



ECE

(Preschool and Pre-K)

Parent

Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

Early Childhood Education 2026-2027

Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) Department

The department consists of:

Sherri Settles: Director of Extended Learning Opportunities 520-616-4504

Rebecca Ortiz: ELO Coordinator 520-616-4505

Holly Stovall: ELO Secretary 520-616-4506

Estrella McGowan: ELO Accounting Clerk 520-616-4516

Mission Statement: The Department of Extended Learning Opportunities will provide a safe, quality, and affordable program that meets the needs of children and their families and enhance the time their child spends away from home.

Philosophy Statement: The Department of Extended Learning Opportunities will provide a safe and nurturing environment to encourage children to learn and grow by providing hands on developmentally appropriate experiences.

Our all-inclusive environment encourages children to succeed while meeting their individual abilities, interests, needs and learning styles.

Our play-based curriculum encourages meaningful child interactions and individualized creativity. Our preschool curriculum includes activities that meet Arizona Early Learning Standards; physical, cognitive, social and emotional, language, self-help, and aesthetic areas that help prepare children for kindergarten.

Our community encourages parents to be involved in their child's education. This bridge helps to solidify a solid foundation for each child in our program.

Locations-

Preschool (3 year old) Location:

Estes 11280 W. Grier Rd. Marana, AZ 85653 (520) 352-2421 Ext 3632	De Grazia 5051 W Overton Road Tucson, AZ 85742 (520) 352-2421 Ext 7127	Picture Rocks 5875 N. Sanders Rd Tucson, AZ 85743 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 6055	Quail Run 4600 W. Cortaro Farms Rd Tucson, AZ 85742 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 7416
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Roadrunner (combined 3-4 class) 16651 W. Calle Carmela Marana, AZ 85653 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 7828	Quail Run (combined 3-4 class) 4600 W Cortaro Farms Rd Tucson, AZ 85742 (520) 352-2421 Ext 7416
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Pre-K (4 year old) Locations:

Coyote Trail 8000 N. Silverbell Rd Tucson, AZ 85743 (520) 352-2421 Ext 6634	De Grazia 5051 W Overton Road Tucson, AZ 85742 (520) 352-2421 Ext 7087	Dove Mountain 5650 W. Moore Rd Marana, AZ 85658 (520) 579-4500 Ext 3215	Estes 11280 W. Grier Rd. Marana, AZ 85653 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 3657
Gladden Farms 11745 W Gladden Farms Dr. Marana, AZ 85653 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 8245	Ironwood 3300 W Freer Drive Tucson, AZ 85742 (520) 352-2421 Ext 7312	Picture Rocks 5875 N. Sanders Rd Tucson, AZ 85743 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 6230	Quail Run (combined 3-4 class) 4600 W. Cortaro Farms Rd Tucson, AZ 85742 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 7416
Roadrunner (combined 3-4 class) 16651 W. Calle Carmela Marana, AZ 85653 (520) 352-2421 Ext. 7809	Rattlesnake Ridge 8500 N Continental Reserve Loop Tucson, AZ 85743 (520) 352-2421 Ext 8556	Tangerine Farms 10300 W. Mike Etter Blvd Marana, AZ 85653 (520) 352-2421 Ext 7540	

Hours for Coyote Trail, DeGrazia, Gladden Farms, Estes, Ironwood, Picture Rocks, Quail Run, Rattlesnake Ridge and Roadrunner:

Full day sessions: 7:30 am -2:00 pm Monday through Friday

Half-day sessions: 7:30 am -11:30 am Monday through Friday

Late pick up charges of \$1.00 a minute will be applied for half-day children not picked up at 11:30am and full day children not picked up at 2:00pm.

Children consistently arriving at school after 7:45 am and/or consistently picked up after 11:30 am (half time) or 2:00 pm (full time not in LEAP) could lose their scholarship or be withdrawn from our preschool program.

Hours for Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms:

Full day sessions: 8:15 am - 2:35 pm Monday through Friday

Half-day sessions: 8:15 am - 12:00 pm Monday through Friday

Late pick up charges of \$1.00 a minute will be applied for half-day children not picked up at 12:00 pm and full day children not picked up at 2:35 pm.

Children consistently arriving at school after 8:15 am and/or consistently picked up after 12:00 pm (half time) or 2:35 pm (full time not in LEAP) could lose their scholarship or be withdrawn from our preschool program.

Fridays: All Elementary Levels Kinder - 6th grade are released at 12:45 pm and kinder - 5th grade are released at 1:40 pm for Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms, but Preschool goes until 2:00 pm (2:35 pm - Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms).

Staff Meetings: On days where preschool staff meetings occur, full day ECE children will be supervised by LEAP staff if preschool staff need to leave before all preschoolers are picked up. Staff will notify of meeting a week in advance.

Shortened Days and Half Days (per District calendar): Full day children in preschool will stay in class until 2pm (2:35pm Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms) Parent/Teacher Conference days are the only exception (see page 9).

Before and after care is available at LEAP for an additional cost if space is available and child is enrolled. **There is a minimum of 8 days a month attendance required to keep your spot in LEAP.**

ECE follows the school-year calendar. ECE is not open on non-school days including teacher work days, breaks and summer. Preschoolers may attend Fall and Spring Break (age 3-5). Only age 5+ can attend our Leap summer program.

Before and After Care Service (LEAP)

If you are in need of before and/or After Care, we are able to offer you this service through our LEAP Program if space is available. The service is offered from 6:00 am to school starts and from end of school day - 6:00 pm. Parents who are interested need to do the following:

1. Contact the LEAP site supervisor at your school to see if there is available space for your preschooler to attend LEAP.

2. Prepay the FRIDAY before at that site for the hours you will need their services. You will pay the ECE tuition fee at the ECE site and a separate hourly payment for LEAP.
3. You do not have to pay another registration fee or fill out new paperwork.
4. Let the ECE supervisor know the days your child will be attending the LEAP Program.
5. LEAP attendance requires 8 days a month to keep their LEAP spot. (Month of December is only exception)
6. ECE children must be picked up by 6:00 pm. You will pick them up and clock them out in the LEAP room.
7. ECE supervisors will copy all registration paperwork and will send it to the LEAP supervisor for your child.

Statement of Services -

ECE (Early Childhood Education) is a tuition-based DHS (Department of Health Services) licensed learning facility for three-, four- and five-year-old that reside in the Marana Unified School District (MUSD) boundary. **We are a DES contracted five half day and five full day preschool.** We are open Monday through Friday and follow the Marana Unified Elementary calendar for the school year. Preschool children must be 3 by August 1, 2026 and fully toilet trained to enroll. Pre - K children must be 4 by August 1, 2026 (some exceptions can be approved by Director only) and fully toilet trained to enroll. We do not enroll students after class is full throughout the year. We have an open-door policy during hours of operation for parents.

Cost of Tuition -

Fees and Rates

Full day sessions: \$178 weekly

Half-day sessions: \$125 weekly

Tuition is not paid or billed daily only weekly.

Registration/Material Fee: (Non-refundable) \$100.00 once per year per child. Child cannot attend if the registration is not paid in full.

Weekly rates are based on 178 days in school that is divided by 38 weeks of school year excluding breaks. For this reason, weekly rates are the same regardless of number of days attended during that week over the 9 months of school you are really only paying for 178 days.

Full time 38 a day x 178 days divide by 38 wks = \$178.00 a week

Part time 26.687 a day x 178 days divide by 38 weeks = \$125.00 a week

Discounts

Verified M.U.S.D. employees receive a 20% discount weekly on full time tuition only.

Parents of multiple children will receive a 15% discount on the second child on full time tuition only.

Parents are allowed up to 10 days to use for vacation or sickness throughout the school year for each child. These 10 days are monitored by our accountant and issued credit for the day/s up to the 10 days only. If you have used all the allotted 10 days then you will be charged for all days missed after the 10. Since we charge weekly, we will credit the daily cost above back on the account for only up to 10 days each school year. This does not apply to DES accounts.

Refunds

You may request a refund of positive balances from the current school year only after your child has withdrawn from the program. Request for refund must be made prior to July 1 of the current school year. All refunds must be approved by ELO Director.

Financial Assistance

Financial Assistance comes through applying for DES. We are a contracted DES provider of services. To apply for DES childcare, you can start an application on www.des.az.gov. If finances are a hardship, you may qualify for DES (Department of Economic Security) support. Their contact number is: 520-638-2255. Our ELO office does not determine qualification or contact DES or case workers for you.

MUSD ECE is an authorized DES Childcare center. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Parent is responsible for payment until DES contacts us with approval and the date it is to take effect.

Financial Scholarships

Financial Scholarships comes through the First Things First Initiative. We are not guaranteed funding. If funding is available (usually known at end of May before the next school year) we offer financial qualification scholarships through Quality First. To see if you may qualify for a Quality First scholarship, please check with our office first 520-616-4506. Parent is responsible for payment until scholarship approval and the date it is to take effect.

Parents who qualify for financial assistance must follow all policies and procedures for payment and attendance to receive financial assistance. Failure to comply with policies and procedures may result in the scholarship being revoked for the remainder of the school year.

Payments

ECE and LEAP fees are prepaid by Friday the week prior to services. If you have not pre-paid for the upcoming week, your child cannot attend ECE on Monday until payment is confirmed. We accept check, money orders, or credit card payments through the MUSD website, services, online payments through Intouch. Intouch does charge a 2% fee for each payment transaction. All accounts must have a positive balance. Phone calls and email reminders of accounts are sent by ECE supervisor (teacher) and or accountant. If you have questions regarding payments, contact your site supervisor or our accounting clerk at 520-616-4516.

Delinquent Payment Process (ECE and LEAP)

ECE is funded through your tuition payments. We are not a District, State or Federal funded program. Payments in full are required in order to continue to keep tuition lower, to fund staff salaries/benefits, licensing fees, site maintenance and supplies. Payments are made through the Online payment through Intouch by credit card or by check or money order in person. ELO ECE staff will send email and phone call reminders of billing for payments. After reasonable effort with no payment then our accounting clerk will make calls, emails and us postal mail to collect payment. At this point your child will not be able to attend until payment in full is received. Parent/guardian are responsible for any charges incurred by child at Preschool. Non payments without communication from parent/guardian after 2 months will automatically be sent to collection as a fine after our reasonable attempts at collecting debt. This could lead to a fine on child's MUSD account or if parent/guardian is an employee of MUSD, the district can take actions to collect this debt.

Late or Incomplete Payment Procedure (ECE and LEAP)

- 1) ELO ECE will send an email or phone call reminder of bill
- 2) If repeated attempts to collect late or incomplete payments are ignored, you will be contacted by our accounting clerk and/or office administration by phone, email or letter. If payments continue to be late, you will be informed a day in advance that your child is deactivated from ECE.
- 5) Payments not received after deactivation will be sent to collections or added to your child's district account.

NSF checks (non-sufficient funds) will require a money order or credit card payment for all future tuition payments. Online payments through the same checking account as the NSF are not accepted.

NEXTCHECK

The Marana Unified School District will gladly accept checks. No longer will the district or school staff arrange for the repayment of returned checks. Should your check be returned for insufficient funds, you expressly authorize your account to be electronically debited or bank drafted for the amount of the check plus any applicable fees. The use of a check is your acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms and conditions.

Please include the following information on your check:

- Full name
- Street Address
- Home phone number
- Cell phone number
- Children's name
- NSF checks (non-sufficient funds) will require a money order or credit card payment for all future tuition payments. Online payments through the same checking account as the NSF are not accepted.

ECE Enrollment Criteria

- Must reside in the MUSD boundaries
- Children must turn three by August 1, 2026 for Preschool and four by August 1, 2026 for Pre-K.
- Each child must provide for their own basic care that includes: feeding self without assistance, toileting without assistance (**diapers or pull-ups are not allowed**), expressing basic needs to staff, and providing no threat to self, other children, or staff.
- Any IEP's or 504's needs to be reviewed by Director before enrollment occurs
- The non-refundable annual \$100.00 registration fee must be paid per child (check or money order only), a copy of the child's birth certificate, current immunization record, utility bill or lease agreement and all paperwork must be filled out completely and on file at the site or ELO office before the child can attend school.
- If your child qualifies for a scholarship, all paperwork must be turned in to the district ELO office before the start of the school year or it may be delayed a month. Scholarships are awarded in June.
- ECE Centers are a five-day, Monday through Friday program. It is important that your child attends and arrives by 7:45 am (Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms by 8:15 am) every day.

In order for your child to get the most out of our program, and to develop positive school attendance habits, it is important for your child to be at school regularly on time.

Staff

Our ECE Centers are staffed by a supervisor (lead teacher), an assistant supervisor (co-teacher) and possibly a part time aide depending on staffing. Our staff is currently working toward or possesses an

CDA, Associate's Degree, a Bachelor's Degree, or a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education and meet the AZDHS requirements for their position.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Arizona State Early Learning Standards. These standards are available for viewing at each ECE site or at www.azed.gov (Arizona Early Learning Standards). We also use Heggerty for phonemic awareness (pre-k) and phonological awareness (preschool) and use Kindermusik in the classroom. Lesson plans will be posted on the parent information board. If you have questions concerning the curriculum, contact the Director or ELO Coordinator at 616-4506.

These standards are followed to prepare your child for kindergarten the following year. These guidelines and standards are in alignment with the "Arizona College and Career Ready Standards". The ECE day is composed of two sessions: half day and full day. Each consists of activities that introduce the child to the standards. These include circle time, small/large group activities, learning centers, emergent literacy/writing, math, science, social studies and social emotional.

Our goal in ECE is to give your child the basic tools which are the foundation for all future learning. Your child will be encouraged to ask questions and to explore the world around them. Your child will be introduced to a multitude of ideas while being allowed to learn and develop at his/her own pace. Our curriculum will allow for diverse and individualized learning. Early literacy is a big part of our curriculum. Hands-on Math, Science, Social Studies, and Health are integrated into your child's learning through books, activities, and projects. Lessons and activities are based on the Multiple Intelligences. Staff is trained in "Best Practice" techniques and lessons are age and developmentally appropriate. In addition, children are encouraged to develop their own talents and skills through arts and crafts, music, movement, and physical activities.

New to our program will be the introduction of Kindermusik. Kindermusik uses age-appropriate songs and movements to engage students throughout the day during music and movement or transitions. We also use STEM. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Also related to STEM is STEAM, which is Science, Technology, Art, and Math. "What STEM does is give a label to what we are already doing... helping children to explore, observe, ask questions, predict, and integrate their learning.

Assessments

Assessment is the process of gathering information about children and is essential toward...

- Making sound decisions about teaching and learning.
- Identifying significant concerns.
- Improving educational and developmental interventions.

Assessment is based on...

- different types of documentation (observations, photos, work samples, and anecdotal notes)
- frequent documentation throughout the year

Assessment will be used to...

- Organize and interpret information on the individual child.
- Make goals for the child and the program.
- Plan appropriate curriculum and effective instructional strategies to help children develop and learn.

Assessment is part of the child's daily curriculum. Lesson plans are developed to incorporate assessment of children as part of their daily activities. Children will be assessed as they play in centers, outside play, and small group activities. Teachers will observe children to see what the child learned.

Teachers will:

1. Ask open ended questions
2. Collect evidence
3. Interpret evidence
4. Take action to develop a plan to meet each child's individual needs.

Children will be assessed in the following areas:

1. Cognitive
2. Social and Emotional
3. Physical (both fine motor and large motor skills)
4. Subject Area (Language Arts, Math, Science/Health, Social Studies)

Assessment Tools that will be used:

1. ASQSE (Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional)- This will be given to parents:
 - If pre-registered, parent will be given the ASQSE with registration paperwork to turn in before the end of deadline.
 - If child was not pre-registered, parent will be given the ASQSE at time of enrollment to be turned in within two weeks of receiving registration materials.
2. PDA- (Preschool Development Assessment) - This assessment will be ongoing and a part of teacher's lesson planning.
3. Early Childhood Assessment- Teacher will document child's progress in the Fall, Winter and Spring. This assessment will be sent to the school that child will be attending in kindergarten.

Quality First

Most of our ECE sites are Quality First sites. MUSD ECE participates in the First Things First initiative for early childhood services through the Quality First Assessment process and T.E.A.C.H scholarships.

First Things First created Quality First to ensure that all Arizona kids have access to the quality early learning opportunities that will help them arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.

Quality child care settings include: safe, healthy environments; highly educated teachers; classrooms and materials that stimulate kids at different stages of learning; and increased staff to child ratios so that kids get the attention and support they need.

Quality first coaches assess our participating preschool classrooms throughout the year, and guide staff toward continued improvement in each of the three key areas noted above. A child care provider is one of the most important decisions parents and families make. Children in high-quality child care settings often do better in school and develop better language and social skills.

Conferences and Staff Communication

Student contact time during the day is our priority. Parents may request a conference with the supervisor during non-student hours (before school or after school hours). If you have billing questions, you may contact the accounting clerk directly at 520-616-4516.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are an important part of your child's schooling and will be held twice a year. Children will be assessed throughout the year using various materials and techniques. The results of these assessments will be shared with parents at that time ECE staff will also share your child's portfolio at this conference. Conferences are an opportunity for parents to express their hopes and aspirations for their child. It is also the time that parents can ask for assistance in working with their child.

On the days that MUSD schedules Parent-Teacher Conferences, ECE centers will close along with the schools in order for supervisors to conduct uninterrupted conferences with their parents. Full time ECE students that are enrolled in Leap will be escorted to LEAP until parents pick them up for the day. Other children not enrolled in LEAP must be picked up at 11:00am on Parent-Teacher days (Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms out at 11:30).

Staff will communicate with families through face-to-face conversations, notes, phone calls, emails, and newsletters. The classroom will also have a bulletin board with information on upcoming events, snack schedules, and lesson plans/activities. As part of our commitment to providing your children with a healthy start in life, we send home Nutrition and Physical Activity newsletters so that you can continue promoting good health practices with your child. We hope you find these newsletters interesting and helpful. We invite you to contact the site supervisor if you have any questions or concerns. If a second emergency contact is not provided by the parent/guardian, DCS or the non-emergency police number should be the second contact per DHS requirements.

Early Childhood Transitions

Into the Program

- Early Childhood Program registration is held annually in March before Spring Break.
- The community is given dates and times of registration through the district website and ELO office.
- Families must pay a registration fee and fill out appropriate paperwork.
- Each site will plan a Meet the Teacher before school starts to explain their program, policies, and answer any questions.

Out of the Program Other Than Transition to Kindergarten

- When we are given notice that your child will no longer be attending our program, we will begin the process of helping your child prepare for their departure.
- Staff will meet with parents to share the progress/concerns of their child and to give parents any documentation of child's performance while in our program.

Withdrawal Procedures

A child may be removed from the ECE Program for the following reasons:

- Discipline - reasons as stated under Discipline Philosophy (pages 13-14)
- Past Due Tuition - Should an account become delinquent the child will be withdrawn from the program and the parent contacted by phone and email. After parent pays in full child may re-enroll after approved by Director.
- Late Pick Up - Any child picked up late (after half-day session or scheduled closing time) more than three times may be withdrawn from the program.
- Habitual Tardiness—Tardiness that continues after meeting with the parent, site supervisor and ECE Coordinator or ELO Director may result in the child being withdrawn from the program.
- Non-compliance with policies and procedure for financial assistance.

- Other—Continued abuse of department policies and procedures by students or parents may be cause for removal from the program, including violation of sign-in/sign-out procedures.

Parents and staff are role models for children and must act accordingly. Failure to do so may result in loss of services. While at the site, parents will refrain from such conduct as physical punishment of children; verbal abuse; swearing or cursing; threatening staff, other parents or children; smoking; quarreling with other parents or staff; and disciplining other people's children.

Transition to Kindergarten

- Children take a trip to the cafeteria to eat lunch with kindergarten classes in May.
- Children will take trip to the kindergarten classrooms in May.
- Children will participate in age/developmentally appropriate school assemblies.
- Staff will meet with designated school personnel to discuss children's progress, concerns, and placement of children in kindergarten. (This will vary from site to site because some children will attend kindergarten at a school different from the preschool they are attending.)

Preschool Participation in Elementary School Activities

The following are suggested activities provided to the schools:

- *weekly/monthly assemblies
- *Assemblies with guest performers (varies by school)
- *Book fair (once each semester)
- *Fundraisers (varies by school)
- *Picture day and yearbook-page for class photos and one for collage of pictures of activities (Fall semester)
- *School t-shirts (once a year depending on school)
- *Use of library (once a week at some elementary schools)
- *Older grade reading buddy class (weekly at some elementary schools)
- *School events such as father/daughter dance, Rodeo BBQ,
- *Field day, Math Night, carnivals, etc. (Yearly events scheduled by elementary schools)
- *Parents Night Out (varies by elementary school)
- *PE, Music class when space is available (varies by elementary schools)
- *Kindergarten visitations near the end of the year

Check In/Sign In/Sign Out

In accordance with best practices in childcare, children's hands need to be washed upon their arrival at school. If a sink is available in your child's classroom, we ask that you assist your child with this task as you sign him/her in.

For the safety of your child, we require that the parent, caregiver, or designated adult over 18 sign your child in and out. Siblings are not allowed to drop off or pick up children. Your child must be accompanied in and out of the ECE site by a parent or designated adult over 18.

We are required by the Department of Health Services (DHS) and Department of Economic Services (DES) to have the sign in and sign out book signed with the time, full first and last name (e.g. George Smith). Parents must sign in using this format. You may be asked to sign the book again if you sign in incorrectly. You may not sign in/out ahead of the day. All sites also have a computer to clock in and out. Please do both if possible.

A child enrolled in the program will be released only to those persons specifically authorized on the emergency form. Picture ID will be required before a child will be released. Any picture ID of those not on the emergency form picking up must have email authorization from parent unless DCS transportation. We must take of a copy of the photo ID of those picking up and keep with email from parent in the child's folder on site. Additions or deletions to the pick-up list must be made in person by legal parent or guardian. One time emergency pick up can occur if parent calls and email with their photo ID stating the person's full name, child they are picking up and the date.

If one parent has sole legal custody of the child, your ECE site must have a copy of the legal document on file. All custody papers must be on site in child's emergency form.

If your child has had an unusually rough morning, didn't eat breakfast, or experienced a tragedy such as the loss of a pet or family member, please let us know. It is best to alert us to a child with a non-contagious rash, clear runny nose, cough or if your child is unusually tired. Please provide this information to staff in person or in writing during non-student time when the supervisor is available. We will likewise share information with you about your child during these times.

Late Pickup

A late pickup charge of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed for half-time ECE children picked up after 11:30 am (12:00 pm Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms) and full times ECE children after 2:00 pm (2:35 pm Dove Mountain and Tangerine Farms).

Students who are picked up late 2 or more days may be notified that their enrollment at the preschool site may be in jeopardy and a fee will be assessed at \$1.00 per minute rate.

DES and scholarships do not cover registration fees, meals or late charges. Children being picked up late will not be left unattended. Staff will attempt to contact parents first. If parents cannot be reached, staff will call other names on the emergency card. If both parents and emergency contacts are unavailable, then local authorities may be called. Habitual late pick up may result in withdrawal from ECE.

Empower Pack

ECE (preschool) participates in the Empower Pack Program from the Department of Health Services. This program was developed to encourage and promote a healthier lifestyle for children. There are ten standards in the program on which we build our curriculum. We encourage parents to try some of the activities and lessons at home to support our efforts in promoting healthier life choices.

Standard 1: Physical Activity

Standard 2: Sun Safety

Standard 3: Breastfeeding

Standard 4: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Standard 5: Fruit Juice

Standard 6: Family-Style Meals

Standard 7: Oral Health

Standard 8: Staff Training

Standard 9: Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine)

Standard 10: Smoke-Free Environment

Nutrition/Lunch/Snack

Parents should either send their child with a cold lunch (no microwave foods please) or parents can purchase a school lunch by putting money on the LINQ account on Marana website, Food Services, online payment. DES and scholarships do not cover lunch charges. Be sure to put your child's name on their lunch box. In order to keep lunches cool we encourage parents to use an insulated lunch box and ice pack. If your child gets breakfast/lunch from the cafeteria, then you will need to make payments on the LINQ online service on the MUSD website for food services. LINQ program for making credit card payments for meals charge a 3.95% per use.

Check with your site supervisor regarding Breakfast/lunch costs.

Parents who are interested may apply for Free/Reduced lunch through the school lunch program. Free/Reduced lunch applications are available at your school office. Qualifying preschool children receive the same meal discounts as school-aged children. If your child qualifies for free or reduced meals the cafeteria will already have it in the system.

Linq - food services online payment

Go to MUSD website, Parent Tools, Online Payment Center, Under Food Services click on LINQ Online Meal Payments and create an account. Here is also where you will make payments for Breakfast and Lunches from cafeteria.

If you provide lunch for your child, we encourage you to include the following items as recommended by the Department of Agriculture:

- 2 small servings (1/2 each) of 2 different fruits or vegetables or one of each.
- 1 serving of grain (e.g. 1/2 of bread, 1/4 cup pasta or rice)
- 1 1/2 ounces of meat or meat alternative (e.g. cheese or 3/8 beans)
- 1 serving of FLUID MILK (not yogurt or other milk products)

Mealtime will be used by the staff to teach children about foods they need every day for good health. Lunch and snack calendars are posted weekly on the bulletin board for your review. Each child is encouraged, but never forced to eat. Please refrain from candy, gummies or lots of sweets in breakfast and lunches.

Because milk is a source of important nutrients for children and can spoil quickly, milk is available from the school cafeteria to children bringing their own lunch at a cost. Check with your site supervisor for the cost. If your child does not drink milk, please provide a small amount of 100% fruit juice or water.

Breakfast and Lunch is offered in the school cafeteria for a price. Parents should send an am snack for their child. Nutritious, healthy foods such as fresh fruit, juices, pretzels, peanut butter and crackers should be offered as snack. Due to current research in child health and nutrition, we strongly urge parents to avoid foods that are high in fat and sugar content (e.g. fruit leather or chips). Please inform staff if your child has any documented food allergies or other dietary needs and the extent of his/her

reaction to such foods. We recommend any snack brought from home consist of foods from 2 different groups (ex. grain and dairy).

The health department does not allow us to serve homemade food to the children. Food brought in for celebrations need to be store bought, not opened and healthy choices.

Discipline Philosophy

The staff uses PBIS, a philosophy of positive reinforcement and interventions, including rewards and praise to manage the child's behavior. PBIS is used in all MUSD schools. This includes:

- praising, encouraging, and modeling positive behaviors
- setting clear, reasonable, and consistent rules and explaining them to the children
- planning developmentally appropriate activities
- observing the environment and children for possible causes of behavior
- allowing flexibility within routines
- encouraging problem-solving skills in children
- maintaining developmentally appropriate expectations of children

Discipline Procedures

- verbally reminding children of the rules
- redirecting children to another area
- providing natural and logical consequences for behaviors
- Incident written reports to parents (3 same behaviors could lead to 1 or 2 day suspensions and dismissal from the program)
- work with parents in a partnership to develop strategies which can include a behavior plan, modifying the child's day, or in cases where continuous challenging behavior is unsafe to the child or others, dismissal from the program could be immediate or a 5-day notification starting from first day suspension as we also follow DES Expulsion policies.

Definition of challenging behavior:

"Challenging behavior is any behavior that (1) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play, (2) is harmful to the child, other children, or adults, [or] (3) puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure."

Examples of challenging behavior: Physical aggression (hitting, biting, shoving, whacking with toys), relational aggression ("You can't play with us", verbal bullying), tantrums, whining, testing limits, refusal to follow directions or observe classroom rules, yelling for extended periods of time (more than 15 minutes).

Student Violence/Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying

Our ECE programs follow Disciplinary Policy which addresses the right of every student to be educated in a positive, safe, caring and respectful learning environment. Disciplinary includes the following behaviors: Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment and Intimidation.

These behaviors are not tolerated. Each staff member has been trained on procedures for reporting incidents. Student and/or parent complaints are reported directly to the school principal for school-aged children. ECE reports go directly to the ELO Director for preschool.

A copy of Disciplinary Policy is available from your site supervisors or our ELO office upon request.

Special Health or Behavior Needs

If your child has health or behavior needs, we require a specific plan to meet your child's needs prior to attendance. Space is provided on the back of the emergency card to add information about your child. This information will be kept confidential. Some IEP's may require more accommodations than we can accommodate or may require hiring a one on one. This does take some time to hire this specific position.

If your child's teacher notices some things that may need more specialized help, they will inform both parents and the director. Director will come for an observation. If needed you may receive a letter referring you to call PAL for a screening. This is optional but may help your child get accommodations in school to help them succeed.

Prior to attendance, your child's site supervisor will meet with you to develop a specific health plan for your child. The Health Plan will include special training from a parent or other qualified adult to train the staff on administering emergency medication. The Behavior Plan may be determined with help from the director, coordinator, counselor, nurse or teachers if needed.

Reasons for Expulsion

The childcare provider will discuss the reasons for expulsion with the parent/guardian based on the actions of the parent or the child, and provide a five-work day written notice prior to a child's disenrollment. This discussion includes suspension days for consistent behaviors which will be included in the five work days.

Immediate Causes of Expulsion: The provider discusses with the parent/guardian the facility's policy that allows for immediate expulsion, without waiting for the required five work day period, or until alternate child care arrangements can be made including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. The childcare provider is unable to prevent the child from causing serious injury to others or to himself/herself; or
- b. The parent/guardian threatens or commits physical or intimidating actions toward a child care provider.

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion: Certain actions or inactions on the part of the parent/guardian/relative **may** result in expulsion of a child. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Verbal or physical abuse to a child care provider;
- b. Threaten or commit physical or intimidating actions toward a child care provider; or
- c. Failure to pay required Arizona Department of Economic Security co-payments or additional fees.

Hearing/Vision Screening

Children enrolled in ECE will receive vision and hearing screening during the school year. Your child's teacher will send you information on the scheduling of these screenings. Hearing/Vision Screening schedules vary from site to site.

Family Resources

Child Find

Mission Statement

AZ FIND provides information and resources to parents, public education agencies (PEAs), state agencies, and professional organizations regarding child find statutes, policies, and procedures.

Requirements

Child find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04) that requires PEAs to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, located within their geographical boundaries that are in need of early intervention or special education services. Child find applies to children who are:

- Suspected of having a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade
- Highly mobile, such as migrant and homeless
- Wards of the state
- Private school students
- Homeschool students

Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)

The Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) is Arizona's statewide interagency system of services and supports for families of infants and toddlers, birth through two years of age, with disabilities or delays. AzEIP is established by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which provides eligible children and their families access to services to enhance the capacity of families and caregivers to support the child's development. If you are concerned about a child not meeting their milestones, please call 888-592-0140.

Play and Learn Preschool

Mission Statement

Play and Learn Preschool (PAL) is a Marana School District program for students who may qualify for special education services. The Marana Unified School District screens children starting at age 2 years, 10 1/2 months. If screening results indicate that a child may have a disability, a comprehensive evaluation will be necessary to determine the child's eligibility for special education and related services. A team will meet to begin the process. Screening and evaluation are free. All information contained in the screening or evaluation is confidential. Contact the PAL Program to learn more. To learn more or schedule a screening please call 520-682-4815.

At PAL we strive for a positive and inclusive environment where children feel safe to learn, grow and communicate using developmentally appropriate practices. Our collaborative team and individualized learning experiences provide opportunities for children to have unique learning experiences.

Smoke-Free Policy

All smoking including vapor or e-cig is prohibited in the Early Childhood Centers or on the school properties to protect the health of children, employees, and visitors.

All sites are a drug, tobacco, vape, alcohol and weapon free properties.

ECE Site Visitation/Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome during the school hours of operation. All interested persons must follow the District Volunteer Policy and DHS regulations. Please speak to the director and site supervisor for specific information concerning volunteering and visitation. Volunteer Forms may be picked up at the school office. Parents are welcome to observe the program in a designated observation area. Please contact the director and site supervisor to arrange for observation time. This may be for one hour or less. In order for the day's activities to continue uninterrupted, teachers are unable to conference with you during student hours. You are encouraged to schedule a conference with the staff at a later date.

Please note that no matter how unobtrusive a visitor may try to be, children often act different and their attention is thrown off by the presence of adults who are not a normal part of their room. Please keep this in mind during your visit and enjoy the activities that are going on.

"Quiet Time"

Quiet Time consists of two parts: 1) 15 minutes of resting quietly 2) 45 minutes for those children who need a nap. In January we start slowly eliminating nap time to get the children ready for kindergarten and by May will just have the 15-20 minutes of quiet activities.

While you may request that your child take a nap, we cannot force them to take one. If you wish for your child to nap, please talk with your child so that he/she understands your expectations. Explain to your child that if he/she chooses not to nap, they must remain quiet while the others are napping. Staff will have "quiet" activities for those who are not napping. Children will not be allowed to continuously disrupt "Quiet Time".

Items from Home

Please send your child with a change of clothes (weather appropriate) clearly labeled in case of an accident. Your child may bring a favorite blanket and crib sheet (to cover sleeping mat) for naptime. No pillows please. Please send only items that will fit in their cubby. These items will need to be taken home weekly for cleaning. Children should leave personal items and toys at home unless instructed by the supervisor. ECE staff cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken toys and articles brought from home.

Safety Drills

At least once per month students will participate in a fire drill that will help maintain order and safety in the event of an emergency. Students will be trained to take part in the following type of drills:

Fire drills

Students are trained how to exit areas of the school, following a primary and secondary route. They are trained how to exit a smoke-filled area, and an area with a blocked entrance.

Lockdown drill (twice a year)

Students are trained how to remain still and quiet, secured in the classroom in the event there is an emergency situation somewhere on campus that could result in unsafe conditions for students who may be out in the open campus.

Health, Medications, and Emergencies

School Guidelines for Elevated Temperature:

- A temperature of 100.4 F is the temperature at which a student is excluded from school.
- The student who is sent home from school with a temperature of 100.4 F cannot return to school until fever-free for 24 hours.
 - Fever-free means without a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing agents such as acetaminophen, or ibuprofen. Please do not give your child aspirin.

Guidelines for Diarrhea:

- Students with diarrhea need to be sent home.
- Generally, diarrhea is caused by a virus or bacterial infection.
- Students need to be excluded from school until they haven't had diarrhea for 24 hours.

Guidelines for Vomiting:

- Students with vomiting need to be sent home.
- Students need to be excluded until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

Guidelines for Lice:

- Students with lice or nits will be sent home
- Students will need to be treated and stay out of school until lice and nits are all removed

Guidelines for Pink Eye:

- Students with possible pink eye need to be sent home.
- Students need to be excluded from school until redness has cleared up or physician writes a note stating the student is not contagious or a student has received a prescribed antibiotic for 24 hours.

Guidelines for Rashes and Skin Sores: students who have unidentified rashes or skin sores may have a communicable disease that could be contagious to other students.

- Students need to be excluded from school until the rash or sore has cleared up.
- Or physician writes a note stating that the student is not contagious.
- Or student has been taking an oral antibiotic or applying an antibiotic or fungal cream for 24 hours.
- When the student returns to school, any open sores need to be covered.

Parents must provide documentation from a health care provider in cases where a child has a contagious infection or disease. This may include but not limited to: strep throat, eye infection, MRSA, or whooping cough.

Medication Requirements per the AZDH (Arizona Department of Health Services)

The staff is permitted to dispense medications including over-the-counter medications after the completion of the medical consent form that requires a doctor's and parent's signature (available from site supervisor). **First dose of any medications must be administered by parents.** All medications including inhalers, over the counter drugs, and prescription drugs, should be furnished by the parent/guardian in the original container labeled with the child's name, date, name of medication, dose, and time to be taken and date to be discontinued. Any medications given will be logged in on a chart with time, date, dose, and signature of the staff person who administered the medication.

Staff may administer a nonprescription medication provided by the parent only from a container prepackaged (cannot be a bottle that has already been opened) labeled for use by the manufacturer and labeled with the enrolled child's name. If a parent's request for administration is different from the instructions on the nonprescription medication, written authorization from a health care provider must be provided.

Parents must pick up expired medication or medication past the date to be issued by doctor immediately when contacted.

Parents must pick up all unused medication at the end of each school year. Medication that is not picked up will be properly destroyed.

Any lotions, bug spray or sunscreen (no aerosols) must be provided by parent and have a form signed by parent. Staff may apply sunscreen using gloves provided by parent if child is under 6, child can apply their own if over 6 years of age.

Emergencies

All sites have staff trained in CPR and First Aid to handle minor injuries or accidents. A parent will be notified of any accident involving his/ her child. Should emergency treatment be needed, staff will attempt to contact the parent. If staff is unable to reach a parent, an attempt will be made to contact one of the designated persons on the emergency card. In case of serious injury or accident, 911 will be contacted. If deemed necessary by paramedics or other medical personnel, the child will be taken to the nearest emergency room.

Healthy Habits

Our staff works to encourage the development of healthy habits among children in our care. These include but are not limited to proper procedures for hand washing, sneezing, coughing, choosing healthy foods, and getting plenty of physical activity.

- We use the "Color Me Healthy" Nutrition and Activity curriculum in our classrooms.
- Meals and snacks are served "Family Style", where adults sit with children and create a pleasant social atmosphere for them to experience foods and learn social etiquette related to mealtime. We do not force children to eat, nor do we reward good behavior with any type of special food or treat. We do not dictate the order that children eat their food. We also discourage parents from sending more food than their child will likely eat.

- We encourage parents to send non-food items to celebrate birthdays (ex. craft items, a book to share with the class, fun pencils). Sweets are strongly discouraged.
- In accordance with current health recommendations, we are not allowed to serve sugar-sweetened beverages as fruit punch/drinks, soda pop, sports beverages, or Kool-Aid in our childcare centers. We encourage milk with meals and water to quench their thirst between meals. Our cafeterias provide only 1% milk to preschoolers.
- Teachers participate in physical activities with children. The preschool years represent a critical time when children develop attitudes and skills that children need to grow into active, healthy adults. Children who learn basic skills such as running, kicking, throwing and catching are more likely to maintain a higher level of activity than children who don't learn these skills. These skills need to be practiced and we encourage parents to work with children at home to develop these skills.
- We limit use of TV, videos, video games, computers or other types of "screen time" in our classrooms. This is in accordance with current health recommendations of less than 3 hours a week for the EMPOWER program.

Dress Code

Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather and school activities. Machine washable clothes are recommended. Shoelaces are a constant concern and become dangerous if not tied securely. Closed toe, Velcro and pull-on shoes are best. Because the school day provides time for rather active and vigorous play, if your daughter chooses to wear a dress or skirt, please allow her to wear shorts underneath. Please do not send your child to school with flip flops.

If it is cold outside, be sure to send your child with a jacket. If it is hot outside, please consider a hat. Jackets and hats should be labeled with the child's name.

Field Trips

Students will not participate in field trips or activities outside of the school campus.

Liability

Liability Insurance is carried through the Marana Unified School District. Trust Insurance information is located in DHS binder on site or can be provided by the ELO office (520) 616-4506.

Transportation

Parents are expected to provide transportation for their children. Preschool children are not allowed to ride the bus.

Sun Safety Policy

Posted on Parent Information Board

Herbicides Warning

Parents will be notified 48 hours in advance if site is scheduled to be sprayed. The following flyer will be posted in cases where pesticides will be sprayed. Feel free to contact your site supervisor for any specific information you need.

Administration

If parents have questions or concerns about the program that are not answered by the site supervisor and staff, please call ELO Director or ELO Coordinator, at 616-4506. We hope that you and your child will have a pleasurable experience with our program.

FERPA (Parent Rights Under the Family Educations Rights and Privacy Act of 1974)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

ECE follows FERPA rules and regulations

DHS (Department of Health Services) Licensing and Inspections

MUSD ECE (preschool) is regulated and licensed by

Arizona Department of Health Services
150 N 18th Ave #400
Phoenix, AZ 85007
602-542-1025

Please refer to the DHS website for information on regulations and licensing (www.azdhs.gov).

Mandatory Reporting

A.R.S. §13-3620 provides that any district employee who "reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense, or neglect that has been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means . . . shall immediately report or cause reports to be made to this information to a peace officer or [in situations not encountered in a school setting] child protective services . . ." Such reports shall be made immediately by telephone or in person and shall be followed by a written report within seventy-two hours.

Educators have a responsibility to ensure that students are safe and have not been the victims of any kind of abuse or neglect. Legally, teachers and staff must report suspicions of abuse or face criminal charges for not reporting. It is the job of law enforcement to investigate the truth of the matter. For further information of this law please feel free to contact the school administration.

Policy Changes

Policies and procedures contained in this handbook are subject to change as needed. Any changes made to the policies and procedures during the 2026-2027 school years will be posted on the parent board. Copies of changes will be available for all parents.

Parent/Guardian Input

Input from parents and the community members are always welcomed and encouraged. Please contact the ELO Department at 520-616-4506 with any ideas, suggestions or concerns.

Revised May 2026

Preschool – Pre-K Calendar

2026-2027

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	21	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

August 3 School Starts

November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

November 11 Veterans Day
November 25-27 Thanksgiving Break

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

February 4-5 early release all but DM & TF
February 11 -12 early release only DM & TF
February 25-26 Rodeo Days

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	1	19	20	21	22
23	24	2	26	27	28	29
30	31					

May 20 Last day of school (full day for PS)

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

September 7 Labor Day
Sept 10-11 early release all but DM & TF
Sept 17-18 early release only DM & TF

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

December 18 Teacher only
December 21- January 3 Winter Break

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

March 15-19 Spring Break

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

October 5-9 Fall Break
October 12 – Teacher only

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

January 4 Teacher only staff development day
January 18 Martin Luther King Day

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Days of No School	
Sept 1	Labor Day
Oct 5-9	Fall Break
Oct 12	Teacher Only
Nov 11	Veterans Day
Nov 25-27	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 18	Teacher Only
Dec 21-Jan 3	Winter Break
Jan 4	Teacher Only
Jan 18	MLK Day
Feb 25-26	Rodeo Days
Mar 15-19	Spring Break
May 21	Schools Out
Early Release Days	
Sept 10 & 11	Parent/Teacher Conference All but Dove Mountain & Tangerine Farms
Sept 17 & 18	Parent/Teacher Conference Dove Mountain & Tangerine Farms
Feb 4 & 5	Parent/Teacher Conference All but Dove Mountain & Tangerine Farms
Feb 11 & 12	Parent/Teacher Conference Dove Mountain & Tangerine Farms

School Hours 7:30am – 2:00pm full day
7:30am – 11:30am half dayDove Mountain and Tangerine Farms
School Hours 8:10am – 2:35pm full day
8:10am – 12:00pm half day

Created 5/12/2026 early release times 11am except DM & TF at 11:30pm for P/T conferences