Eligibility Criteria approved by Policy Council January, 2023



G.W. Carver Early Learning Center and East Bank Head Start Excused Absence Form

Date: _____ Child's Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Please excuse my son/daughter from his/her classes on _____
(Insert Date of Absence(s))

For the following reason:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Illness: _____ | ☐ Family Emergency/Death in Family |
| ☐ Transportation (lack of), missed the bus | ☐ Court Hearing or Court Order Visitation |
| ☐ Doctor's/Dentist appointment/visit | ☐ Weather Conditions |
| ☐ Other _____ | |

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: _____ **Staff Initial:** _____