



Early Childhood Handbook 2026-2027



Program Locations and Phone Numbers

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Sossaman ECDC Brilliant Beginnings, Kindergarten Prep, Cross Cat Special Education 18655 E. Jacaranda Blvd. Queen Creek, AZ 85142 School Office: 480-279-8613 San Tan Elementary Dual Language Immersion Kindergarten Prep 3443 E. Calistoga Dr. Gilbert, AZ 85297 School Office: 480-279-7200	Billing and Enrollment for Sossaman and San Tan 480-279-8613 Nicole Camp, Office Manager Sarah Gagliardi, Office Assistant Paula Kwiatkowski Office Assistant
Cooley ECDC Brilliant Beginnings, Kindergarten Prep, Cross Cat Special Education 1100 S. Recker Rd. Gilbert, AZ 85296 School Office: 480-279-8413 Gateway Pointe Kindergarten Prep 2069 S. De La Torre Dr. Gilbert, AZ 85295 School Office: 480-279-7700 Higley Traditional Academy Kindergarten Prep 3391 E. Vest Ave. Gilbert, AZ 85295 School Office: 480-279-6800	Billing and Enrollment for Cooley, Gateway Pointe, and Higley Traditional Academy 480-279-8413 Mona Skyler, Office Manager Michelle Brennan, Office Assistant

Our ECDC Mission

Our certified, early childhood educators and staff inspire curiosity, build problem solving skills, self-esteem and foster a love for learning in our young children within a nurturing and play-based environment.

Our ECDC Vision

Bring teachers, parents and community together to educate and improve the lives of children and their families.

Our ECDC Goal

- Provide quality, foundational early childhood experiences
- Provide loving, safe and nurturing early childhood environments
- Build self-esteem
- Develop creativity and a joy of learning
- Expand communication and language skills
- Foster self-control and responsibility
- Develop fine and gross motor skills
- Cultivate academic skills
- Develop problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Encourage concern for others

Program Options and Tuition

A \$75 non-refundable annual program registration fee will be collected when enrollment forms are submitted. Please refer to the calendar that was given to you for more information regarding half day schedules and school closures. Class times may vary slightly to assist with pickup/drop off and parking lot congestion.

Brilliant Beginnings- Three and early four year olds. Must be 3 years old and FULLY potty trained (no pull-ups).

Session Options	Start Time	End Times	Time in Class	Monthly Tuition
AM M-F, M/W/F, T/TH	8:00 & 8:15	11:00 & 11:15 M/T/TH/F 10:00 & 10:15 W	3 hours M/T/TH/F 2 hours W	M-F: \$450 M/W/F: \$235 T/TH: \$180
PM M-F, M/W/F, T/TH	11:45	2:45 M/T/TH/F 1:45 W	3 hours M/T/TH/F 2 hours W	M-F: \$450 M/W/F: \$235 T/TH: \$180
Full Day M-F, M/W/F, T/TH	7:30-8:15	2:30-3:15 M/T/TH/F 1:15 - 1:45 W	7 hours M/T/TH/F 5.5 hours W	M-F: \$800 M/W/F: \$460 T/TH: \$330

Kindergarten Prep – Four and five year olds. Students must be four years old by August 31st.

Session Options	Start Time	End Times	Time in Class	Monthly Tuition
AM M-F	8:00-8:15	11:00-11:15 M/T/TH/F 10:00-10:15 W	3 hours M/T/TH/F 2 hours W	M-F: \$450
PM M-F	11:45	2:45 M/T/TH/F 1:45 W	3 hours M/T/TH/F 2 hours W	M-F: \$450
Full Day M-F	7:15 - 7:45	2:15 - 2:45 M/T/TH/F 1:15 - 1:45 W	7 hours M/T/TH/F 5.5 hours W	M-F: \$800

DES Provider

If you believe your family would be eligible for childcare assistance provided through the Department of Economic Security, please contact a local DES Childcare Office or visit www.azdes.gov for more information. If you have already been approved by DES for childcare assistance, please contact an HUSD Early Childhood Development Center for registration information.

Registration Policies

The HUSD Early Childhood programs are open to all children. It does not discriminate as to race, creed, color, or gender. Registration and payments must be completed online through our ARUX system on our district website. The staff at our Early Childhood Development Centers are happy to assist you with online registration and payments.

To complete your child's registration, you will need to submit the following during the enrollment process:

- A copy of your child's birth certificate
- Immunization record
- Proof of residency
- A copy of your driver's license
- Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), if applicable

A separate registration is required for each child and incomplete packets may delay enrollment.

Lunch (Full Day Preschool Students)

Full day students can bring a lunch from home or purchase lunch at school. We encourage families to not pack candy and surgery treats in order to promote healthy habits. You will receive additional information on purchasing lunches at Meet the Teacher.

Tuition and Fee Policies

All tuition and fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. The family account will be charged and the parent/guardian will be held financially responsible for payment.

Tuition is paid in advance. Parents will create an account through our ARUX Online system. Tuition will automatically be charged to the credit/debit card on file. If you need any assistance, please call or visit the office assistant at one of our Early Childhood Centers (please see above for contact information).

An annual \$75 registration fee will be due at the time of registration. Tuition is due on or before the 1st of every month. Tuition fees are not adjusted for school closure and holidays. Tuition is determined by the number of days the program is in operation during the year and is divided into 10 equal monthly payments.

A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed per student if payment is not received by the close of business on the 4th of each month. Student(s) may be removed from the program if payment is not received.

Please reference your child's program end times. If the child is picked up 11 or more minutes after class has ended, a \$2 per child/per minute will be assessed to the family account. The Early Childhood Development Center site clock will be used to determine the time.

The financially accountable parties are responsible for any charges or legal costs incurred by HUSD in the collection of the delinquent accounts.

HUSD's Federal tax ID number is #86-6000505. Tax information can be found on our ARUX site. Our Office Assistants are available to help if needed.

Families who wish to make changes to their program contract or cancel their child's enrollment must do so by the 15th day of the month prior to the changes taking effect.

- Contact the ECDC Office Manager to make the changes.
- Changes become effective on the first business day of the following month.
- The financially accountable parties are responsible for paying the next month's tuition balance if a child is not disenrolled by the 15th of the month.
- If you change programs by adding or deleting days, you will need to fill out a new Financial Agreement with the new tuition amounts.

Higley Hangout Information (Before and After Care)

Higley Hangout provides before and after school care for our preschool students. Online information and registration is available at <https://husd.arux.app>. Higley Hangout can be reached through the Community Ed Department at community.education@husd.org or (480) 279-7055.

Staff Credentials and Student Ratios

Our teachers are Arizona Department of Education Certified and Highly Qualified Early Childhood Teachers. In addition to the classroom teacher, paraprofessionals are also assigned to each classroom and are invaluable in helping your child benefit from their preschool experience. State mandated ratios are 1:13 for three-year-olds, 1:15 for four-year-olds, and 1:20 for five year olds. Brilliant Beginnings classes are capped at 20 students and Kindergarten Prep classes are capped at 24 students.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum was carefully chosen to provide foundational educational experiences for your child's intellectual, social, emotional, creative, and physical development. Our entire curriculum aligns with the Arizona Early Learning Standards, which have been developed for children 3-5 years of age. The standards support each child's learning through positive relationships with teachers and peers and through child-initiated and teacher supported play.

Conscious Discipline

Conscious Discipline integrates social-emotional learning, discipline, and self-regulation so teachers spend less time policing behaviors and more time teaching vital life skills. Conscious Discipline is a longtime leader in integrating classroom management and social-emotional learning. It utilizes everyday events rather than an external curriculum and addresses the adult's emotional intelligence as well as the child's.

Big Day for Pre-K and TELL

Big Day for Pre-K from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and TELL from Arizona State University are used in our Kinder Prep classrooms. They are comprehensive, integrated early learning programs designed to ensure success for today's early learners based on the latest research and interactive learning philosophies. It integrates all curricular areas into our daily instruction including Reading and Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Health, and Art. Thorough, comprehensive lessons and high interest activities completely engage children along with a flexible instruction plan that allows children to learn and explore at many different levels and gives our teachers a variety of activities to choose from depending on individual child interest.

Learning without Tears

The Learning Without Tears curriculum is used throughout our centers and draws from years of innovation and research to provide developmentally appropriate, multisensory tools and strategies for classroom lessons. The program follows research that demonstrates how children learn more effectively by actively manipulating materials that address all styles of learning.

Assessments/Parent Teacher Conferences

Each of our teachers will assess your child throughout the school year in several developmental and academic areas. This will help teachers adjust their planning and instruction to best meet the needs of each student. A basic developmental screening will be given to all tuition students upon

reaching the 45th day of enrollment. Your teacher will alert you should there be any concerns. Additional assessments may be sent home for your input as needed.

There are 2 scheduled Parent Teacher Conferences each school year, which are held before Fall Break and before Spring Break. The spring conference is a student led conference.

Special Education

Our preschool programs are designed to address the educational needs of preschool children with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan). Children cannot be of kindergarten eligibility age (e.g. cannot be turning 5 prior to September 1st of current school year). HUSD provides a continuum of services to meet the educational needs of children: PAC (Preschool Articulation Class), itinerant services in a general education Brilliant Beginnings or Kindergarten Prep class, or a CrossCat special education class.

Transportation

Transportation is not available for our general education preschool students. Specialized transportation is available for students who have a special education eligibility and the student's IEP team has identified transportation as an individual need.

Child Find Screenings

School districts are mandated to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities within their district of residence, free of charge. Child Find Screenings for children 2 years 10.5 months through age 5 (not Kindergarten eligible) will be held throughout the school year and summer. Referrals for the program may come from various sources (such as 45-day screenings), but the most common is the child's parents. Initial preschool referrals are handled and recorded through the Preschool Evaluation Team office. A Child Find or developmental screening determines if a child has a potential disability that requires a Comprehensive Developmental Assessment (CDA). All 5 areas of development are screened (e.g., communication, social, adaptive behavior, motor, and cognitive skills). A vision and hearing screening will also be conducted.

If you have concerns about your child, please contact your child's teacher and they will connect you with the Child Find Team.

Illness, Accidents, and Emergencies

A child cannot attend the program with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever within the past 24 hours
- Vomiting within past 24 hours
- Diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Head or stomach ache
- Swollen glands
- Undiagnosed rash
- Head lice

- Severe cold or sore throat
- Inflamed or matter-filled eyes
- Is unable to participate comfortably in activities

Your child must be fever-free without Tylenol or other medications for 24 hours before he/she can return to school. If your child becomes ill while at school, parents will be called and asked to pick up their child promptly.

If a child is injured at the site, first aid will be administered. In case of an emergency, as determined by program staff, the paramedics will be called, and a parent or other emergency contact will be notified as soon as possible. Early Childhood Development Centers are not responsible for any charges incurred for transport or care.

Health Records

Any changes and revisions to health records must be made immediately. Please remember to keep all records updated. A child's immunization record must be provided at the time of registration. The immunization record provided by the parent shall contain all information required by the Arizona Department of Health Services and be up to date.

Medication Administration

Medication is not given to a student without prior arrangements with the school Health Aide or the Higley Hangout Site Supervisor.

- Children who require medications during school hours must have written parent/guardian permission on a school medication form. Prescription medication must be provided to the health office staff in the current, original container with the child's name on the prescription label.
- Over-the-counter medication must be provided in the original container and a school medication form must be completed by the parent/guardian. Students may not keep any medicine, lotion, lip application, cough drops, sunscreen, or anything else that is applied or ingested in their backpack, cubby, or classroom.
- Antibiotics or other medications that are prescribed one, two, or three times daily do not need to be given at school unless your child attends a before or after school program. If so, consult with the health office staff.
- Medication cannot be sent to and from school with students. Parents/guardians must make arrangements to deliver and pick up medication from the school health office. The person picking up medication must be a parent or guardian, sibling 18 years or older, a family member or friend over the age of 18 as specified by the parent in writing or by telephone.
- Any unused or expired prescription medication will be returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the program or the child's withdrawal.

Backpacks

Please provide your child with a standard sized backpack with his/her name on it to be used to transport papers, artwork, and special items. It is very important that parents check their child's backpack daily for important notes and communication from school. Please do not bring gum, candy, toys, or other personal items from home. Items that are valuable or breakable may become lost in the classroom. We will not be responsible for any personal items brought from home that are broken or lost. Toy weapons are not allowed on campus at any time.

Arrival/Dismissal

All parents and caregivers will accompany children to their classroom where a staff member will take responsibility for the student. Children may not be left unless a staff member is there to supervise. Children must be dropped off no earlier than class start time. Late pick-ups are subject to fees and leave teachers without adequate preparation and lunchtime.

Sign In/Out and Attendance Procedures

Our program is licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services for preschool-age children 3 to 5 years of age. The policies and procedures followed by Early Childhood Development staff and administration are directly based on applicable state regulations. DHS requires that a parent or an authorized party sign a child in/out of the HUSD Early Childhood Development Center before and after school each day.

Please make sure your child arrives at school on time every day. This teaches children that being on time is expected because school is important and it also limits disruptions to the learning environment. Should your child need to be out for the day, parents should inform their child's teacher by email.

For the safety of your child, any individuals removing children from the program will be required to show proof of identification. A child will not be released to an individual refusing to show ID upon request. Always bring a valid (state) picture I.D. to the site.

A Parent or Guardian will have access to the areas where their enrolled child is receiving services. Under state laws, both parents have the right to pick up their child unless a court document restricts this right. The enrolling parent who chooses not to include the other parent's name on the authorized list for pickup must file an official court document such as the following:

- Current restraining order
- Sole-custody decree
- Divorce decree stating sole custody
- Judgment of adoption
- Foster parent documentation

Without this documentation, we may release the child to either parent, if the parent provides the parent documents, biological or adoptive parenthood, of that child. Parents must provide us with updated legal documents when any changes occur.

Otherwise, a child enrolled in the HUSD Early Childhood Development Center will be released only to those persons specifically authorized on the emergency information form. A sibling may not sign out a child unless he/she is listed on the emergency form as an authorized party. Parents will be required to complete the list of individuals who are authorized to pick up their child in ARUX.

Preschool Dress Code

Each child needs to be dressed according to the Dress Code set forth by the Higley Unified School District. We are also asking that you send your child to school in closed toed, closed heel shoes. Please no light up shoes. Everyday your child will be engaged in outdoor activities and gross motor development skills that require running, jumping, and quick movements that are best done in tennis shoes. Children at this age tend to get their little toes stepped on a lot and tennis shoes provide more protection. Our primary goal is to keep your student safe.

Physical Activity

All children are provided with at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day for full-day students and at least 30 minutes for half-day students. This includes both teacher-led and free-play activities. We encourage children to be active throughout the day exploring their environment by limiting sedentary activities to fewer than 60 minutes at a time (except during nap time).

Screen time is limited and used to engage children in physical activity and for educational purposes. No screen time during meal or snack time. Physical activity is never used or withheld as punishment.

Snack Time

A snack will be served family-style every day to refuel our bodies and our brains. Snack time provides an opportunity for language development, social development, fine motor skill development, and the development of adaptive skills. Your child's teacher will let you know how they handle signing up for snacks in their classroom. We require only 100% fruit juice and limit it to 4-6 ounces serving at a time. You will be notified of any food allergy restrictions in your child's classroom.

Birthday Celebrations

Any food that is brought from home for classroom celebrations must be store bought and sealed in original packaging. We also encourage that any treats be low in sugar content. Foods that are high in sugar (cake, cookies, cupcakes, etc.) are strongly discouraged.

Field Trips

On site field trips will be offered to preschool students throughout the school year through the support of our annual PTO fundraising efforts. Students will not attend off site field trips that require transportation.

Child Guidance and Discipline

Social growth is crucial during the early childhood years. For this reason, HUSD Early Childhood Development Centers place great emphasis on helping children learn to display appropriate behaviors. Behavioral guidelines are established to maintain the physical and emotional wellbeing of each student and to teach self-discipline, judgment and manners. Positive behavior management techniques are used to guide children's behavior. Parents and staff are viewed as partners in guiding each child's development. Conscious Discipline by Dr. Becky Bailey is the discipline tool we use in our centers.

Conscious Discipline Overview

The School Family: The Foundation for Connection

Ask yourself, "Would I rather have children say, 'What do I get if I'm good?' or 'How do I give of my goodness?'" How you answer this question will determine the school climate and culture you want your child to participate in. School climate impacts all achievement. The culture of a school can foster bullying, blame and cliques, or it can build cooperation, willingness and responsibility.

Historically, we have unconsciously used the metaphor of a factory when creating our classrooms and schools. The goal of a factory is to create standardized products through a rewards and punishment paradigm. Research and experience prove that we need a new metaphor if we wish to build successful and safe educational institutions. The School Family, built on a healthy family model, is this new metaphor. The goal of a healthy family is the optimal development of all members. The School Family builds connections between families and schools, teachers and teachers, teachers and students, and students and students to ensure the optimal development of all.

These connections provide the three essential ingredients for school success:

- A willingness to learn: Without willingness, each interaction becomes a power struggle instead of a learning opportunity. The School Family brings all children, especially the most difficult, to a place of willingness through a sense of belonging.
- Impulse control: Connection with others is the construct that literally wires the brain for impulse control. Disconnected children are disruptive and prone to aggressive or bullying behaviors. External reward/punishment systems often do not improve a child's ability to self-regulate because they are not designed to teach new skills. The School Family uses connection to encourage impulse control while teaching self-regulation skills in context.
- Attention: Our attentional system is sensitive to stress and becomes engaged with positive emotions. The School Family reduces stress while creating an atmosphere of caring, encouragement and meaningful contributions. These components are essential for children to develop and apply sustained attention.

The School Family creates a fundamental shift in education and classroom management because it is created through routines, rituals and structures. We replace coercion, fear and external rewards with intrinsic motivation, helpfulness, problem-solving and connection.

Conscious Discipline defines discipline not as something you do to children, but something you develop within them. Our staff is trained to teach students how to respond instead of reacting to situations throughout the school day. Parent training is offered throughout the school year.

We offer a course on Conscious Discipline for parents during the school year. The 10 workshops series communication will be shared out to families through your classroom teacher.

Discipline Practices

Appropriate behavior is essential to learning, both physically and emotionally, and should be based on mutual respect. This respect includes the rights and property of others, respect for those placed in authority, and respect for every student. No one will be allowed to jeopardize the health, safety or learning environment of others.

If a child's behavior escalates and he/she does not respond the school will work with the school's behavior team to implement interventions.

If program administration determines that a child cannot safely function within the program, or that the child's behavior presents a danger or harm to other children or staff, HUSD Early Childhood Development Center administration reserves the right to remove the child from the program through suspension or removal from the program.

Dismissal or Suspension from the Program

HUSD Early Childhood Development Centers reserve the right to remove or suspend any child from the program for the following reasons:

- A child may be removed from the program if a tuition payment by any financially responsible party is delinquent. The financially accountable party will be responsible for any costs incurred in the collection of the balance due. No refunds or credit to the family account will be given if a child is removed from a HUSD Early Childhood Development program.
- A child may be removed from the program if program administration determines that a child's behavior endangers the safety of other children, themselves, or staff.
- A child may be removed from the program if nonmedical drugs are found on the child or in their backpack. DCS will be contacted.

All incidents are situational and will be documented according to our guidelines. Our program will make every attempt to include parents in situations involving these concerns and progressive consequences. These consequences can range from, but are not limited to, parents attending parenting classes, prompt removal from class, suspension (up to 5 days) and removal from our program. Our goal is to try and ensure success for all the children enrolled in our programs.

Family Connection

Meet the Teacher

This is the first event of the year. You will receive an email the week before school starts from your child's teacher. There will be information on how to sign up for an appointment to meet the teacher. Our teachers meet with just a few families at a time to begin building relationships.

Curriculum Night

Curriculum Night is scheduled for an evening in early August. This event gives you the opportunity to find out more about the curriculum as well as the routines in your child's classroom.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

We have two conferences scheduled: before our Fall Break and before our Spring Break.

Other School and PTO Sponsored Events

- Restaurant Nights throughout the year
- Family Celebration Night during the Week of the Young Child in Spring
- and more!

Visiting and Volunteering

If you wish to visit or volunteer in the classroom, you must complete the Tier One volunteer packet which you can receive in the front office. Teachers begin scheduling volunteers after 4 or 5 weeks of school to establish their classroom routines and build the school family.

We use the Raptor Visitor Management System to screen visitors, volunteers, and contractors in our schools to provide a safer environment for our students and staff. Upon entering a district building, visitors will be asked to present an ID such as a Driver's License, which can either be scanned or manually entered into the system. If a parent or guardian for any reason does not have a US government-issued ID, the school staff member can use any form of identification and manually enter the person's name into the Raptor system.

The Raptor system will check to ensure that registered sexual offenders are not entering our school campuses without our knowledge. The Raptor system checks the visitor's name and date of birth for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the Raptor system. No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded and the information is not shared with any outside agency. Once entry is approved, Raptor will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of his/her visit. A visitor's badge will not be necessary for those who visit our schools simply to drop off an item in the office or pick up paperwork.

There are many other ways to be involved in your child's education outside of the classroom. Contact your child's teacher to see if you can take home projects to prepare for class or be a room parent. The PTO is always looking for support as well.

Communication

You can expect to receive regular communication from your child's teacher. By checking your child's backpack on a regular basis and by checking email, you can be sure you are aware of any communication from your child's teacher or the school. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, you may email them or leave a message for them to call you before, between, or after classes. You may also coordinate with the front office to make an appointment with our Director or Assistant Director.

Liability Insurance

HUSD Early Childhood Development Centers and Kids Club are insured by the Higley Unified School District. Documentation of insurance may be reviewed at the District Office.

Pesticides

We limit the use of pesticides and herbicides in our program. If it is necessary to use pesticides or herbicides, they are applied by a licensed professional when children are not present. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals used in pest control are kept on file at the Higley Unified School District Office and Community Education Department. Notice of Pesticide Application, with date of application, is posted at all Early Childhood Development Centers. Changes to these dates will be posted within 72 hours before application.

Inspection Reports

All inspection reports are available upon request.

Regulation of Facility

The Arizona Department of Health Services licenses and regulates HUSD Early Childhood Development Center Programs. The Department may be contacted at Office of Childcare Licensure, 150 N. 18th Ave., 4th Floor, Phoenix, AZ 85007 or by phone at 602-364-2536.